

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the House, two members of my constituency from Sandy Bay, Mr. Bobby Ray, and Elizabeth Ray from Sandy Bay.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you, and through you to this House today, 21 grade 8 students from Ituna, Saskatchewan, who are visiting the legislature and seated in your gallery here, together with their teacher, Mr. Bill Hudema, and their bus driver, Walter Petrowsky.

The Ituna School visits annually at the Assembly and usually brings a grade 8 class as part of their education program to learn how governments function in Canada. I want the members to welcome these students and advise them that after their tour I will be meeting with them at 11 a.m. on the front steps. So would the members please welcome these students from Ituna, Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Privatization of SaskPower

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is to the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Premier, in this legislature, in this House last May, May of 1988, your Deputy Premier was asked in this legislature if the splitting up of SaskPower was the prelude to the privatization of SaskPower. And his answer was, and I quote, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, to that rather lengthy straightforward question, the answer is no.

Those were the words of your Deputy Premier. Mr. Premier, we see today how good the word of your government is, a word of your government which is a record of promises which are broken and are worthless. My question to you, sir, is this: what is your explanation or apology to the people of the province of Saskatchewan for now breaking your promise and your word and privatizing a major public utility of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, a couple of points should be made. Number one, I was asked the question as to whether the splitting of the utilities was being done for the purposes of privatization or public participation. And, Mr. Speaker, I think the short answer at that time was no; and the short answer at this time was still no.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you why. As I said then, and I

continue to say, Mr. Speaker, this is the only place in Canada where we have competing forms of energy in the same utility — electrical and gas, Mr. Speaker — the only place in Canada where there are competing forms of energy.

So it was considered prudent, Mr. Speaker, to split the utility into the electrical utility and the gas utility. We did that, Mr. Speaker, we did that. We now have separate lines of administration for the electrical utility and the gas utility.

Since that split, Mr. Speaker, and because of some of the things my colleague the Minister of Public Participation has heard while he's travelled around the province, and because of the some of the ideas that we have generated as it relates to opportunity and diversification, Mr. Speaker, we recognized a great opportunity for the people of Saskatchewan, for SaskEnergy, for SaskPower, and indeed, Mr. Speaker, diversification, jobs, all of the things that go with it. That is how we got to the point we're at today, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I'm disappointed that the Premier saw fit not to answer my question on a very important matter, the privatization of SaskPower. It's his choice, of course, whether he answers or not, so I guess I've got to direct my new question to the Deputy Premier, his desk mate.

Mr. Speaker, the SaskPower annual report shows that in the last 10 years, past 10 years, the natural gas side of the power corporation made profits every year, while out of the electrical side they lost money seven out of 10 years. There was cross-subsidization. That was the way power corporation always worked. Now you propose to sell the profitable natural gas side to private investors, and you want the taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan the unprofitable electrical side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can see that that's a good deal to your big buddy investors in eastern Canada and elsewhere, but how in the world is that a good deal for the people of the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, SaskPower, the electrical utility, has in fact shown a profit in the last two years. And part of the problem in the past, Mr. Speaker, is that there was cross-subsidization and no clear administrative lines in the two utilities in competing forms of energy. And of course today, Mr. Speaker, today you will see when this thing takes place, when it does, Mr. Speaker, that the rates at SaskPower will be at or below the rate of inflation, out for some period, Mr. Speaker, I'd say nine, ten years. Rates for rinks, Mr. Speaker, the centre of activity in our small rural communities, Mr. Speaker, will be 50 per cent of what they are today, Mr. Speaker. In addition, Mr. Speaker, there will be up to \$10 million each year put into a diversification fund at SaskPower, Mr. Speaker.

And let's take a look at the opportunity that exists on the gas side, Mr. Speaker. A few years ago there was a small company similar to SaskEnergy today. That company was called Nova. Today that company is worth \$10 billion, employing thousands of Albertans, building fertilizer plants, upgraders, pipelines, you name it, Mr. Speaker. They are working for Albertans, as this company will work for Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Deputy Premier. I want to remind the Deputy Premier, you don't have to go to Alberta. This province was working prior to 1982 before you people got hold of this government . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And SaskPower was working, and we didn't have 6,000 people leaving this province a month.

Now my question to you is this, Mr. Deputy Premier. I'm saying . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well, the hon. member who's the minister in charge of privatization, his sorry record, knows that's the case that 6,000 people leave the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And if he would tend more to the businesses of the public rather than to his own business, maybe he'd understand that better.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Now my question, Mr. Speaker, to the Deputy Premier is very simple. Under your administration, because of the way that you've mismanaged, you and your buddies, Mr. George Hill, you and your PC cronies — the way they've mismanaged the power corporation, we now have the highest electrical rates in Canada, thanks to your mismanagement. Yet another Crown corporation that you have messed up — the highest electrical rates.

Now I want to tell you that selling off the most profitable portion of SPC, where the return is higher than the electrical side, I want to ask you this question: can you confirm that everyone in Saskatchewan has come to understand that one of the many unfortunate side consequences of privatization of power corporation is going to be the inevitable rise yet again of electrical rates?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, let me tell you how well this province was working, Mr. Speaker, prior to 1982. Prior to 1982, in boom times, Mr. Speaker, in boom times . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — In boom times, Mr. Speaker, in 1981 there were three gas wells drilled in the province — three gas wells; 1988, 700 gas wells drilled in the

province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. In addition, Mr. Speaker, because of some of the initiatives taken by SaskPower and SaskEnergy, we now have SK Turbines in Saskatoon. We have Phillips Cable in Moose Jaw. We have Dupont Plastics in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, we have Babcock & Wilcox in Melfort. We have 107 products now being manufactured in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that were once manufactured some place else.

Now you don't have to be a space scientist to figure out that we have had a net decline in jobs in the agricultural sector, but, Mr. Speaker, we've had 4,000 new jobs in the industrial sector.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Rural Gas Distribution

Mr. Romanow: — My goodness. My goodness, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Deputy Premier. My goodness. The Deputy Premier stretches his own credibility and this government's credibility, which is now threadbare in any event, by those kinds of statements. How in the world can he say that in the face of the statistics?

I want to ask a new question to the Deputy Premier, a new question to the Deputy Premier. Your government announced again with great fanfare, a program that began in 1982 — natural gas to farms. You admitted at that time that it's something everybody understands and a program which was a good program. Now it's going to be a very long time before a gas distribution system comes to farms as being economically delivered. That has been said by you people and by the power corporation people.

It seems that in the highest degree unlikely, in my judgement, Mr. Speaker, that a private company is going to have any interest in continuing this program. My question to the Deputy Premier is this: can we assume that farmers wanting to use the cheaper natural gas are yet going to be another victim of the ideological drive to sell off Saskatchewan's heritage?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, a couple of points should be made here. Number one, I can remember when we were talking about the rural natural gas program, they fought it tooth and nail every step of the way, Mr. Speaker. They said that it was uneconomic and that rural Saskatchewan didn't deserve that kind of expenditure, Mr. Speaker.

During that same period, Mr. Speaker, in the seven years prior to 1982, natural gas prices went up 188.5 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Compare that, Mr. Speaker, compare that to the seven years since 1982. Natural gas prices, Mr. Speaker, during that seven-year period went up 8.8 per cent.

Now tell me, Mr. Speaker — and I want to answer his direct question, Mr. Speaker, and that is, will the natural gas distribution program continue? The answer is yes, the natural gas program will continue until its completion in 1992.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Deputy Premier. He gave us that assurance in May of 1988, and today he broke his word by privatizing SaskPower. And that's how much I can trust his word on this issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — You can't trust anything that they say about this government at all. In fact the Premier, he forgot he was elected to act as Premier, but he's turned out to be the Monty Hall, and he thinks he's making a deal with everybody in the province and the country.

My question to the Deputy Premier is this. Look, you've given away now the power corporation; you've given away the potash corporation; you've privatized the Sask Minerals corporation; you've privatized Saskoil; you've privatized SaskCOMP; you're privatizing the dental plan; you privatized the highway workers.

My question to you, sir, after you're done, after the wrecking crew is done, after you take us back to the 1930s, what in the world is going to be left to run for this province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, what is left, what is going to be left to run? Mr. Speaker, as is the duty of all good governments, Mr. Speaker, we will have an obligation to deliver health care, Mr. Speaker; to deliver education and social services, Mr. Speaker; to build highways; to do all of those things that government has a responsibility and an obligation to do, Mr. Speaker. And in addition, we will have a much healthier revenue base to draw from to do those things, Mr. Speaker.

Can you compare SaskEnergy to Alberta Trunk Line of several years ago, Mr. Speaker? Alberta Trunk Line has grown, from something comparable to SaskEnergy today, to a \$10 billion company employing thousands of Albertans, Mr. Speaker, and building and diversifying, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're talking about. Now only a few short years ago, they started to think the same way, and I'm not sure what happened. Their tail got caught in the gate coming out of the chute. But they were talking, Mr. Speaker, about offering to the public shares in these Crown . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Deputy Premier. He talks about a healthier economic base is what's going to be left. You bet you, he says. Well I'll tell you it can't be much worse that it is right now, although I don't think it's going to be any healthier.

My question to you, sir, is this: in the 1986 provincial election campaign, I didn't hear you mention one word to the people of Saskatchewan that you were going to privatize Power. You didn't tell the people of the province of Saskatchewan in the 1986 provincial election one

word that you're going to privatize SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), that you were going to touch the public utilities. You didn't say in the 1986 provincial election that you would privatize the potash corporation or Sask Minerals or anything else. You never campaigned on that. You do not have the mandate to do what you're doing which is destroying SaskPower and the heritage to the province of Saskatchewan. I say to you, let the people decide, call an election on this issue right now. Call an election right now!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. I appreciate the hon. members can get enthusiastic about emotional topics; however, I remind them again that that should not include unparliamentary language from their seats.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that I understand the enthusiasm, particularly of the member for Regina Rosemont. I don't think that he, in an election, the emotional levels of an election scenario, Mr. Speaker, would be that of . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I ask order from the hon. members. I ask order from them as well.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I don't think he'd be campaigning much around Rafferty, in any event, Mr. Speaker. But let's talk about — let's talk about mandates, Mr. Speaker.

I remember, and I was sitting exactly in that chair in 1975, Mr. Speaker, and Bill 1 and Bill 2 of that session, Mr. Speaker, dealt with the nationalization of 50 per cent of the potash industry in this province. Not one word of that nationalization was mentioned in the election campaign of 1975, Mr. Speaker, not one word, but they did it anyway.

Now what happened? What happened subsequently, Mr. Speaker? They had a change of heart, but they didn't tell anybody. But they had this secret little agenda, Mr. Speaker, that they were going to privatize newsprint, privatize market pulp, privatize the heavy oil upgrader, privatize, Mr. Speaker, natural gas. Look at it. It's right there.

Mr. Speaker, natural gas. Look, it's right there. Mr. Speaker, natural gas. Don't talk to me about mandates, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Spill of Oil at Island Falls

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, the look on their faces tells all about whether they think they're winning or losing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I have a question to the same minister, the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan

Power Corporation. Mr. Minister, are you aware that on April 15, 1988 there was a spill of some 250 gallons of transformer oil containing polychlorinated biphenyls, more commonly known as PCBs, Mr. Minister, at the Island Falls generating plant near Sandy Bay, and that the oil leaked into the Churchill River through the plant's drainage system? And can you confirm, Mr. Minister, the minister in charge of the power corporation, can you confirm that this spill was never reported to the Department of the Environment's spill registry?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, the information that the member is presenting to this House is not factual information. It's completely wrong. What actually happened in that spill that the member is recalling from 1988 — and it happened in April of 1988 — there was between 15 and 20 litres of ordinary lubricating oil that leaked from a switch. There were no PCBs in it. It was strictly lubricating oil, and it did leak into the river, which is unsatisfactory.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I will then ask a question of the . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Since the minister in charge of the power corporation, which did not report the spill, because it's not shown in the records of the spill registry which have been thoroughly investigated and checked, Mr. Minister, I will go to the Minister of the Environment and I will ask him whether he is aware of the fact that in fact there were PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) in the oil. And I hold here a report of an analysis done by PPM Canada Inc, PCB management, clean-up and destruction of samples that were taken on that site by my colleague, the member from that area, Cumberland, which showed that in fact there were PCBs in the oil, Mr. Minister. And either you're uninformed, although you should be, or you are misleading the House about this issue. Now . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, the information that the member is trying to put across in this House is not factual. I checked as recently as yesterday on this issue, and the data that was brought forward by the staff in the Department of Environment, in their inspection of that particular spill, indicates that the oil that was spilled was strictly lubricating oil. It was not PCB contaminated. And, Mr. Speaker, any time you have a spill that is under 50 litres of lubricating oil, it is not required to be reported to spill control.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I question the same minister. Mr. Minister, it may very well be lubricating . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order, order. Would the hon. members allow the member from Regina North East to continue with his questioning without vociferous interruptions.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't see that you were up. I just want to repeat that whatever the oil that was there, Mr. Minister, the fact of the matter is — if it's lubricating oil or cooling oil — the fact of the matter is that it had, according to the test results, PCBs in it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now I ask you, Mr. Minister: will you stop this continuous cover-up in your department by yourself, and will you undertake today to put some of your inspectors on an airplane, send them up to Sandy Bay so that there can be an investigation on all of the things that have taken place there, including the fact that there are barrels of PCB-containing oil stored on the site, barrels which are corroding and which have the potential of draining further into the Churchill River and doing more damage? Will you give that undertaking to the House today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, I will assure you again that there was no PCB-contaminated oil spilt into the Churchill River. And as far as the inspection of the site, the site has been thoroughly inspected by the department staff. It was inspected in October and it was inspected again early in the new year; the site is fine.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I just like to ask the hon. members to give the member from Cumberland an opportunity to put his question.

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister. That side of the House doesn't care what happens to environmental . . . (inaudible) . . . in northern Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Would the Minister of Finance please allow the hon. member to put his question.

Order, order, order. Would everybody . . . the member from Meadow Lake, would he also give . . . Order. Order. Let's just everybody relax and allow . . . Order. Let's allow the member from Cumberland to put his question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — These members still don't care what happens to the people in northern Saskatchewan or the workers in northern Saskatchewan in regards to a 250 gallon spill of PCB contaminated oil.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — We're not talking about the lubricating oil spill, we're talking about the PCB spill of 250 gallons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — Is the minister aware that there's been a lot of serious medical health problems, including skin disorders, headaches, and nausea, and many other forms of illnesses that have affected the people from the community and also the workers in that dam.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, I might inform you that the hon. member from Cumberland was given the opportunity to go to the site with the staff from the Department of Environment at the time that they did the tests. And at that time that was found that the oil that was spilled was not PCB-contaminated oil but rather there was between 15 and 20 litres of ordinary lubricating oil. The member is raising an issue that is not factual.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 21 — An Act to amend The Power Corporation Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Power Corporation Act.

The division bells rang from 10:33 a.m. until 1 p.m.

The Speaker: — Order. I have not been notified that the House is ready to proceed with the division currently under way. Therefore, in accordance with past practice, the bells will be turned off and this sitting is suspended until 9 o'clock a.m., Monday, April 24, 1989.

The division bells then continued to ring until 2:08 p.m., Monday, May 8, 1989.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 31

Devine	Pickering
Muller	Martin
Duncan	Toth
McLeod	Sauder
Berntson	Johnson
Lane	McLaren
Taylor	Hopfner
Smith	Swenson
Muirhead	Martens
Maxwell	Baker
Schmidt	Gleim
Hodgins	Neudorf
Gerich	Kopelchuk
Hepworth	Saxinger
Klein	Britton
Meiklejohn	

Nays — 26

Romanow	Solomon
Prebble	Atkinson

Rolfes	Anguish
Shillington	Goulet
Lingenfelter	Hagel
Tchorzewski	Pringle
Koskie	Lyons
Thompson	Calvert
Brockelbank	Lautermilch
Mitchell	Trew
Upshall	Smart
Simard	Van Mulligen
Kowalsky	Koenker

The Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 22 — An Act respecting Saskatchewan Energy Corporation

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting Saskatchewan Energy Corporation.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 31

Devine	Pickering
Muller	Martin
Duncan	Toth
McLeod	Sauder
Berntson	Johnson
Lane	McLaren
Taylor	Hopfner
Smith	Swenson
Muirhead	Martens
Maxwell	Baker
Schmidt	Gleim
Hodgins	Neudorf
Gerich	Kopelchuk
Hepworth	Saxinger
Klein	Britton
Meiklejohn	

Nays — 26

Romanow	Solomon
Prebble	Atkinson
Rolfes	Anguish
Shillington	Goulet
Lingenfelter	Hagel
Tchorzewski	Pringle
Koskie	Lyons
Thompson	Calvert
Brockelbank	Lautermilch
Mitchell	Trew
Upshall	Smart
Simard	Van Mulligen
Kowalsky	Koenker

The Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

(1415)

Bill No. 23 — An Act respecting the Regulation of Rates of Service with Respect to the Distribution of Gas in Saskatchewan by Provincial Gas Limited

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Regulation of Rates of Service with respect to the Distribution of Gas in Saskatchewan by Provincial Gas Limited.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 31

Devine	Pickering
Muller	Martin
Duncan	Toth
McLeod	Sauder
Berntson	Johnson
Lane	McLaren
Taylor	Hopfner
Smith	Swenson
Muirhead	Martens
Maxwell	Baker
Schmidt	Gleim
Hodgins	Neudorf
Gerich	Kopelchuk
Hepworth	Saxinger
Klein	Britton
Meiklejohn	

Nays —26

Romanow	Solomon
Prebble	Atkinson
Rolfes	Anguish
Shillington	Goulet
Lingenfelter	Hagel
Tchorzewski	Pringle
Koskie	Lyons
Thompson	Calvert
Brockelbank	Lautermilch
Mitchell	Trew
Upshall	Smart
Simard	Van Mulligen
Kowalsky	Koenker

The Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Kinistino on his feet?

Mr. Saxinger: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask for leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Saxinger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, 31 grade 7 and 8 students from the Aberdeen School. They are sitting in your gallery. They are accompanied by their teachers, Ross

Graham and Belinda Snow. I will be meeting with them at 3 o'clock for pictures and refreshments, and I would ask all the members to please help welcome the Aberdeen School.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — I, too, ask for leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to guests and members of the Legislative Assembly, a group of students from Robert Usher Collegiate in Regina. There's 14 of them involved in the program of academic and creative enrichment, and I've already met with this group, discussed some of the proceedings that are going on today. I was unable to tell them what is going to transpire from here on in as all the rules seem to be out the window for now. But anyway I enjoyed the meeting with them, and I ask all members to join me in welcoming the group from Robert Usher.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to other members of the . . .

The Speaker: — I assume you are requesting leave to do this?

Mr. Koenker: — Yes.

Leave granted.

Mr. Koenker: — I'd like to introduce to you, and through you, a constituent who is visiting Regina this afternoon, Maxine Wawryk, and I'd ask all members to greet her in the appropriate manner.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lane that **Bill No. 20 — An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan** be now read a second time.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, in resuming the debate on Bill 20, the Bill to sell off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, I want to say what an unusual set of circumstances this is to rise in this House to speak to a Bill without first having subjected the government to questions in question period, without first having had the opportunity to table petitions. The people of Saskatchewan are asking, what are they hiding?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I believe the subject matter is the debate on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order. Order. I am unable to hear the Minister of Finance. I would like the opportunity to do so.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding of the rule is that we're talking about Bill 20, An Act respecting the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. The hon. member has brought in matters not related to the particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest that the hon. member begin to follow the rules of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak to that point of order. I was listening carefully to the member. He had given, I think, one line where he talked about the government not allowing question period today in the Assembly, and presenting of petitions. And I think that that is perfectly in order as part of his comments that he was going to make.

I'm sure that if the minister would wait for more than half a minute to see where the member is going with his speech, he would see where presenting of petitions, when it comes to privatizing corporations in this province, has a great deal to do with the potash corporation.

So I would just say to the member that wait, and once he concludes his remarks about the lack of opportunity to present petitions today and ask questions, that he will in fact get on to the potash issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I have heard the point of order. I would just like to draw this to the attention of the House. There is no room for the introduction of petitions today. Being after 2 o'clock, routine proceedings started where we left off, and therefore we continue from there.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I raised those comments because the people of Saskatchewan are outraged — outraged about this Bill, outraged about privatization. And if there's anything that's clear from the last few weeks, it is that the people of Saskatchewan want no more part of privatization. They want no part of this potash sell-off Bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — They can hide, Mr. Speaker, they can hide behind the skirts of Legislative Assembly rules, but they can't run for ever. And they can hide today and they can try and hide tomorrow, but I tell you, a day of reckoning will come for them. There will be accountability — if not today, if not tomorrow, then there will be during the next provincial election when the people will say no to this Bill, no to this government, no to selling off Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, the Bill that we're addressing is a Bill to sell off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to foreign investors and other big-business investors in Canada. And I guess the question that the people of Saskatchewan have been asking themselves: is this something that we really want? Is this something that we really need? Is this a Bill that will help build the future of this province? Is this a Bill that will deal with the real problems of today?

The real problems of today, Mr. Speaker, are things like unemployment, things like people leaving the province. This government talks about how the privatization, the selling off of Potash is going to help our young people, how it's going to produce jobs. We don't know how that's going to happen. The people of Saskatchewan don't know how that's going to happen. But I tell you, people leaving the province is a real problem in Saskatchewan.

I'd only need to refer you, Mr. Speaker, that in the first three months of this year more than 9,000 people left this province in search of jobs in other jurisdictions, in other provinces. They looked for job opportunities elsewhere. And that's contrasted . . . that's the first three months of this year, as contrasted with 13,000 who left Saskatchewan in all of 1988, or 8,000 who left in all of 1987; more people leaving this province than coming to it in search of jobs and economic opportunities.

And the people of Saskatchewan are asking themselves, how does the sell-off, how does the sell-off of the potash corporation address that? How will it provide jobs for our young people, and especially for our young people? Because it's young people primarily that are leaving Saskatchewan, and leaving it in droves.

And it doesn't deal with the real needs and the real wants of Saskatchewan people. It doesn't address the many problems that beset them. It doesn't deal with the many challenges that they face. The people of Saskatchewan are concerned, not only about unemployment but about agriculture, health care, the economy, the provincial debt.

Yet this Bill, and other privatization Bills that the government is spending so much time on, does not begin to deal with these problems. It doesn't deal with the real issues that face Saskatchewan people. And it's almost as if this government has put a bag over its head and has refused to listen to the people of Saskatchewan, refused to listen to their concerns, refused to address their needs, but has a bag over their head or some blinkers and says, these are the things that we believe in, no matter how irrelevant they may be to the problems facing Saskatchewan today.

That's how we look on this Bill, Mr. Speaker. That's how the people of Saskatchewan look on this Bill. And I will venture to say that if this government carries on, carries on in this vein and with this type of Bill to ignore the people of Saskatchewan, there is just simply no doubt in my mind that come the next provincial election these people will be told they will be turfed out of office.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1430)

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Even in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, even in rural Saskatchewan the people are telling me that the thing that concerns them is the lack of jobs for young people, the drought, the world price of wheat, maintaining the family farm, financing farm debt, the cost of farm inputs, retaining rural services and businesses, the need for farm management training, interest rates. They're telling me that those are the concerns that we have.

And I say to them, but the government is proposing to sell off the potash corporation. I know, they say, but how does that help us? And the answer is that it doesn't help them, Mr. Speaker; it doesn't help them at all. And this government is not only turning its people on all of the people of Saskatchewan, but very much so on the people of rural Saskatchewan who, as we all know, face some real and serious difficulties as they try to grapple with the many challenges they face to get a crop in, to get a crop off, to get it sold, to keep the family farm afloat.

So the people of Saskatchewan are asking themselves, how will this Bill help them? And it doesn't help them, Mr. Speaker; it doesn't help them. This is a Bill that's put forward by an ideologically driven government, a government that only sees its own agenda, knows that it doesn't correspond to the agenda of the people of Saskatchewan, but couldn't care less.

They are in so deep now, Mr. Speaker, they are in so deep, and I guess they're taking to heart the words of their Premier and saying, never say whoa in the middle of a mud hole. But they are in a mud hole. They're in a mud hole of privatization, Mr. Speaker. That's what they're in, and sinking fast.

Mr. Speaker, I would venture to say that if you were to ask the people of Saskatchewan or tell them that the Premier is planning to sell a major portion of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to a foreign company, would you be in favour or opposed to the sale? I would venture to say that three-quarters of the people of Saskatchewan would oppose that; that they oppose the selling off of the potash corporation to foreign investors; they oppose selling off, selling off — very strongly — our assets, our future, our ability to generate profits to help in things like health, education, and social services. That they oppose selling off that ability for the people of Saskatchewan to do that, and that they oppose this government on this sell-off.

Mr. Speaker, I want to look at the Tory record, the PC record, with regards to privatization. And I would point out that this is not something that they really like to talk about very much; that they prefer to talk about the future; that they don't want Saskatchewan people to judge them on their record. Even in this sell-off of the potash corporation, they don't talk about, based on their experience, why it's going to be good thing for Saskatchewan. What they talk about is the future and why it would be a good thing.

They invite Saskatchewan people to ignore the past. They invite Saskatchewan people to ignore the privatization wave which has already taken hold of parts of Saskatchewan and parts of government operations. And they say, well we want you to ignore that; we want you to concentrate on our words and what we promise you for tomorrow.

It was remarkable, remarkable, Mr. Speaker, that when the minister who moved the Bill spoke to the Bill, spoke to it for, I believe, for some 20 minutes — all of 20 minutes. One would have thought that given the magnitude of this Bill, given the massive sell-off of Saskatchewan interests, that the government might be prompted to say more on this particular Bill and why they felt it was so necessary to sell it off, and what their experience has been to suggest that this would be a good move for Saskatchewan people. They didn't do that. No, the minister talked blithely, briefly about things such as a new economic direction building in Saskatchewan and diversifying here; companies building and expanding. That was the minister who moved it.

The Premier puts it even more succinctly. At his big dinner, the "meet the Premier dinner" where the guests were charged \$125 a plate or so, where you had the crème de (la) crème of Saskatchewan society, the big business interests represented, the Premier said this about the future — the Premier said: "We've got a tiger by the tail on a downhill drive and we're going for it." That's to quote the Premier. And one of my colleagues says, well this is a variation on "give 'er snooze, Bruce."

Well if that's all the Premier can say about his potash Bill, that we've got a tiger by the tail on a downhill drive and we're going for it, Mr. Speaker, again I want to say that this is a government that is not proud of its record on privatization, not proud of its record, and will ignore what it has done in the past.

I want to turn to some examples of that, Mr. Speaker, and one I want to turn to, and a very topical one, deals with the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. I want to deal with the record of privatization, what we have experienced in Saskatchewan, and why I think this Bill is a bad Bill, because I have to go on their experience, I have to go on their record, as do the people of Saskatchewan.

And a part of that record, Mr. Speaker, is the sell-off of the SaskPower building in Moose Jaw. In 1988 it was confirmed that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the PC government sold the SaskPower building in Moose Jaw to a local firm for \$280,000 and then entered into an agreement to lease back half of that building, half of the building — not the whole building — lease back half of that building from that same firm for \$37,000 a year plus half the total operating costs of the building for 10 years.

An Hon. Member: — Total \$53,000 a year.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And it works out to \$53,000 a year . . .

An Hon. Member: — For half a building.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — For half a building that the

government sold for \$280,000.

Now this is not something that's made any sense to the people of Moose Jaw, the people of Saskatchewan, but it did seem to make sense to that government, that you take something that you own and you sell it one day for \$280,000, and then turn around and rent half the building back for \$370,000 plus operating costs.

An Hon. Member: — Oh, that's a scam.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — That's a scam, Mr. Speaker, a straightforward, outright scam; either that, or it's another example of their questionable economic policies. I think one that was best . . . or one that we called nerdonomics. Nerdonomics, Mr. Speaker, deriving from the editorial in *The Globe and Mail* which, when commenting on the Bill to sell off the potash corporation, *The Globe and Mail* in an editorial was moved to ask: was this Bill to sell off the potash corporation? And I quote them: "Is this the Waterloo of socialism or the Revenge of the Nerds?"

Well, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House and the people of Saskatchewan are afraid that this is more revenge of the nerds. Another example, if you will, of nerdonomics, where you take something that you have, sell it for a ridiculously low price, and then rent it back for a much higher price, and lose money in the process. Nerdonomics, Mr. Speaker. Nerdonomics — a word that will for ever be associated with this government.

Mr. Speaker, that particular sell-off with the SaskPower building in Moose Jaw, to my mind, ranks high and exemplifies this government's attitude towards its sense of responsibility towards taxpayers' dollars — that they would take something, undervalue it, sell it off, and lose money in the process; rent it back for more than they sold it for. It's just an absolutely ludicrous state of affairs, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely ludicrous.

And it's of course by no means the only example, only example of privatization that we've seen from this government. This is a government that also early on, after it was elected in 1982, decided that it would sell off our Highways' equipment and fire many Highways workers and turn it all over to the private sector. And of course the people of Saskatchewan are in a position to judge for themselves just how effective this government has been in terms of maintaining their highways, or even for that matter of fact, and in terms of improving their highways. It's been a horrible record, Mr. Speaker, as the people of Saskatchewan will attest to.

This is another case, I would submit, of Tory privatization, driven by their philosophy, by their ideology, with no regards as to the effect it might have on the people of Saskatchewan. And certainly, in the case of Highways' equipment, it's very clear that it has not had a good effect on Saskatchewan highways, has not had a good effect on Saskatchewan motorists.

And this is also the government, Mr. Speaker, that when they fired the workers, had all this government-owned equipment, millions and millions and millions of dollars worth of equipment — \$10 million, I believe . . .

An Hon. Member: — No, no, 14.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Fourteen million dollars worth of equipment, and then attempted to sell it all off in one day in a market that was at that time already glutted with equipment of that sort; took the position that we're best off to sell it all in one day. And lo and behold!, Mr. Speaker, they got 10 cents on the dollar. Then instead of selling \$14 million worth of equipment for \$14 million, they sold it for \$140,000 — more nerdonomics, Mr. Speaker, more nerdonomics.

I don't think that the people of Saskatchewan will forget, if only because it's more recent, the sell-off of Sask Minerals. This is a mineral company just outside of Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker, that since it's inception in the late '40s, mid-'40s, has returned a profit, a dividend to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, with the exception, I believe, of one year. Every year has shown a profit, profits that have been able to go back into the general revenues to help the government of the day to either keep taxes down or to have money available for things such as health care spending and education spending — general government spending.

Now I think the people of Saskatchewan know that those are not things that this government values highly, because as you look at their privatization and then look at sort of the government's record, you get an idea here of rapidly escalating taxes over the years, and rapidly de-escalating quality of services for the people of Saskatchewan. That's this government's record.

Now one would think that if you had a part of your operations that was able to make some money, that you would retain that, that you would retain those profits to help you in your general operations. But that's not the approach that this government has taken. They sold it off for virtually no profit, and there's a big dispute about what the profit actually was. There seems to be a half a million dollars missing. But money being missing is not something that surprises us with this government, Mr. Speaker — nothing that surprises us.

And incidentally, as another concern we have as they head into privatization and selling off things, it's a question of who they sell it to and where the money goes. And I'll deal with that later, Mr. Speaker, but that is a very grave concern, a very grave concern of the people on this side of the House and a very grave concern of the people of Saskatchewan, that as this government sells off government operations, the money somehow ends up in the pockets of their friends. That is a concern that the people of Saskatchewan have. That is a fear that they have.

I want to just mention another example of privatization, of a government deciding to end a government operation and turn it over to the private sector. Because again this is part of the privatization record by which this government must be judged, by which the people of Saskatchewan must be able to decide now whether or not the potash Bill should be supported or whether it should not be supported.

One cannot simply take the vague statements of: we're

building here and we're planning there and diversifying here, and we've got a tiger by the tail there, and we're going on a downhill drive there. We can't take those kinds of assurances from this government, Mr. Speaker, take those kinds of assurances, and on that basis pass judgement on this Bill. We must, as in an election campaign, we must look at the government's record. We must not only look at what it is that they're planning to do, but what it is that they've done — what it is that they've done.

(1445)

And in that context I want to talk about the dental program, the children's dental program. Because I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that that is another example, another example of privatization in Saskatchewan. And it's a privatization, I would submit, that has not been supported by the people of Saskatchewan. The people of Saskatchewan see it as a wrong kind of move to make. Because here we had a program that hired hundreds — hundreds — of dental therapists who were situated in communities around Saskatchewan, living and working in those communities. And the government decided that, well, we'll fire all those people. We'll fire all those people because we want the work that they've been doing to go to dentists, and suggesting that because they fired those 300 people, and basically saying to hundreds of communities that you're no longer going to have a dental therapist living there; saying to those communities that you need not worry because the slack will be taken up by private dentists; that private dentists will now move to each and every small community in Saskatchewan; and that this is better, better than dental therapists.

Well we know the record, Mr. Speaker, and that is important. And that is what I'm encouraging people to examine and to look at — the record of this government when it comes to privatization. We know that the record of the children's dental program was anything but what the government said or what they promised it would be.

So I want to make this clear for the public, to take very carefully what this government says about what it is they're doing and how it's going to be good for our future; how it's going to be good for the future of the young children in Saskatchewan; how it's going to be good for our economy, to put that into some context of what it is that they've done in the past, because the record does not support their statements today.

The record does not support the statement of the Minister of Finance who moved this Bill and who talked about a new economic direction; about building in Saskatchewan and diversifying here; about companies building and expanding. And I sometimes wonder . . . and of the course the Premier, about a tiger by the tail on a downhill drive and we're going for it.

Because the record is something else. The record is anything but an economy going on a downhill . . . well it might be going on a downhill drive, Mr. Speaker, but it's anything but an economy that's picking up speed, if that is what the Premier intended to say in his remarks. This is anything but an economy that's picking up speed; that privatization or the selling off of the potash corporation

does not suggest to us or the people of Saskatchewan that the economy will pick up speed. In fact I think the contrary is true.

I think that the people of Saskatchewan get more of a sense that this has been a government that is characterized by pushing a rope up a hill — very difficult and very slow — and getting nowhere, Mr. Speaker. That's the record of this government when it comes to the economy, and it's by that record that this government must be judged.

It's by that record that people must look at the sell-off of the potash corporation and decide for themselves as to whether or not this is a good thing, because the people of Saskatchewan know. And I would say, Mr. Speaker, it accounts for, at least in some recent public opinion polls, why the majority of Saskatchewan people oppose the sell-off of the potash corporation to foreign interests. They're opposed to that because the people of Saskatchewan have caught on to your record; they've caught on to the PC record. They know that the PC record of privatization has not meant prosperity and a better future and a more diversified economy. The PC record of privatization has meant higher taxes, lower services, greater unemployment, reduced economic opportunities. That is the result of PC privatization, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this, as I suggested at the outset, is a government that's driven by their ideological agenda, and by that I mean a government which has its own fixed ideas, fixed ideas about how the Saskatchewan economy should operate, about how the government should operate. It's an idea that's as old as the hills; it's an idea that was born in 17th and 18th century capitalism, an idea that the government has no responsibility, no role except to put some minor constraints on the barons of industry as they set out to make profits for themselves, and that somehow this kind of capital leadership will provide for all of the people of the province. Of course, that's not something that we've seen here. That's not something either, Mr. Speaker, that we've seen in Great Britain.

And I refer to Great Britain, Mr. Speaker, because this government's ideas about the economy, this government's ideology about the economy and the role of government is, to a very great extent, borrowed, borrowed from the Maggie Thatcher Conservative government of Great Britain — a government that has over the years presided over a massive increase in unemployment, a massive de-investment in the British economy, a massive decrease in services for the public, and a wilful, rigid, harmful, cruel Conservative ideology and manner of operating government; a philosophy, I suppose, that is best characterized by first come, first served, Mr. Speaker; that if you're wealthy and powerful and you're able to elbow your way to the front of the line, well then you'll get the best services in terms of health care in Great Britain; that if you can afford . . . if you can afford the very best in health care, then you'll get that. But if you're poor, if you're dispossessed and you cannot afford the very best, then it's the back of the line — and I might say, the back of a very long line — in Great Britain in terms of gaining access to government services, services that, I might say, in Saskatchewan we take for

granted; take for granted because we see them as a basic right; services such as health care, which we perceive to be a basic right of Saskatchewan people, that everyone should have equal access to those services.

The Conservative government of Great Britain, which this government looks to for leadership in Bills such as the potash sell-off, that governments such as the one in Great Britain takes a different approach; that again if you have the money you can be first come, first served; if you don't have the money, it's the back of the line.

And that is an ideology, Mr. Speaker, that is foreign to the people of Saskatchewan. It's not something that the people of Saskatchewan want. It's something that they've rejected and it's something that surely, come the next provincial election, that they will say to this government that notwithstanding your massive advertising campaigns, bought for and paid for with their own money to try and convince us otherwise, we see through, we see through the charade. We see through what it is that you're saying. We will have no part of it, and we will vote you out in this provincial election campaign.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I talked earlier about how this privatization would help the people of Saskatchewan, and I think I made it clear that the people of Saskatchewan don't see it as helping them; that the people of Saskatchewan have far different needs, far different challenges than the government proposes to spend time on; that the people of Saskatchewan are crying out for leadership on things such as the economy, are crying out for leadership on a number of issues.

An Hon. Member: — Why weren't you out in the legislature?

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And the member asks, why weren't we in the legislature? Well I want to ask the member, if that's his case, why was it that the government refused to subject to question period? Why was it that the member and his government refused to allow us to table petitions? Why is it that the member, why is it that that member and that government refused to come forward today with an Interim Supply Bill so that we might vote the money that's needed to support government services and programs? Where were you? Where were you?

Where are the farm Bills? Where were the farm Bills that the people of rural Saskatchewan had been desperately crying out for? Where is the tangible, tangible support that the people of rural Saskatchewan need in their hour of need?

Where are the Bills to help small business? Where are the Bills to help young people who are being driven from this province, who are desperate, desperate, Mr. Speaker, who need jobs, who need jobs so that they can have some kind of future? Where was the government legislation to help them? Why haven't you provided that? Where has it been? Why haven't you spoken directly to the needs of Saskatchewan people? Why are you ignoring them? Why are you proceeding with your own agenda in selling off the Potash Corporation to foreign investors?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — The member asks questions about priorities and needs. I want to remind the member that he was on the radio show this morning, "The Action Line," and that he received 12 phone calls — the radio show in Weyburn. And of the 12 phone calls, 11 were opposed, 11 were opposed to his government's privatization agenda. Only one could be found to support him. Only one could be found to support him.

So, Mr. Speaker, when members opposite ask about priorities, we also ask about priorities. And I would suppose, Mr. Speaker, that the two main priorities in this province are not being addressed by this government now. They say that the two main priorities are something that will be addressed by selling off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

That's the message that you're giving to the people of Saskatchewan, that when it comes to rural Saskatchewan and the needs that people have, when it comes to the lack of jobs for young people in rural Saskatchewan, the drought, the world price of wheat, maintaining the family farm, financing farm debt, the cost of farm inputs, rural services and businesses — this government has turned a blind eye.

This government has said that it's more important for us, more important for us to proceed with a Bill to take up the time of the Legislative Assembly and to take up the time of the people of Saskatchewan to talk about a Bill to sell off — sell off — the potash corporation as if this is somehow going to deal with the crisis in rural Saskatchewan.

There is no greater crisis in Saskatchewan today. There is no greater crisis than what is happening in rural Saskatchewan. You were supposed to be the friends of rural Saskatchewan. This is a government that supposedly built a reputation on helping the people in rural Saskatchewan. Now you've turned your backs on them; you ignore them. You want to deal instead with your agenda of selling off everything in Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that this reputation of being the friends of rural Saskatchewan is one that's worn thin, that it's only a veneer. I think this is a caucus, a PC government caucus and a cabinet that sits around and they tell each other every day about what a good job it is that we're doing for rural Saskatchewan. And they're too busy telling each other what a great job it is that they're doing, too busy doing that as opposed to listening to the people of rural Saskatchewan to get some sense of what it is that people want.

And the people of Saskatchewan want you to come forward with legislation, with a program to address the crisis in rural Saskatchewan. And what have you given them? You've given them Bills. You've given them Bills to sell off the potash corporation and more Bills to sell off the power corporation, and you say that that's going to help rural Saskatchewan.

Well I have news for you that that is not going down well with the people of rural Saskatchewan. And the people of

rural Saskatchewan oppose you — oppose you most strongly — in what it is that you're doing. And they oppose you strongly too, in speaking to this Bill, they oppose you strongly in the selling off of the potash corporation, because they perceive this to be a sell-off to foreign interests.

(1500)

And I suppose the people of Saskatchewan, more so than any other group in rural Saskatchewan, understand the importance of ownership, in that ownership gives you some levers in terms of manipulating your own future, in terms of building your future as opposed to being a tenant, or to being someone who simply rents and has no say in that future. The people of rural Saskatchewan understand that, and I think is one of the reasons that, more so than any other group in Saskatchewan, they oppose your government; they oppose your government in selling off the potash corporation to foreign interests.

They oppose it strongly because they understand what it's like to not have any farm land, to have that sold out from under them. They know that you have no future unless you have some form of ownership in rural Saskatchewan, and that is something that you people don't understand. And that is something that the people of Saskatchewan, of rural Saskatchewan, oppose you most strongly on.

You know, this government is one that, again, invites people to look at their statements . . . at a time that they introduce a Bill such as this and then ask you to take their statements at face value, because their statements are about how good things will be if this Bill goes through, and that that's an accurate representation, an accurate representation of events to come.

Well we've had a lot of this, Mr. Speaker. We've had a lot of this government saying one day that somehow things are going to be miraculously better. And that's simply not turning out to be the case. I don't think that there's one person watching the legislative proceedings on the television today and listening to this debate on the sell-off on a potash corporation, I don't think that there is one person watching who does not remember that shortly after the election of the PC government in 1982 that the Premier was running around and saying, we're open for business; we're open for business, as if somehow the province was closed to business before; as if somehow there was nothing happening in Saskatchewan before that. But with the election of the PC government, notwithstanding how well things were going in 1982, things were going to be even better yet.

I think the Premier even made comments to the effect that we can afford — by "we", meaning the Conservative government and himself — that we can afford to mismanage the economy and still come out ahead. But he said, we're open for business, and if we're doing well now, we're going to do even better tomorrow.

But that did not turn out to be the case. Things went the other way. We went downhill, Mr. Speaker; we went rapidly downhill. And when he found that to talk about we're open for business wasn't succeeding, he came out with other lines.

He started to talk about, well, we're going to build and diversify the economy. Forget about we're open for business; we're now going to build and diversify. And what has happened? What has happened, Mr. Speaker?

I think the statistics speak for themselves, that while the Premier was talking in 1986 in the election campaign about building and diversifying and painting a rosy picture of what Saskatchewan might be like and inviting the people of Saskatchewan to ignore the immediate past, inviting them to ignore the record — and I might say that is not something that the people of Saskatchewan will do again. They will not ignore the government's record again, because in the next election the government's record will be very much, very much a part of the agenda, and it's because of that record that the people of Saskatchewan will defeat them in the next provincial election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — But I want to just go back to the Premier's words when he talked about, we're going to build and diversify; we're going to build fertilizer plants here; we're going to build chemical plants here; we're going to build a pharmaceutical plant here; we're going to build this in Swift Current; we're going to do this there; we're going to do all these wonderful things for you, the people of Saskatchewan. Just believe me, just trust me, he says.

Well, you know it's difficult, it's difficult at the best of times for the public to judge, to judge a record, but there's some basic facts, some basic facts that they can turn to which will tell them how well the Saskatchewan economy is doing and whether or not we're improving or whether or not things are getting worse.

And I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that one indication of that record, one indication of that record, and I think a valid one on which the people to judge . . . for the people to judge this government, is the matter of out-migration. And the record . . . Now I want to take us back to 1986 and the provincial election, after of course 1982 and where the Premier talked about: we're open for business and things are going to get better. And when he found out that that wasn't the case, he said the next election, well we got to use different words, so we're going to talk about building and diversifying.

And he talked a lot about building and diversifying and how things are going to get better. But I wanted to point out to you that in 1987, shortly after he said those words that things are going to get better, 8,000 more people left the province than came to the province in search of jobs, in search of economic opportunities — 8,000. The net out-migration, 8,000 people. Now they might say, well obviously we didn't have enough time, we didn't have enough time for our program of building and diversifying all over the place to take hold. We didn't have enough time to get the message out and for the various sectors to respond. Surely there would be progress.

Well if the progress was to be one year later, I want to point out that the net out-migration was 13,000 people,

Mr. Speaker — that 13,000 more people left Saskatchewan in 1988 than came to Saskatchewan in search of jobs and economic opportunities. So in '86 he said: the future is unfolding before us; we're going to build and diversify and everything's going to get better. And in '87, 8,000 more people left the province than came to the province looking for jobs. And in 1988, 13,000 more people left Saskatchewan than came to Saskatchewan looking for jobs.

Well, they say, you're not patient enough; you haven't waited long enough. Well, Mr. Speaker, the record, the record in 1989, this year, gives us all great cause for concern because in the first three months of this year 9,000 people — 9,000 people, more people — left Saskatchewan than came to Saskatchewan in search of jobs and economic opportunities — 9,000 in the first three months alone.

We will set a new record; we will set a new record in Saskatchewan for people leaving the province in search of jobs. We will set a new record this year. Not since the 1930s will we witness a year like this one, in terms of people leaving. And this is from a government that invites you to take their words at face value, from a government who says, ignore what's happened in the past, concentrate on our words for the future, and take that as some real indication of what might happen and what the future might hold.

Well it just doesn't wash. It just doesn't wash, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan have been fooled enough; they won't be fooled again. This is a government that believes it can fool all of the people all of the time, but the people of Saskatchewan are saying, you might have fooled us a couple of times but you won't fool us again, and you might have fooled us in 1982 and you might have pulled another trick out of the bag in 1986.

But I invite you, I invite this government in the next election to run again on the future, to talk about how well things might be in the future, and I invite you to ignore the past because we will lose no opportunity to remind the people of Saskatchewan of your sorry, dismal record and invite them to make a choice on that basis. And I think the answer will be: out goes the Conservatives, in come the New Democrats. It's time for a new tomorrow!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Weyburn might well talk from his seat again. I'm sure he doesn't want to talk from the chair in the radio studio again because the response there for his government's record is a dismal one. His response there for selling off Saskatchewan has not found a supportive audience, neither has this government's message generally for selling off Saskatchewan, for selling off the potash corporation, for selling off the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. These initiatives of selling everything off have simply not met with positive response from the people of Saskatchewan.

I think most people of Saskatchewan are aware of a poll that was taken by the Angus Reid corporation, Mr. Speaker. And just to emphasize the depth of feeling on the

part of Saskatchewan people, the depth of feeling on the part of Saskatchewan people about selling off their province, I want to review some of the results of that Angus Reid survey just in case there are some people out there who aren't aware of what the results were.

And just in case the government couldn't afford to get a subscription to the daily paper to find out what the results were, I want to just briefly go through some of the results. And not just with respect to the potash corporation, or the sell-off of the potash corporation, but more generally about questions about privatization, Mr. Speaker, because I think it shows, I think it shows very clearly the depth of feeling that Saskatchewan people have about any perceived attempts by this government to sell off their heritage and to sell out their future.

One of the questions that was asked in this poll, Mr. Speaker, is that people were asked: overall would you say you personally support or oppose the Saskatchewan government's plans to privatize SaskEnergy by making a public offering of shares in the company? Well, Mr. Speaker, we know that 67 per cent of the people oppose this government, 67 per cent of the people oppose the government in their plans to sell off the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, to privatize SaskEnergy.

And that's something that, you know, that this government is never really fully honest when it comes to describing things because in that particular case they talk about privatizing SaskEnergy or selling shares in SaskEnergy and say, well it's got nothing to do with SaskPower. Well they may fool themselves, they may fool themselves, but they do not fool the people of Saskatchewan who understand that SaskEnergy is no more than a part of SaskPower. And they can't fool them.

The other question I wanted to turn to, Mr. Speaker, is the question that was asked about: what about the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan; did you support or oppose that policy decision? And here is the results, Mr. Speaker.

The results are that overall, 50 per cent, 50 per cent oppose, oppose the sell-off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan; 28 per cent, 28 per cent support the government in selling off the potash corporation.

Now earlier I talked that there was a slight difference here between rural Saskatchewan ... (inaudible interjection) ... And I'll give the member for Wilkie an opportunity to get on his feet and to participate in the debate, and I might say that would be very welcome, because in this debate, this debate has been characterized by their silence; this debate has been characterized by a mover who spoke for 20 minutes about a fundamental, vital decision that has grave consequences for the people of Saskatchewan. And the other members have sat on their fannies and have sat silently except to heckle from their seats, but not to stand in their place — not to stand in their place — and to defend what it is that they're doing.

And I say to the member for Wilkie, I say to the member from Shaunavon, and I say to the other members, get up from your seats; get up in this Assembly; defend what it is that you're doing; explain to the people of Saskatchewan

why you want to sell off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to foreign interests. Explain that if you will.

(1515)

But please do more than simply sit in your seats and disagree with what is being said. This Assembly gives you the opportunity to rise in your place and to make your comments and to defend your actions, unpopular as they may be.

And getting back to that, Mr. Speaker, the question was asked about the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, and did you support or oppose that policy decision. And we know that 50 per cent opposed, opposed the privatization and the sell-off of the potash corporation; 28 per cent supported it. But now here's . . . The interesting thing, Mr. Speaker, is this: that 50 per cent, that these are a group of people who claim to represent all of Saskatchewan and ignore the fact that people in urban and rural Saskatchewan simply oppose, oppose very strongly, what it is that they're doing.

And I think it's reflected . . . as well as, in terms of whether or not they approve or disapprove of the actions of the Premier and the actions of my leader, the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Riversdale, where people are asked: do you approve, or do you generally approve or disapprove of the way each leader has handled himself in these debates. And when it's asked of the Premier, 50 per cent say we disapprove, 40 per cent say we approve. But when it comes to the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Riversdale, 58 per cent say we approve; 58 per cent say we approve of the actions of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to the Premier. And this is a Premier that was supposed to be so popular with the people of Saskatchewan, but I don't know.

I suppose that the people of Saskatchewan have finally, finally caught on to his act, and they finally made a decision and have come to the conclusion that a Premier has to be able to do more than cheer-lead. A Premier has to do more than simply run around like a cheer-leader waving his flags and saying: golly gee, we're open for business; we're going to build and diversify; we got a tiger by the trail on a downhill drive and we're going for it; don't say whoa in a mud hole; give her snoose, Bruce; that I want you to ignore the past; I want you to ignore the government's record; I want you to ignore that. Just treat it as if it were some black hole and it doesn't exist. It's not there. I want you to share my vision of the future. I want you to concentrate on the days ahead. Don't look at what we've done here; that's just nothing. Don't look at that, but look at the future with us and look at my words and what it is that we're saying. Look at what I'm saying about building and diversifying.

Well I think the people of Saskatchewan have finally caught on, finally caught on. Now the Premier may be able to go to China or India or Japan or South Korea and all those places; he might be able to go to all those places, Mr. Speaker, and talk there about giving her snoose and going downhill on a tiger and all that kind of stuff. He might be able to explain things in his optimism, in his own inimitable fashion there, but I think that he's worn out his welcome with the people of Saskatchewan.

The people of Saskatchewan know that there's more than simply words that are required from a true leader, that a leader to be successful has to show good action, that there has to be a positive record. And they don't see any positive record when it comes to that government; not with that sorry bunch, Mr. Speaker.

No, Mr. Speaker. The results of that poll, the results of that poll where it suggests that the public opinion and the approval rating of the Premier is greatly reduced, greatly reduced, it is simply no surprise to us any more, who have to put up with his shenanigans in the House. This we in the opposition know, know more than most, how difficult it is to get the Premier to speak in English, to say things that are clear and straightforward, so that he might be judged by what he said. I think the *Leader-Post* put it best the other day that the Premier's a master of talking his way around anything and everything. And we certainly agree with that, that the Premier is a master of speaking his way around things.

But it'll be interesting to see how he speaks his way around this sell-off of the potash corporation to foreign interests. It'll be interesting to see how he explains that one in clear, straightforward English to the people of Saskatchewan.

And will he explain it to them in clear, straightforward terms? Will he say, I invite you to look at my record as a Premier; hold my head up high and say, look at my record, and on that basis judge what might happen with the new sell-off or the new privatized potash corporation? Or will he mumble again and talk around things and say, well, look at the future; don't look at the past; don't judge my record; look at my words. That's what the Premier will likely end up doing. That's his record in this House.

And we as an opposition know that very firmly, Mr. Speaker, because we rise in our place every day, with the exception of today, to ask the Premier questions, to ask him questions to explain to the people of Saskatchewan his government's policies and his programs, and to answer questions about government's action. And he speaks around them, and he refuses to answer.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would not be surprised, in fact I feel very strongly and I would go out on a limb to make the prediction that when the next election rolls around, this government is finished. This is a government that's gone, and this is a government will not come back. This is not like the cat in the award-winning National Film Board cartoon, the cat that went away, but came back. They thought he was a goner, they thought he was a goner, but the cat came back. Well they won't be saying that about the PC Government after the next election, Mr. Speaker.

So earlier, Mr. Speaker, I talked about how this sell-off of the potash corporation, how this sell-off of the potash corporation would help the people of Saskatchewan. And I suggested that the people of Saskatchewan were of the opinion that this sell-off of the potash corporation would not deal with the major issues facing them, and the major ways in which a government might be able to respond to their needs in a tangible way.

Again, number one, is the farm crisis. This is a government that had the opportunity in the many days preceding this one in this session to come forward with legislation to help the people on the farm, to help the family farm, but didn't do that. Instead they came with legislation to sell off everything.

This is a government too, Mr. Speaker, that had the opportunity to come forward with legislation that might put into place programs that would provide some job opportunities, employment opportunities, for young people in Saskatchewan. But it chose not to do that. In fact, if you look at their budget, it has chosen to go the other way. It has chosen to cut funding for programs that might provide job opportunities for young people. They've cut spending for the Opportunities student summer employment program by 22 per cent in their budget.

And I say to them, if you want to get on with the business of this province, get on with the business of this province, withdraw this sell-off Bill, withdraw this sell-off Bill and come forward with an interim supply, come forward with an interim supply so that we might vote more money, vote more money for youth employment programs to put young people to work in Saskatchewan.

That's what we would like to do, Mr. Speaker, but it's not something that has made any impression on the government. It's not something that they see as a priority. And a priority must be judged by what it is that the government does, not by what it is that they say they might do.

And to judge by this legislative session, to judge by the legislation that they've put forward, their priorities are to sell off everything. Their very first Bill, the very first Bill, Mr. Speaker, introduced in this legislative session — now was that a Bill to help farmers with interest rates? Was that a Bill to help farmers with input costs? Was that a Bill to help with the farm debt? Was that a Bill to help young people find jobs in Saskatchewan?

No, Mr. Speaker, this was a Bill about privatization, a Bill about selling everything off. That set the tone for this session. This will for ever be known as the sell-off session when the government's ideological agenda became clear, and that is to sell off, sell off everything that the people of Saskatchewan own as quickly, as rapidly, and as much as possible. That's their agenda for this session, Mr. Speaker. It sure isn't to deal with the farm crisis, and it sure isn't to deal with the unemployment crisis that young people are facing in Saskatchewan.

So the people of Saskatchewan are puzzled. They're wondering how it is that this particular Bill to sell off the potash corporation will help them or how any of the sell-off Bills will help them, how the Bills to privatize everything is going to improve things.

But I bet you one thing, Mr. Speaker, I bet you one thing, and that is that somewhere along the lines these sell-offs will help some of their friends. These sell-offs will help some of their friends. That's something that the people of Saskatchewan also believe.

And that's not a question that was asked in any poll, but I would venture to say that if you were to ask the people of Saskatchewan, if you were to ask them one of the questions — and while the Premier is writing questions, so will we — one of the questions might be: do you believe that friends of the PC Party will benefit from the sell-off of Saskatchewan assets?

I would venture to say the majority of people will agree with that; that they agree that there's something rotten back there; that when they sell off these things to their friends that somehow there's going to be some benefit for the PCs. That's something that the people of Saskatchewan believe. And you can bet, Mr. Speaker, you can bet that somehow, somewhere, some friends of the PCs and the PCs will benefit from this sell-off of Saskatchewan asset.

Mr. Speaker, like the reason that I come to that conclusion, the reason I come to that conclusion is by looking at their party in the very recent past, not just in Saskatchewan but across this country. And when you look at the PC Party, not only here in Saskatchewan but in Ontario and Quebec and other parts of the country, you will come to the conclusion, as I have, that the PC Party, the PC Party in recent years is a party that's known for crooks, grifters, and con artists. Grifters, Mr. Speaker, with a "g." A swindler if you like, Mr. Speaker. That's what this party is — a party of crooks and swindlers. That's what it's become known as.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster — why is he on his feet?

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think if you've been listening to the member opposite from Regina Victoria, he's been accusing members on this side of the House of being crooks and, etc., swindlers . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — . . . and I would suggest, although I had to repeat those words, I will not be repeating those words in the future, but I'm going to ask the Chair to ask the member from Regina Victoria to withdraw those unparliamentary remarks and apologize to the members opposite.

(1530)

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. A point of order has been raised by the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster. I find that the language is unparliamentary, and I would ask the member from Regina Victoria to apologize to the House. Order. I'd ask the member to apologize.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I'm not sure which words I should apologize for.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member for Regina Victoria specifically said the government members were crooks and swindlers, so I'd ask the member to apologize.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I said that the PC Party were well-known for crooks and . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I asked the member for an unequivocal apology.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I certainly would apologize if I meant to imply that the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster or any . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. You implied the members of the government. I'd ask the member for an unequivocal apology.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Okay, Mr. Speaker, I'll apologize.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear, I want to make it clear why it is that the people of Saskatchewan think and know that this party, the PC Party, is an unsavoury bunch. They know that this party, the PC Party, is unsavoury; that there have been far too many PC Party members, elected and otherwise, that have been caught on the other side of the law in recent years. That's something that they know from the record, Mr. Speaker.

Now you can use whatever words one wants to apply to that. You can use whatever words you want, but the fact remains that too many members of the PC Party have been caught on the wrong side of the law.

I want to just draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, and I put this in the context of the people of Saskatchewan are not only looking at the potash Bill and what it means, but what might happen as a result of that Bill and who benefits, where some of the money might go.

They have a very clear impression of their federal counterparts, a very clear impression of their federal counterparts where cabinet ministers, federal cabinet ministers, resigned for reasons ranging from violation of conflict of interest guide-lines to criminal charges of bribery and fraud. That's the federal cabinet, the federal PC Party. They're all part of that; they're all part of that same PC Party. They will remember names such as André Bissonnette. They will remember names such as Michel Côté who was fired, who was fired as minister of Supply and Services for failing to disclose personal loans . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Hopfner: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't know if the members opposite . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Does the member have a point of order?

Mr. Hopfner: — I'm speaking on my point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't know if the member opposite realizes, but he's way off track on the public participation of the potash Bill. And I would ask you to make a ruling and get him back on track, because if you would go back in verbatim you'd know he is not on the Bill whatsoever.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address this because I suspect that this may arise again. The member from Regina Victoria was speaking to the reasons why this Bill was being brought forward and the ends to which the Bill will serve. That is in order, Mr.

Speaker, and I suggest that the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd's point is not well taken. Members can always talk about the ends being served by the Bill and what means are intended to be attained, and that's all the member from Regina Victoria was doing.

The Deputy Speaker: — I've been listening very closely to the debate and the member has been relating to the points he was making, so I would say the point of order is not well taken.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've always taken the position that if the shoe fits, wear it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, again I want to deal with the impression that Saskatchewan people have, not only of this Bill but generally of privatization, the concerns that they have with this PC government as it attempts to sell off their assets, that they have a sense of a government and a PC Party that has had too many members operating on the wrong side of the law; that they have a sense that the PC Party will find ways to benefit from this privatization; that the friends of the PC Party will find ways to benefit from this privatization, and is one of the reasons that they're opposed, opposed to the sell-off of the potash corporation, as they are opposed to the sell-off of all Saskatchewan assets.

And I went on because . . . I went on to name some of the federal cabinet ministers, the PC Party, who are well known to the people of Saskatchewan, people such as Michel Côté who was fired as minister of Supply and Services for failing to disclose personal loans; Sinclair Stevens who was found to have violated conflict of interest guide-lines 14 times while industry minister — industry minister, and this Bill is about industry, Mr. Speaker, very much about industry — or Tory MP Michel Gravel, Mr. Speaker, who went to trial on 50 charges including breach of trust, fraud against the government, and bribery, Mr. Speaker, a PC member, a member of the Progressive Conservative Party.

And that's not all, Mr. Speaker; there have been other instances in the news of late. I refer you to the *Leader-Post* of February 22, 1989, where it is shown that a PC riding president has been charged, has been charged with fraud and bribery in connection with his contacts with government officials. It says that:

Suburban business man Joseph Hamelin has been ordered to appear in court May 8 in South Shore, Longueuil, to answer the charges, Crown attorney Marcel Patenaude said Tuesday.

And it says here that Hamelin is past president of the federal Progressive Conservative St-Hubert riding association and former president of the party's Chamblis association.

And he's accused of having defrauded the federal government by using, for electoral purposes, people hired under a federal program to establish an air ambulance network. The charges say people paid under the federally subsidized program were put to work by

Hamelin going over voters lists.

Well isn't that a cute little indictment on the PC Party, Mr. Speaker.

And here's another one, again in the *Leader-Post*, where a former MP pleads not guilty. This is concerning former member of parliament Edouard Desrosiers, who pleaded not guilty Tuesday to charges of fraud, breach of trust, and using forged documents. These charges against Desrosiers, who held the east-end Montreal riding of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve for the Tories from 1984 to 1988, were laid after a three-month investigation by the RCMP.

And we turn to the *Leader-Post* of April 15, Mr. Speaker, where it says, "MP faces corruption charges." Corruption charges, Mr. Speaker, where:

Conservative MP Richard Grisé was charged Friday with three counts of fraud and eight counts of breach of trust in connection with alleged kickback schemes involving federal government contracts and cheques, police said. The three fraud charges, involving a total of \$4,000, and three counts of breach of trust are related to a kickback scheme in which the MP is alleged to have had employees from a friend's company put on a federal payroll, court documents say.

Mr. Speaker, this is shameful. It's an indictment on the PC Party.

You know, there is also Saskatchewan PCs, such as Geoff Wilson, the Member of Parliament for Swift Current. You know, this is a case of where a man has gone to jail supposedly for accepting bribes. Supposedly for accepting bribes to do certain work, a man has gone to jail; bribes that were provided by this member of parliament. Except they don't call it bribes; they say these are payments. And he gets off scot-free. Well not scot-free; he's been fined by his own law society, Mr. Speaker — fined \$10,000 by his law society for operating outside of the ethics becoming a lawyer in Saskatchewan. A Saskatchewan PC, Mr. Speaker. Under-the-table payments, no less, Mr. Speaker, under-table payments — bribery.

How many times have we mentioned that word — bribery and corruption, Mr. Speaker, conflict of interest. Of course there are other people I don't want to talk about who don't deal with bribery and corruption; people such as the PC member of the legislature in Winnipeg who was sent to jail for pushing drugs on young children. And of course our very own very sad case of Colin Thatcher, the PC member who was sent to jail for murder, Mr. Speaker.

But I did want to draw to the attention of members opposite that you have a real problem of perception here with the Saskatchewan public, that if somehow you think you can sell off these things and hide the fact that somehow this isn't going to find its way into the PC Party's friends' pockets, that you've not been very successful. Because the perception out there is that as you attempt to sell off Saskatchewan assets, that your friends are going to benefit. Your friends always benefit.

And I suppose you believe that you should benefit your friends — friends such as Peter Pocklington, Mr. Speaker. Speaking of privatization, this is a big friend of the PC Party, one who has benefitted very much from PC economic diversification initiatives. And this potash sell-off is something that they call an economic diversification.

Well again I want the people of Saskatchewan to review the record, review the record of what it is that this government has done to diversify the economy. And I want to bring their attention again to one Peter Pocklington who's been given millions, millions of taxpayers' dollars to diversify the economy in Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — What is the member's point of order?

Mr. Hopfner: — Mr. Speaker, this point that the member from Regina Victoria has brought forward to this floor of the legislature in this debate makes no sense to the Bill that we're debating here on the floor of the legislature. And I'd ask you for you to put him back on track please. It has absolutely nothing to do with Peter Pocklington or anybody else; it's to do with public participation of the potash Bill. And I would ask you to rule, sir.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member for Regina Centre, I would suggest to, Mr. Speaker, is dealing with the Bill. The member for Regina Victoria — I'm sorry. The member for Regina Victoria is suggesting that members opposite are too prone to act out of self-interest and too slow to put the public interest first. Now the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd may not agree with that point, but it was put, I think, in parliamentary language, and it's certainly on point. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, the member's on point and ought to be allowed to continue without the repeated interjections of the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd.

(1545)

The Speaker: — I've listened to the point of order, and let me just say this in answer to it. Certain latitude is granted members when they're speaking on a Bill; however, at the same time I believe hon. members should keep in mind that there are limits, that what they are saying should be related to the Bill that they are discussing. And we can't assume that if member talks for 15 minutes or half an hour or whatever, you know, on some peripheral topic, that eventually it will be related. I think that it should be clear to the hon. members that the issue the member is dealing with is related to the Bill.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I was dealing with the whole question of the public perception of who will benefit from the sell-off of the potash corporation. And I believe there to be a very healthy scepticism, a very healthy scepticism about what it is that this government is up to; that the public of Saskatchewan are sceptical of who may benefit from the sell-off of the potash corporation, based not only on nefarious characters who seem to have become very much a part of

the PC Party, not only in Quebec but also here in Saskatchewan, that the public of Saskatchewan are asking themselves some real questions about who benefits.

And when the people of Saskatchewan ask themselves who benefits in the economic diversification that this government talks about, they also talk about Peter Pocklington and his ties to the PC Party. And again that this is a case of where a government helps its friends, and very definitely Peter Pocklington is a friend of the PC Party.

I only need refer you, Mr. Speaker, to prove that point, refer you to the *Calgary Herald* of Thursday, April 6, where the headline says, "Oilers helped fuel Tory machine." Where it says here — and I want to make clear this connection between Pocklington and the PCs — the PCs and economic diversification and potash and who benefits. And it's clear that their friends benefit, Mr. Speaker. But in any event, this article, to prove the point, says here, quote:

The Edmonton Oilers and other companies owned by entrepreneur Peter Pocklington, gave the Alberta Conservative Party \$12,200 last year.

The National Hockey League club contributed \$4,050 to the Tories in 1988 and, and with other Pocklington companies, were among the party's largest corporate donors, figures provided by the office of Alberta's chief electoral office show.

Pocklington's Gainers meat-packing company, which received \$71 million from the government last year for various expansions, gave \$3,550. His Palm Dairies Ltd., which received a multi-million dollar line of credit from the province's treasury branches, gave \$4,600.

So I want to make the point, Mr. Speaker, I want to make the point that in all these economic diversification things that the Premier has talked about, when he talks about building and diversifying, he talks about building up his PC Party and getting rich off the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And I saw on the part of some members, or I heard some exclamations of surprise that Peter Pocklington would give this kind of money to the PC Party in Alberta. And I'm sure that they'll be going back to the PC Party treasurer here and saying, how come Alberta got so much and we didn't get as much? They're a greedy bunch, Mr. Speaker, a greedy bunch.

But that's the point I wanted to make is that any time that you transfer large amounts of money, someone benefits. It's our belief and it's our ideology when money is involved that the people of Saskatchewan should benefit, that the benefit should flow to those who need it, should flow to the farmers of Saskatchewan, should flow to the young people who are looking for jobs, but not to the friends of the party, not go to nefarious characters who live off the public purse.

One might ask in light of this, Mr. Speaker, how many of the members opposite will be guaranteed a job after the defeat by the PCs as a form of kickback at the expense of the taxpayers. Is that the undertaking that's received by members opposite, that if you lose an election, don't worry, you'll get a job? Because that's how we interpret it. It seems like every member of the PC Party that was defeated in 1986 has received some job, has received a little goody here or there.

No wonder that the public is sceptical. No wonder that the public looks at this privatization, this sell-off, and says: who's going to benefit; where's the moneys going to go?

An Hon. Member: — More Tory millionaires, that's what they want to make.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — My colleague says, more Tory millionaires, Mr. Speaker, and indeed that may well be the case, more Tory millionaires.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to one aspect of the sell-off of the potash corporation that is very troublesome for the people of Saskatchewan. And I suppose more than any single thing, more than any single factor is a reason that so many people in Saskatchewan oppose this Bill, oppose this government and its handling of this Bill, oppose the sell-off of the potash corporation, and that is that the government has made it clear that the potash corporation will be sold off to foreign investors.

They've said that 45 per cent, a minimum of 45 per cent of the company, will be sold off to foreign investors. We're not sure where those foreign investors will come from. Perhaps they'll come from India and China and Japan and South Korea, where the Premier went on his trip to try and sell our corporation. Perhaps those are the people that will be buying it. Maybe it'll be the big American potash companies, the mining interests, owning another part of Saskatchewan, owning another part of Canada.

We've always believed on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that in the long run, in the long term, it benefitted the people of Saskatchewan, and it benefitted the people of Canada to own things, as opposed to being tenants in their own land. That it's better to own your resources, that it's better to manufacture here, that it's better to build here, as opposed to selling off to foreign interests, because we've had too much of that.

Well that's something that's very troubling about this particular Bill, and it's something that the people of Saskatchewan oppose very strongly about the Bill, the fact that a minimum of 45 per cent will be owned by foreign interests. One might suggest that that is a question that the government may want to also have their panel review with the people of Saskatchewan, this panel that's going around to explain the SaskPower sell-off, that we might also want to ask them to explain to people . . . or ask people if selling off half of our potash corporation is going to be good for Saskatchewan, and whether the Saskatchewan people agree that 45 per cent of the potash corporation should be sold off to foreign interests.

You know, in a very real way, Mr. Speaker, in selling off to foreign interests . . . And I want to just come back to one technical point, or explain one technical point, and that is this business of 45 per cent, and to make it clear, to make it clear that when 45 per cent of this company is sold off to foreign interests, sold off to foreign interests, that we will be unable — we, the people of Saskatchewan — will be unable to reduce that number for ever, or at least as long as the U.S.-Canada trade agreement is in place, because one of the provisions, one of the provisions of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement is that where, in an instance such as this, a public company sells shares and a percentage is set for foreign ownership, that that percentage can be set but that that percentage can never be reduced again.

So that for ever and a day, for ever and a day, 45 per cent of the new Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, if this government has its way, will be owned by foreign interests, will be owned by foreign interests, heavily influenced by people in Chicago, New York, Tokyo, and other parts of the globe, Mr. Speaker.

And I just want to put that into context. Like, for example, Mr. Speaker, in 1988, in 1988 the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan had reported profits of \$106 million. Those are the figures that were provided in the potash corporation annual report. That \$106 million in profits — this is after taxes and royalties and so on that any other company might pay — there was \$106 million in profit — profit — profit that came to the people of Saskatchewan, people of Saskatchewan who are owners, all of whom are owners, all of whom have a lifetime, non-transferable lifetime share in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Their profit was \$106 million.

Now if 45 per cent — 45 per cent of a future potash corporation is owned by foreign investors, it will mean that nearly \$50 million — \$50 million — will be leaving the province to go to foreign shores. That's what this government is proposing.

What can we do with \$50 million, Mr. Speaker? I look at the cruel and intemperate actions of this government in cutting out the children's dental program, of cutting back on the prescription drug plan, of the long waiting lists at our hospitals, at the school closures in Regina, at the lack of money for education, at universities that are bursting at the seams and are having to put on quotas for students.

I look at the farm crisis, I look at the need for jobs for young people in Saskatchewan, and I ask myself, and the people of Saskatchewan will surely be asking themselves: isn't there something better we could do with \$50 million than to send it out of province and to send it out of country? These profits are moneys that are and could in the future be used to help support government services and programs and to keep taxes down.

And there is another thing that we might be able to do with this \$50 million, Mr. Speaker — that as opposed to selling off the potash corporation, we keep the revenues flowing in. As opposed to sending profits out of province, we keep them here and reduce taxes in this province.

Now wouldn't that be a wonderful thing, Mr. Speaker?

Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to reduce taxes in Saskatchewan? I know it would be a new thing for the PC governments. They believe that taxes are something that only go up, unless it's for their big-business friends. Then they believe something else.

But wouldn't that be a wonderful thing, to reduce taxes for the people in Saskatchewan? Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing, Mr. Speaker, to do away with this tax that they've put on on non-profit groups and charitable organizations and so on who have to make money through bingos? Wouldn't it be nice to say to those groups: we believe and support what it is that you're doing; we want to help you in the worthwhile things that you're doing for Saskatchewan people; and instead of taxing you, we want to take away that tax and we want to take some of the profits that we make from the potash corporation to help you in the good things that you do for Saskatchewan people and to make it work for Saskatchewan people, to make it work for people here at home. Wouldn't that be a wonderful thing, Mr. Speaker, to do that?

But they won't do it, Mr. Speaker, they won't do it because they believe in nerdonomics. *The Globe and Mail* wondered whether this whole battle over the potash corporation was the last Waterloo for the New Democrats or whether this was the revenge of the nerds. Well we look at it, Mr. Speaker, and say that it's more revenge of the nerds, that it's nerdonomics. And only a group of nerds that you see in the front benches, Mr. Speaker, would come up with the idea to take something . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order, order. I think that unparliamentary language is something that we're seeking to avoid in this House, and I would ask the hon. member to withdraw and apologize.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Is this the front benches, Mr. Speaker, or the nerds?

(1600)

The Speaker: — Order. I think the request was clear to the hon. member, and I don't think there's much point in this type of a debate on the issue. I simply ask the hon. member to withdraw and apologize.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well I certainly would apologize, Mr. Speaker, for the use of any unparliamentary language.

The Speaker: — And withdraw it as well.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I certainly withdraw it as well, Mr. Speaker, and I do that unequivocally; I do that unequivocally.

The Speaker: — Thank you.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — But again, whatever adjectives one wants to apply to it, one has to wonder about the logic and wisdom. The logic and wisdom, Mr. Speaker, are quantities that are in short supply on the front benches into the back benches of the PC government. One has to worry . . . wonder about the logic and wisdom of taking

something that we own, made a \$106 million in profit last year — made \$106 million in profits last year — to sell it off and so that in the future we don't have those kinds of profits. Now what logic or sense could there be in that?

Well, you know, maybe there's one little logic and sense in here, and that is that if they're able to sell it and if they're able to get in hundreds of millions of dollars, then they just might be able to build up a little kitty before the next election, Mr. Speaker. They might just build up a little kitty before the next election and try and bribe the voters of Saskatchewan and say, we got all kinds of money. Here is what privatization had done for you. We've got cash sticking out of all of our pockets.

What do you want? Tell us what you want so we can buy your votes. Tell us what you want so we can buy the next election. Maybe that's the reason behind their particular economics in this case, Mr. Speaker, is to get the money, get the money so that they can go to the voters and say, we have all kinds of money here. And what is it that you want; what is it that you need so that we can buy the next election campaign. Just tell us because we've got the cash right here.

You know there's only one problem with that, Mr. Speaker. There's only one problem with that. When the election's over, everything's gone; when the election's over, everything's gone. We won't be getting the \$100 million a year any more. Half of that, \$50 million, will be going out of country. And who knows, the other half may all leave the province as well, because that's what this Bill does. This Bill says that 100 per cent or all of the company can be sold to out — of-province investors, but that at least 45 per cent will go out of country.

That's the question here, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think that they're going to fool the people of Saskatchewan on this one. I think the people of Saskatchewan are seeing through this one, they're seeing . . . They know that prior to the last election that this government seemed to have all kinds of money, seemed to have money for everything, that things like a deficit were not a problem.

They know that in looking at this sell-off of the potash corporation and any money that might be made from that sale . . . They remember the last election, they remember a government saying, well we got money for everything; what do you want? You want money for this? You got it. You want money for that? You got it. Debt, deficit — not a problem; not until after the election it wasn't.

After the election it was a very major problem. Prior to the election we had a deficit of \$389 million. After the election we had a deficit of \$1.2 billion.

Mr. Speaker, the sell-off of the potash corporation means that the people of Saskatchewan will be losing future profits. It means that a government that is desperate for re-election needs to sell off the potash corporation to get some cash so it can do things like, see now we've reduced deficit; do things like, see now we've got money to spend on you, and it's all a result of our building and diversification, all those things that the Premier talked about.

No, Mr. Speaker. No, Mr. Speaker. Any money that they have will not result from enlightened economic leadership in Saskatchewan. Any money that they have will result from the sell-off, the sell-off of Saskatchewan assets. That's where the money will come from.

And we oppose them on this, Mr. Speaker. We oppose this sell-off of the potash corporation. We oppose the sell-off of Saskatchewan assets to foreign investors. We oppose it because a corporation such as this has the potential and has shown that it can provide profits to the people of Saskatchewan, profits which can be used by them in the long run, can be used by future generations to support government services and programs, can be used in things such as reducing taxes.

You know, it's no accident, Mr. Speaker, that prior to 1982 when you had a New Democratic Party government, that taxes were much lower than they are today. Taxes were lower, with the exception of the oil companies of course; taxes were higher there. And this government has changed that.

I guess that's an interesting indictment, just as an aside, about government priorities and where taxes should go. But prior to 1982 taxes were lower here. And that is because we had things like a potash corporation which made profits, profits which could be used by the government to help support services and programs without going to people and saying, we need more of your tax money; we've got to be in your pocket again; we need the money to pay for health and education and welfare; as opposed to taking the position that why don't we get the profits in the potash corporation and from Sask Minerals to help pay for these things?

No, this is a government, Mr. Speaker, that through waste and mismanagement has driven this province into the greatest fiscal crisis that we have ever experienced. This is a province that is teetering on the edge of bankruptcy because of PC waste and mismanagement. This is a province that has a huge accumulated deficit, on the average higher than all jurisdictions in Canada, and they need the money.

These people are desperate. The PCs are desperate. They know that they cannot go to the public again with that sorry fiscal record and explain to the people what has happened. They need money, and their only hope for getting money is to sell off the potash corporation, Mr. Speaker — to deny the future, to deny the future and to save their present. That's what this Bill is all about. That's what they're hoping to do.

But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, come the next election campaign, whether or not the potash corporation sell-off goes through, whether or not they have the money, the people of Saskatchewan will see through their charade, will recognize their attempts for what they are, and will turf the Tories out of office and restore a New Democratic Party government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — A party and a government that is committed to the future, not only to the PC Party and its

friends, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I just want to say in terms of foreign ownership and foreign domination, the reason that the government of the day set up a potash corporation in the first instance was to avoid foreign domination. It was to do things to ensure that instead of having head office jobs located in Chicago or Milwaukee or New York, that head office jobs would be provided here in Saskatchewan.

And that has happened, Mr. Speaker. That has happened. There have been many head office jobs created by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, jobs that would not be here, jobs that would not be here if the government had not acted as it did in those years.

Mr. Speaker, it's because the Saskatchewan people have a strong ownership position in the potash industry that we see many head-office jobs here in Saskatchewan.

Now this is a government that proposes to change that. They want to sell it off again. And they say that, well, we're going to keep the head office here in Saskatchewan. Well it would be kind of like Wawanesa Mutual, Mr. Speaker. Wawanesa Mutual is a life insurance company that has its head office in Wawanesa, Saskatchewan. But if you want to ask about how many people are employed in Wawanesa, Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, in a Wawanesa Mutual company, it's a different story. There are many more that are employed in head offices probably . . . or in major branch offices, Mr. Speaker, in Ontario, but certainly not employed in Wawanesa, Manitoba.

And that's what will happen here with the potash corporation, Mr. Speaker. Out-of-province investors, foreign investors will own and control the potash corporation. They'll say that, look, the real action in terms of potash is to be here in Atlanta, Georgia, so therefore some of our operation should move to Atlanta, Georgia, or move to Chicago, move to where . . . the home of the futures markets in North America. They'll say that's where the action is so that, no, no, we'll keep the head office there, but we're just going to move some of our operations out of town and out of country. That's what'll happen, and Saskatchewan people will lose more jobs.

And again, you know, when you look at the crisis facing Saskatchewan and what it is that Saskatchewan people need and demand, and given the state of our economy, what we need from this government, and what people want from all politicians at this time, is leadership in turning the situation around so that we can provide hope and optimism for the future; so we can provide hope and optimism for our young people; so that we can provide direct jobs for our young people; that we can provide economic opportunities for the great mass of Saskatchewan people. That's what . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — That's what Saskatchewan people want, Mr. Speaker; that's what they want. They don't want more foreign domination of their industry; they don't want to set the stage for selling off Saskatchewan assets; they don't want to set the stage for future job loss in

Saskatchewan. They want to be able to retain those jobs. They want to be able to say to young people, study hard, go to school; there's head office jobs here in Saskatchewan; there's jobs here with good, good wages. They want fairness and honesty. That's what they want, Mr. Speaker. They don't want more foreign domination.

Mr. Speaker, the record of the potash corporation is a good one. This is a corporation that has made profits in many of its years, with the exception when the PCs were running things, when the potash corporation showed some reverses. But in the main, in the past the potash corporation has made money for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. There is every reason to believe that in the future the potash corporation will make money. And even the PC government believed that at one time, because they carried through with major expansion plans in the mid-1980s, because they believe that there's a market for potash, and I believe that they are right.

I think that there is a strong future market for potash, a strong future market for Saskatchewan's resources. And I think that there is a real prospect of strong profits for Saskatchewan people from a resource that they own, a resource that they feel will help them in the future to do things such as reduce taxes and maintain services and programs.

Mr. Speaker, again the real reason that the government wants to sell off the potash corporation is because they're desperate for money. These people have been . . . or are the epitome of a group that believes that waste and mismanagement is the order of the day. Nowhere else in Canada have we seen a jurisdiction go from the position that Saskatchewan has; of a jurisdiction that since 1944 had never, never shown a deficit. From 1944 to 1982, there had never been a deficit in Saskatchewan, with two exceptions — I think in 1962 and '63, or in the early '60s when there were some real problems in the agriculture economy. And I think the deficits were in the single or double digits of millions and ultimately were absorbed in the ensuing years.

But other than that, you know, the record has been a proud one, has been a strong one, through thick and thin, through bad times, through good times. There has always been a surplus in Saskatchewan until the PCs came around. That's when they started doing things like giving tax breaks to the oil companies; that's when they started doing things like pumping up the money for advertising, and I'll get to that in a minute; that's when they started doing things like giving away money to their friends, the Pocklingtons and so on.

(1615)

And it built up a deficit, an accumulated deficit, in record time and one that is a source of amazement — amazement — to people outside Saskatchewan. How could you take your province that was so rich and abundant in resources, that has been managed so well by CCF, Liberal, and NDP governments . . . And I say Liberal; I want to give credit due where it's due, Mr. Speaker. And then you come to a PC government, a PC government, and all of a sudden things go the other way.

Well that explains, Mr. Speaker, why they want to sell off the potash corporation, because they have mismanaged, because there has been waste. They want to sell off the potash corporation to build up an election fund so they can go to the people in the next election and say, here is our money; here is what we can do with your money once we're re-elected. But they won't be telling the people — you can bet, Mr. Speaker — that we will . . . that they sold off a major asset and that we'll not be getting future profits from any potash corporation in Saskatchewan and all those profits will be going out of province and out of country.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned waste and mismanagement. You know, one doesn't really have to go very much beyond this Chamber to see the waste and mismanagement every day. We on this side of the House — and this is not something that the people who watch the proceedings on television will know — but we every day sit here and see the government appointees, the government hacks and flacks, political appointees, every day during question periods, filling the galleries, wasting taxpayers' money, filling the galleries to sit here to see how their ministers might answer a question, if they answer a question.

This is a government that we know that spent \$90,000 in the 1986-87 fiscal year, spent \$90,000 on a Toronto research outfit and media outfit to teach them how to comb their hair and how to dress. At least that's what the member for Regina Wascana told us in the committee the more we raised questions about this kind of expenditure — teaching the cabinet ministers how to comb their hair and how to dress so that they look appropriate for the TV cameras.

We don't have to go very far, Mr. Speaker, to see the waste and mismanagement around here. The people of Saskatchewan don't have to go very far to see the waste and mismanagement, the waste and mismanagement which has led to the deficit crisis that we have in Saskatchewan and which has forced this government to the brink of having to sell off the potash corporation so that they can get a quick fix of cash, a quick fix of cash to help them with their election fund for the next campaign so that they can turn around and buy the voters with their own money, Mr. Speaker. That's what this is all about.

And the people of Saskatchewan don't have to go very far to see that waste and mismanagement, the waste and mismanagement which is leading to this sell-off of the potash corporation. They can sit at home tonight, they can sit at home tonight — they don't have to venture from their chair, you don't have to venture from the chair that you're sitting in now to see the waste and mismanagement tonight, because if you turn the channel, if you turn the channel to the hockey game or one of the other Saskatchewan channels, one of the other Saskatchewan stations, the chances are very great that you will see government ads; you will see the millions of dollars that this government is spending on advertising.

You will remember a couple of weeks ago, to generally encourage you to feel good about public participation, to feel good about privatization, to make you feel good about selling things off, and I understand now, a series of

ads to make you feel good about selling off SaskEnergy — no, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan don't have to go very far, don't have to go very far to see the waste and mismanagement. They can see it in their own living rooms.

The question is, who benefits from that, Mr. Speaker? Is it the public of Saskatchewan, John Q. Public, feel better because they've watched an advertisement on public participation, privatization, selling things off? I ask the people: do you feel better after watching that advertisement? Did you feel better about your province? Do you feel better about the prospects of jobs for the young people in your family? Do you feel better about the prospects for the family farm? Do you feel better about the prospects for your small business? Do you feel better about the prospects for reducing taxes? Do you feel better about those things after watching the government ads?

You know, and this is no small thing because the figures show to us, Mr. Speaker, that in the last fiscal year this government probably spent in the neighbourhood of \$16 million — \$16 million, Mr. Speaker — on advertising, on self-serving advertising; on telling the people things like public participation is good for you; you know, on telling the people things like free trade is good for you; on telling the people that things are good for you even if the people don't believe in them, pushing their ideology down their throats with the people's tax money.

So every time you see those ads, every time you see those ads about public participation and you see those ads about SaskEnergy and you see those ads about what a wonderful place Saskatchewan is, you have to ask yourself how many dollars of mine are going into those ads?

And that's waste and mismanagement, Mr. Speaker. Those are dollars that could be better used to support government programs. Those are dollars that could be better used to lower taxes in Saskatchewan. Those are dollars that could be used in any number of ways. If the government just simply cut back from \$16 million worth of advertising every year to \$10 million worth of advertising, we'd be able to retain the children's dental program, and then some.

So you have to question, who benefits? And again the people should ask themselves, when I see the ad on public participation, am I benefitting from this? Or are my pockets being picked again so that this government can shove some silly message down the throats of Saskatchewan people?

You know, Mr. Speaker, this government is known far and wide for its phenomenal spending on advertising and its phenomenal waste and mismanagement. And it's no wonder that they're having to sell off the potash corporation and selling off so much of Saskatchewan so that they can get some money to buy their way into the good graces of Saskatchewan voters. Not that it's going to work, mind you. They'll find that out in the next election campaign. They'll find that out that when they go to the people and say, look, we've got all kinds of money here; mind you, we don't have anything left; we don't have any assets left and we wouldn't be able to do it again. People

of Saskatchewan aren't going to buy their line. They're going to go to the ballot boxes and they're going to vote the PCs out. That's what they're going to do, Mr. Speaker.

But in terms of the advertising, they're just simply spending millions of dollars. It's a phenomenal waste of taxpayers' dollars. I think the public is like a friend of mine who I saw the other day, and he said, you know, I was watching the hockey games and there they were, those government ads — government ads on public participation, public ads on privatization. He said, every time I saw one of those ads I feel like my pocket's been picked. And his pockets had been picked. Every time you see one of those ads, it's your money that's being used to pay for that.

And I want you to think, I want the public to think about, you know, taking that money and what better ways there might be to use that money. Aren't there better ways to spend that money? To spend it on Big Sisters, to spend it on hospital construction, to spend it on reducing hospital waiting lists, to spend it on sheltered homes for battered women who so desperately need it. There's many, many fine and good ways that that money can be spent — any way except self-serving government advertising, Mr. Speaker.

But I raise the question of advertising because it's a phenomenally extravagant example of government waste, Mr. Speaker, of a government wasting the taxpayers' dollars — wasting the taxpayers' dollars, and during the course of time spending themselves into a deficit crisis, spending themselves into a fiscal crisis which could only be resolved, in their eyes, if they're to be re-elected, by selling off our assets to get the money.

You know, this is not something that's going down well with Saskatchewan people. It's almost like if you have a farm and through mismanagement you build up a big debt. You sell off part of that farm to get the cash that you need to keep it going. Well there's only so many times you can do that, Mr. Speaker, or you won't have anything left. And you'll be a serf, you'll be a tenant on your farm.

Now I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, that rural people especially understand and oppose this sell-off of our assets to foreign people.

You know, this is a government that used to attack the New Democratic Party on something called the land bank, and said, you're turning Saskatchewan people into tenants as opposed to owners. You're a government that really doesn't know how to deal with the question of intergenerational transfer of farm land; how to take a farm that's owned by someone — they want to sell; they don't have any buyers — and the son wants to buy. They don't have the money. You have no program for doing that other than through the land bank.

You know — and I readily concede that there may have been improvements needed to that land bank — but I want to look at the facts, Mr. Speaker. And one of the reasons that rural people oppose the sell-off, because one of the things that's been happening in rural Saskatchewan is with respect to land tenure, and that there's a whole new class of serfs and tenants out there, because in land

tenure there have been noticeable changes.

The number of farmers having total ownership of their farm has declined from 34,135 in 1981 to 29,416 in 1986 — mostly years of PC government. In 1981 the level of farm land ownership was 66.1 per cent, involving 43.3 million acres of land. By 1986 the percentage of farm land ownership has declined to 62.1 per cent, involving 40.8 million acres, Mr. Speaker. During the past five years, approximately 2.5 million acres of land have changed from that of ownership to rented status, or an amount equal to two and a half times the total which was held by the land bank previous to 1982.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is not a government that, notwithstanding the things that it says, has any very strong feelings or certainly any very strong programs to promote ownership, to encourage Saskatchewan people to retain ownership of their resources. We see it in the area of farm land that there's just been a phenomenal shift, Mr. Speaker, of people moving from those who own their farm to those having to rent the farm because of economic circumstances. And it comes as no surprise therefore to rural people that the government would take this approach with other assets that we own, to take the potash corporation, to sell it off; to take the power corporation, sell it off. But they oppose it more strongly because they feel it more deeply and understand it more, Mr. Speaker, and they oppose, they oppose this selling off of what it is that we own; they oppose the selling off of our heritage, and they oppose the selling off of something that just might be employed to provide a better future for their children.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude my remarks by simply saying that the people of Saskatchewan do not understand what benefit there might be in the long run of the sell-off of the potash corporation; that the people of Saskatchewan do not understand the government's fixation with the sell-off of everything; that they see far more important priorities, far more important issues that the government should deal with; that they're crying out for leadership and help when it comes to the farm crisis; that young people and families everywhere in Saskatchewan are crying out for help and leadership in terms of stimulating the economy so that young people might be helped to find jobs, so that young people might be helped to develop some equity, so that young people might be helped to develop their families and to move forward.

Because those are major crises in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I don't make these things up. The members opposite know that. The people of Saskatchewan know that. They know that there's a crisis on the farm. They know that young people . . . they all know of young people somewhere in their extended families that are looking for jobs. They know that unemployment for our young people is 25 per cent.

(1630)

They're asking for leadership and concrete help and action on those items. They don't ask for a sell-off of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. They don't ask for a sell-off of something that might in the future make profits

and will make profits that can be used to provide services and programs for young people. They ask for the retention of a corporation that has a head office in Saskatchewan and provides employment opportunities for Saskatchewan people.

They ask the government to be with them and to help them in their hour of need, and their need has never been greater, Mr. Speaker; their need has never been greater. They're asking for help now, but this government has taken a position that they want to prioritize privatization. Their first Bill of this session was about privatization. Not about the farm crisis, not about youth unemployment; their first Bill was about privatization. So the people of Saskatchewan are asking themselves, why won't the government deal with the problems that I see as being important to deal with?

The people of Saskatchewan also object, Mr. Speaker, to the selling off of something that we own to foreign interests, and know that once we sell off 45 per cent, that for ever and a day, with the Canada-U.S. trade agreement, that foreign interests will always own 45 per cent of the potash corporation; that in the past we took the position and we as a government and we as a party have always taken the position that we want to promote, we want to promote Canadian ownership; we want to promote ownership at home.

But this is a government that through its policies and programs, whether it be on the farm, has seen a remarkable reduction in the amount of land that is being owned as opposed to the land that is being rented; has seen an increase in the amount of farm land that is being rented as opposed to being owned. This is a government that is taking us back to previous times when foreign industries seemed to own everything in Saskatchewan and everything in Canada, and a trend that we fought against because we believe it's important for people to own their own things, to own . . . to have access to their own resources. But this is not something that the government wants.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that is characterized by waste and mismanagement and is now desperate to find ways to search for money, to locate pools of capital and money that they can take with them to the next election campaign, because they know that the people of Saskatchewan are sceptical of their fiscal record, of their record of ever-increasing deficits, their record of a record accumulated deficit, Mr. Speaker.

They know a government that is spending millions of dollars on things such as government advertising, and they see that as waste; they see it as mismanagement. They would like the government to take this money and to put it in more appropriate things, and it's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, that over the years that we've accumulated this massive debt, and that now the government must sell off what it is that we all own, that we all own, Mr. Speaker.

We all own the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, each and every person in Saskatchewan. Each and every person in Saskatchewan has a lifetime, non-transferable share in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. We all benefit from that. This government wants to end that kind

of relationship. It wants to make some people be the owners; it wants to make the rest of us being tenants in our own house, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there's a very healthy scepticism about this party and what it now stands for. This is a party that was known for honesty. This is a party that was once represented by John Diefenbaker. This is a party that was known for its integrity. But they see the list of federal PC members and Saskatchewan PC members. They see these people operating outside the law. They see the charges of corruption and bribery and conflict of interest, and they ask themselves, who will really benefit?

Who will really benefit from this sell-off of Saskatchewan's assets? How can we trust this government in the sale of our assets? One might trust another government, Mr. Speaker, one might trust another government, but certainly we can no longer trust the PCs when it comes to stewardship of our tax dollars. They're not to be trusted in this case, Mr. Speaker. And that is a real concern that the people of Saskatchewan have.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude my remarks by encouraging the government to take another look at the potash corporation debate to sell off the potash corporation. If the government really believes that they have public support on this issue; if they really believe that this is something that the people of Saskatchewan want; if they really believe that selling off the potash corporation is going to benefit Saskatchewan people, then why don't they put it to a vote of the Saskatchewan people? Why don't they hold a plebiscite on the issue?

They don't have to put their government on the line. I know that they'll get defeated if they take it to a general election, but why don't they hold a plebiscite on the issue? Why don't they seek the input and advice of Saskatchewan people and ask the Saskatchewan public to pass judgement? Do you want the potash corporation sold so that you can get a quick fix in time for the next election? Or would you prefer the Saskatchewan people to be able to retain ownership in this important industry and ensure profits for all time? What position is it that you want to take?

And I'm not suggesting to the government that they need fall on that issue. Just simply put it to a plebiscite of the voters. Give every man, woman that's of voting age an opportunity to pass judgement on this Bill as to whether or not they want the government to proceed in this manner.

This is no small thing, Mr. Speaker. This is a major, major enterprise. This involves hundreds of millions of dollars, if not a billion dollars, of Saskatchewan people's assets — or \$2 billion of Saskatchewan people's assets, things that we own. I think they should be consulted. And if the government lacks the courage to go to a general election to ask the people in a general election on this, at least put it to a plebiscite. Let's ask the voters what they think as to whether or not they want the potash corporation to be sold off.

I ask them to do that. I ask them to take that opportunity,

that offer, to gracefully back down on this issue, because they know from the polls that the people don't support them. They know, and they don't have to put their government on the line, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I hope they come to their senses. I hope that they will recognize, as do the people of Saskatchewan, that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is a profitable corporation, is one that has made profits for the people in the past; has the potential to make profits in the future; likely will make profits in the future; can be used by the people of Saskatchewan to raise moneys that can help to support services and programs that are desperately needed, to reduce the tax burden on the average person. I hope they come to their senses, understand that and withdraw this Bill, or put it to a plebiscite of the people, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a pleasure to take part in this, what I guess probably may be a historic debate. And I would like to indicate to you that I listened quite well to what the member from Regina Victoria had to say while he was speaking in this debate.

And other than the fact that of a stonewalling factor that I've envisioned from the member from Regina Victoria, I would say and suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that his remarks to the Bill of public participation on potash has, I guess, probably in all summation, if you wanted to sum up the amount of words and the amount of participation that he put into the Bill, directly related to the Bill, I would say that you could have said all of what he said in about two minutes.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that as I get into my remarks on the potash Bill here, you will, as well as the people in the province of Saskatchewan, will begin to understand exactly what the truth is about the most common sense approach that any government can take with public participation.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP opposition have for now, the last hour and a half or so, been continually suggesting that this is a sell-out of Saskatchewan potash mines and the Saskatchewan company. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that if it was an ideology of this government that we're just going to privatize anything for the sake of privatizing it, well then, Mr. Speaker, the arguments would be totally different and the arguments would be, sir, that just exactly the point of standing up here and saying, well they're wrong and we're right and this is it.

I want to lay out the facts to you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to lay out the facts to you exactly why it is common sense, it is a business approach, and the right thing to do for the province of Saskatchewan through public participation in our potash industry here in Saskatchewan. And I want to point out to you, number one, is basically the expansion and the diversification that can be created through public participation in potash. And I also want to indicate to you,

Mr. Speaker, that not only through this diversification and expansion in potash, that it also gives long-term security for jobs for our young people here in the province of Saskatchewan.

The members opposite speak out of two sides and three sides and four sides of their mouths, and let me tell you, they have awful large mouths. I want to indicate to you that at one particular time they're criticizing this government because there are not enough jobs in this province, and then on the other hand they come in and say, well you're expanding, and so through this expansion you're giving away our resources, you're selling out Saskatchewan, and you're not doing anything.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they just can't have it any way that . . . their arguments just don't hold any water. I'm telling you, Mr. Speaker, that if they used that kind of a pail and went to a river to draw water, by the time they got back to their camp, that pail would be empty.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, is that when I have looked, when I have looked over at the members opposite and what they've had to contribute over this last while and the concern they've had for the people of this province over the last couple or so weeks, it has been a shame of this democracy. It has been a shame of this legislature.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order.

Mr. Hopfner: — I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that — and I thank you for bringing members opposite to order — and I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that I was wanting to begin to debate all the Bills in this legislature and get on with the job and get on the job of public participation in the potash.

One thing I want to talk to you about, Mr. Speaker, is basically of what the members opposite have been saying, and I want to bring some facts back in and the truths back into this floor, into this legislature. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, and as my colleague had indicated, and not to give him too much credit for putting words in my mouth. But I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the people in the province of Saskatchewan do definitely deserve the true facts of what this government is actually doing through public participation in this province.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the people . . . of a story my grandfather used to say, that the people that had to holler and call people names and try and attract attention through that kind of . . .

An Hon. Member: — Garbage.

(1645)

Mr. Hopfner: — Well, garbage, yes. That's a good word. Then I would say, Mr. Speaker, that as he had indicated that there was not much substance to what those people were doing other than trying to attract some attention and to try and get some support for that kind of behaviour. It doesn't work.

The people in our province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are much more intelligent. They're thinkers and they're doers. They're shakers and they're doers. And I give that credit to those people out there. They're free thinkers, Mr. Speaker, and they want a free society. They do not want to be under the thumbs of the NDP.

And I want to indicate to you that when we started public participation, and as the members opposite had indicated, that they say they go out . . . The NDP say they've heard from the people and they're opposed to public participation. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk to you about the success in my remarks and my speech as I go into it in great detail.

But I want to indicate some of the things that the member from Regina Victoria had indicated, because I did not cover that in my speech. And the more positives are in my speech, Mr. Speaker, so I want to indicate a few of the untruths that were mentioned by the member from Regina Victoria. I want to indicate to you that the member from Regina Victoria had indicated that on the 106 million, I believe, profits of the potash corporation, that if it was foreign owned or something like of this substance that they are so much against, that there would be approximately \$50 million leaving the province of Saskatchewan. Not the case, Mr. Speaker. Not the case.

The member opposite again has brought out this calculator that does not know how to add and subtract and put costs into any kind of a business. And I can rightfully see that, Mr. Speaker, and it's because there's not one of them across the floor of this legislature that have either been a successful business man or a successful farmer or successful in anything, other than the fact . . . I can't understand how they ever became successful getting into this legislature.

But I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that \$50 million is not going to leave this province; that if they would look and take a look at the amount of interest the potash corporation has got to pay, has got to pay because of the NDP's investment in potash in this province, is basically . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. I don't think we need hollering in the Assembly, and it certainly doesn't do much for the decorum of the Assembly. And I ask for your co-operation in allowing the hon. member to continue.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to indicate to you that this \$50 million is not going to be leaving the province of Saskatchewan. This \$50 million is basically going to go — and that's only half of it, because if we added it up, out of that 106 or 8 million dollar profit, approximately \$100 million will go to pay for the interest on the debt of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

And the only way that money is going to leave the province of Saskatchewan is to the people that have invested where that money was borrowed from. And if the money was borrowed from foreign investors, from foreign banks, which they were, then it is not this government that went out and borrowed that money, but it was the NDP government in 1976, Mr. Speaker. It was

the NDP that went to the U.S. and went over to Europe and borrowed these dollars to purchase these potash mines. So a hundred million dollars a year is leaving this province because of the NDP's borrowing outside of Canada and outside of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, put it in its proper perspective — who owns these potash mines? Who owns these potash mines? Well, Mr. Speaker, I will indicate to you, it's not the people of Saskatchewan that own these potash mines, but it's the banks that own these, and the foreign banks that own these potash mines, because there isn't enough assets in these potash mines, Mr. Speaker, enough assets because of the blundering, the blundering, foolish management of the NDP when they were government, Mr. Speaker.

We're in here as a government, Mr. Speaker. The Progressive Conservative government has got to clean up that mess; we've got to manage the province; we've got to build for the future, Mr. Speaker. The NDP can't stand that because the NDP know that they will never return to this Assembly as government, Mr. Speaker, as long as we, as long as we show the public that this is the right thing to do. And this is what I'm going to show to you through my speech — that this is the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, as those members were out there talking about public participation and the demise of the province of Saskatchewan, the last couple weeks they were out there trying to drum up support, well, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that I was in my riding, I was in my riding.

And those people opposite, the member from The Battlefords happened to be into my riding. And I think I have a . . . I think I had a paper . . . I'll get back to that later, Mr. Speaker. But anyway, he was up there trying to drum up support in my riding because of their little escapade they were on. But I want to indicate to you it didn't work; it absolutely didn't work, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to turn this thing now, and I want to show you how it's not working and it's not working in potash. I want to say to you that the people in this province, as I had indicated earlier, are ready for the industry to expand. They're ready for the industry to diversify and to create these jobs. These young people are hungry for jobs, Mr. Speaker. They don't want the job to choose them any longer; they want to be able to choose the job again.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is exactly what this kind of public participation in potash and any other of the corporations that we have been looking at, have been working, and I will point that out. But the member from Regina . . . I want to clear up just a couple of points before I get into my speech, Mr. Speaker, because the member from Regina Victoria had, as I was saying, had been misleading the public.

Mr. Speaker, he had indicated that we are spending something in the neighbourhood of around \$16 million in advertising, and that a friend of his was upset because this advertising had come on during a hockey game or whatever. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would think that \$16 million, if that is even the number . . . I'm not quite aware,

but if that would be the number and the maximum number of bringing information to — and the proper and the factual information — to the public of Saskatchewan, instead allowing them to go out on some sort of a strike mode of the Assembly and then go out and tour the province and mislead the people.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that it's money well spent, because I can remember back under the days of the NDP administration when they were advertising in massive, massive millions, I believe it was well documented, well over the hundreds of millions of dollars with the families of Crown corporations and bragging about what the great things it was doing for the Saskatchewan taxpayer.

And I will also get into that, Mr. Speaker, when I get into my speech as to actually what the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan had contributed to the Saskatchewan taxpayer. And I'm sure that when the people have a chance to hear this, Mr. Speaker, they are going to just shake their heads at the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at . . .

An Hon. Member: — Point of order, point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — What is the point of order?

Mr. Anguish: — I recognize other times in this Assembly you have called this side of the House to order for using unparliamentary language, and I distinctly heard the member from Rosthern call across "big lie" to this side of the House. And I think that it's incumbent upon you, Mr. Speaker, to also call those members to order when they use unparliamentary language, not just to focus your attention on this side of the House. And I would like you to ask the member from Rosthern to withdraw those remarks and apologize to this Assembly.

The Speaker: — I listened to the point of order, and if the hon. member is challenging the Speaker's ruling, the judgement, of course, is completely out of line. And I might just remind the hon. member that I did not hear what he heard, and that can happen, and it has happened before.

However, regarding the issue of unparliamentary language, yes, that is an issue that all members in the House should adhere to. And whether they're standing on their feet or sitting in their seats, hon. members should avoid using unparliamentary language . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that the NDP opposition will do anything they will to interrupt my speech because they don't want to hear the facts, and so they'll pick out some word that they think they heard. And I'm sure I never heard my colleague from Rosthern indicate anything, but I'm sure that your ruling is well taken.

Mr. Speaker, when the member from Regina Victoria had indicated that instead of all this . . . dollars going to advertising. And I wanted to bring this to your attention, is that he's afraid that the facts and the truths that get out

there to the Saskatchewan people will be accepted, and he's afraid of this. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I can understand why he's afraid, and you're going to, as I had indicated, see this as I release my items from my speech.

He had indicated that these dollars should be well more spent on other things such as Big Sisters. Well, Mr. Speaker, when he mentioned Big Sisters I made a quick note of that, and I wanted to indicate to you that it was not until 1984, under this administration, that the lobby of the Big Sisters group out of Lloydminster had come to me and asked for government funding and help which they had previously asked the NDP opposition for years and years and years and never got it. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased, and I was very pleased to be able to say, yes Big Sisters, we now will support you and see that you're assisted in your very worthwhile organization.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, and I was very pleased to hear this comment from the member from Regina Victoria as he says that the NDP are now in favour of . . . to promote Canadian ownership in this province. They're in favour of promoting Canadian ownership in the province of Saskatchewan. They're in favour of having now the industry opened up to Canadians in the province of Saskatchewan.

I was certainly amazed by that because as he was talking about agriculture, Mr. Speaker, I want to inform, and I want to inform you about the fact that the member from . . . all the NDP members are . . . when in referring to agriculture, refuse . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Quite frankly, I'm having great difficulty hearing the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster, and it's obviously because of some very loud interruptions in the House, and I just ask for your co-operation.

Mr. Hopfner: — Well I want to just indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that through the Canadian ownership that the member from Regina Victoria was talking about and through suggesting that NDP Party now agree with Canadian ownership in Saskatchewan, is that they still have not recognized that within the farming industry . . .

The Speaker: — It being 5 o'clock, the House stands recessed until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.