

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

**Acting Clerk:** — I beg to advise the Assembly that Mr. Speaker will not be present to opening this sitting.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Fertilizer Plants in Saskatchewan

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is directed to the Premier. Mr. Premier, it seems that after weeks of delay you have finally decided to meet with the mayors of the five communities who have been asking to meet with you to discuss your government's decision to scuttle Canadian "88"'s western Saskatchewan fertilizer project.

It is clear in recent statements made by several of your ministers that contrary to your original announcement, the deal with the Cargill is far from complete. In other words, the two projects should be judged equally as to the benefits that they will bring to Saskatchewan. In view of that, Mr. Premier, will you approach your meeting with the mayors in that spirit, and if they can convince you of the benefits of this project for their communities and for Saskatchewan, will your government agree to support it?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in discussing the possibility for fertilizer plants in the province of Saskatchewan, we will share the information that has been given the government about Canadian "88", about the research that we've done with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool in putting together projects with respect to this, Federated Co-op who have looked at the possibility, CdF Chimie from France that has looked at the possibility, as well as Cargill.

We have reviewed them all for a period of years, four or five years, and we've obviously come to the conclusion that we want a fertilizer plant to survive. I say to the hon. member, and he would know this, that never in the history of Saskatchewan have we had either a fertilizer plant making our own nitrogen from natural gas, or — and I'll use this as an example because it's relevant — a paper mill, before recently. And I point out to the hon. member that just because you have trees in your community doesn't mean that you're entitled to have, or even feasibly could you have, a paper mill in your community.

We want them to be economies of scale large enough that it's a big enough company, large enough company so that in fact it survives. And when we look at the infrastructure associated with the paper mill like in Prince Albert, we can't build a paper mill like that in Melfort, we can't build a paper mill like that in North Battleford or other communities because they are not large enough to sustain it.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at this fertilizer plant . . . Mr.

Speaker, the opposition, if they're interested in the answer then they can deserve . . . Mr. Speaker, I'll just make the point, if the opposition is not interested, as they never built paper mills, fertilizer plants, and upgraders, Mr. Speaker, I will make the point that we want them to survive. We are looking at economies of scale and the size and the access to the United States market so that in fact it will work, Mr. Speaker.

I don't want to allow the opposition or anybody else to go from town to town to town and say, you can have a paper mill, you can have a fertilizer plant, and you can have a paper mill, you can have a fertilizer plant, and you can have a paper mill and you can have another one, if it isn't feasible, Mr. Speaker.

We will look at the best numbers we have. I look forward to meeting with the mayors today, and I'll have the opportunity of going through all of the numbers with them, and I will share with them every single opportunity that we have available in fertilizer and processing, manufacturing, diversification. And I'm quite optimistic that you will see new diversification in things like . . . in areas in agriculture in Yorkton, in Melfort, in Rosetown. And when I talk about this, Mr. Speaker, the opposition hollers "order."

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — We have seen diversification for some time, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to stay with it.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a new question to the Premier, and I hope you will be as indulgent with me if I take a long time to ask it as he took to answer it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, and Mr. Premier, my new question to you is the following. In view of the fact that the studies which you have had before have proved to be nothing more than a cover-up from some decision that you have previously made, will you put aside the speech now and will you make a guarantee that you will provide the right information to the mayors so that they can decide what the real situation is.

And so I'm asking you now, Mr. Premier, will you guarantee that you will present to the mayors all relevant documentation about the funding of the Cargill project, plus all of the correspondence your government has had with the energy "88" people, so that the mayors are in a better position to judge whether or not their communities have been treated fairly, Mr. Premier. Will you provide them that kind of information which is valid and which they can make a correct judgement on?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I've already said that I will provide that information, and the mayors are in today to meet with me so that we can go through the entire package of information so that they can make the same decisions and look at the same information that we did, Mr. Speaker.

So we've taken the time. I've met with the mayor of Yorkton, the MLAs and cabinet ministers have met their respective mayors in Melfort and in Rosetown, and the Deputy Premier has been meeting with them. And we'll share all the information, Mr. Speaker, so that they can look at the data we have.

I've talked with the mayor of Yorkton, and he had concerns with respect to water and where will you get water for a project. He wants to know about the distribution system. He wants to know about the economies of scale. He wants to know whether it can market into the United States, what it means in terms of alternatives to Yorkton or other parts of Saskatchewan — very reasonable questions, Mr. Speaker. And we are going to provide them with that information, as well as look at other alternatives that are possible for diversification, processing and manufacturing throughout rural Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the opposition members know that they wouldn't put in rural gas to allow diversification; we did. They wouldn't promote irrigation; we do. They wouldn't provide individual line service; we do. They wouldn't protect people against high interest rates in Yorkton or Melville or Rosetown. We lock in mortgages at nine and three-quarters, Mr. Speaker. We give them six per cent money and farmers get zero per cent interest rate money on cash advances for livestock that weren't there before.

All these kinds of programs for rural diversification were not here prior to us taking over, Mr. Speaker.

So yes, I'm very interested in meeting with the mayors I've met in the past, I will meet now, and I will continue to provide them with information to help them in diversification in the province of Saskatchewan. Because, Mr. Speaker, because as the Energy & Chemical Workers Union local president says about bigger . . . (inaudible) . . . Mr. Speaker, this is a very good idea and we haven't even announced it yet, Mr. Speaker. And they're hollering "order" from their seat because it's diversification, Mr. Speaker. I think it's a great idea.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — A new question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, my question to you is: why will you not make a commitment, put aside the rhetoric — we've heard that before — put aside the rhetoric and give a commitment that you're going to provide the specific documentation which I asked you to provide, and that is the documentation for the funding of the Cargill project and all of the correspondence you've had with energy "88", so that the people of those communities, who these mayors represent, will know why you so readily are prepared to support and give a commitment to one of the largest and one of the wealthiest corporations in North America, but you're not as ready to provide the same kind of support for the communities of Saskatchewan like the Yorktons and the Melvilles and the Nipawins and the Rosetowns. Why won't you do that, Mr. Premier?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the opposition should be aware of a couple of things. Agrico, which is behind Canadian "88", is a large American multinational . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, you raised it. It's a large American multinational. Are you in favour of them? Are you in favour of them? Come on.

Mr. Speaker, I make the point, they have no marketing network in the United States, compared to this . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. The member has asked a question. Allow the Premier to answer.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I'll go back on the point. We worked with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, first and foremost, to build the fertilizer projects. And they are in every community in Saskatchewan, rural communities in there, in Yorkton and Melfort and Melville and Rosetown, Mr. Speaker — they're all over Saskatchewan.

And we went through the details and we said let's go in a partnership and we tried this — and do you know what, Mr. Speaker? They said, I don't believe we can do it because we need access to economies of scale, and particularly in the North American market, so that we can sustain ourselves through these cycles. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool said, I don't want to do this. Federated Co-op had the same opportunity associated with the upgrader. We looked at it with other people internationally.

Now we have a firm that operates across North America, and particularly in western Canada, and we can do it with them, as well as opening it up to other people who want to invest in it, and the NDP says, well let's go with another firm and build one here and one there and one there. And it's backed, Mr. Speaker, by a multinational out of the United States, and they don't tell you that.

Agrico is an international firm, multinational, and I want the NDP to stand up and say they support Agrico. Let's see, let's see if the CBC . . . well anybody, come on. The point is, you didn't build one. You never built a fertilizer plant in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool hasn't built one. United Grain Growers hasn't built one. The Federated Co-op never built one, Mr. Speaker. We're going to build one and it's going to be viable, and we'll share all of that information with the people across Saskatchewan, and we'll be proud of it, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### Referrals to MacNeill Clinic

**Ms. Simard:** — Mr. Speaker, my question's to the Minister of Health. Mr. Minister, I have a letter here dated July 7 from the MacNeill Clinic in Saskatoon to an unnamed doctor turning down a referral to the clinic. The letter states:

High demands for services and insufficient resources have resulted in a waiting list of 300 children and families. Accordingly, we have closed our intake until August 31, 1989, at which time we will re-assess our capacity.

Mr. Minister, are you aware of this problem, and what steps have you taken to deal with it?

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — First of all, Mr. Speaker, I will ask the member to share the letter with me. I think that would be an appropriate response for her to share the letter with me, perhaps not in this forum, because as she said, the unnamed doctor and the family that would be affected. I would ask her to share that with me, and from that point I would take notice on it, Mr. Speaker, and we can discuss the wider problem at another date. But I would ask the member to share that with me in a confidential way.

**Ms. Simard:** — Mr. Speaker, new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, I'm absolutely appalled that that MacNeill clinic is closing its intake and you aren't even aware of it, Mr. Minister. Because of your government's continued underfunding of health care, children with mental health problems in Saskatoon are finding difficulty getting treatment and you don't even know about it, Mr. Minister.

You will be aware that you cut back the staff in 1987, and that you cut back on that clinic, and that the funding since then has not been adequate to meet the demands. I want to know, Mr. Minister, whether you're prepared to tell these children and their parents why you have \$9 million for a birthday party and not sufficient funds for the MacNeill Clinic.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — Mr. Speaker, the reason I responded as I did in the very first instance, and will continue with that response, because I don't take at face value what the member is bringing forward. That's number one. Nor should I take at face value, nor should anyone in this House take at face value what she says, because while there may be some elements of accuracy to it, usually it is found that it is only one very small element. So, Mr. Speaker, all I say is that I ask the member to share the letter with me. I will say to the member that it is absolutely untrue that there was a cut-back in staff at the MacNeill Clinic. That's absolutely untrue that there was a cut-back in staff at the MacNeill Clinic as she has said here today.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Simard:** — New question, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Minister, I have here, lost two positions to early retirement, and that was a brief that was done some time ago and that became public in the province of Saskatchewan. Other positions are vacant and cannot be filled, resource purchases are very restricted — there's a whole list of information with respect to inadequate funding for the MacNeill Clinic, Mr. Minister. I will share that letter with you.

But tell me, Mr. Minister, does your government give any thought to these children each and every month when it spends another 50,000 keeping GigaText afloat, simply because you don't want to embarrass your Deputy Premier, when you have a waiting list, according to this correspondence, of some 300 children for mental health services in Saskatoon?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's definition of cut-back is when people retire; in this case a couple of people retired. The positions that they occupied are very much there and available for anyone who would come to them in response to long-standing advertisements, advertisements for hiring the specialized people that work at MacNeill clinic.

**An Hon. Member:** — That's a cut-back.

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — As the member says, those are cut-back. Mr. Speaker, those are not cut-backs. We had long-standing and excellent employees in that area. There's no question that that's the case. When early retirement came forward, when early retirement came forward across all of government, those people were eligible for it and took advantage of it like any other civil servant across the government was able to do, and that's no problem. And that is not a cut-back.

Mr. Speaker, what the member would do by serving . . . what the member could do, if she really is interested in serving the families who are served by the MacNeill clinic in the good work that they do, would be to work in a co-operative way in terms of hiring people, in terms of helping us to get people, in terms of giving us credit when we do get people to fill these positions which are very difficult to fill. Those positions are difficult to fill, as they were in ophthalmology one year ago here in the House, and as is the case now we have ophthalmologists in Regina. That recruiting is done, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that recruiting is done and there is an awful lot of hard work goes on.

The member raises issues because she thinks she makes some political points. She raises GigaText. She talks about all of this in the context of health care and the delivery of health services to people. She doesn't care about the kids that are involved; she cares about a political point on a particular day.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Attendance at Family Life Symposium

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think we continue to see in that response by this government, lots of rhetoric, lots of wind about how well we're doing, but they continue to turn children and families away from needed counselling services in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pringle:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services. Yesterday I asked you, sir, about your government's engaging telephone solicitors to try and entice people to attend your symposium on the family. One would think you would have had time to look into this by now, Mr. Minister, and check this out and have an answer for the House.

Would you confirm that your government has hired 10

telemarketers to try and interest people in attending your symposium later on this week; and could you tell us how much that's costing the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the allegations made by the member opposite have been checked out, and my assistant deputy minister has no knowledge of anyone being hired to telephone anyone with respect to the family conference.

The staff of the Department of Social Services have worked very hard on this conference, are working on it right now as we speak, and they have contacted people throughout Canada to attend the conference. It is part of the normal organization, and to the best of my knowledge no one in our department knows anything of hiring any extra people.

**Mr. Pringle:** — New question, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Minister, would you confirm this — and I know this to be true — would you confirm that senior officials in your government, not only your department but in the Department of Health and other departments, that senior officials have contacted various NGOs (non-governmental organizations) urging them in the strongest possible terms to get behind the symposium, carrying this to the point . . . I have been advised by several people in NGOs of threatening their funding if they failed to co-operate and send the requisite number of people to your symposium. Will you confirm that?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, yes, my officials have asked people to come to the families conference. Officials have asked the people to come to the families conference. Officials all across Canada, from other provinces, have asked people to come because it is a program sponsored by the premiers of Canada, paid for by the provinces. Our share is 4 per cent. We are hosting the conference. And yes, we have asked people to come to solve the problems of families.

On the contrary, I have information that NDP-affiliated groups have contacted the speakers and asked them not to attend, trying to break their contract and have them not attend this conference because the NDP have to politicize everything and cannot stand a successful conference. That's what's wrong with the NDP.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pringle:** — New question, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Minister, for any other government, for any other government . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. I'd ask the member for Regina Elphinstone . . . order, order. I'd ask members to allow the member for Saskatoon Eastview to put his question.

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I appreciate that. Mr. Minister, for any other government a symposium on an issue as important as the

family would have widespread support, but your government's record is so dismal, it's so hurtful towards families that you have to phone around and solicit people to come.

Now you didn't answer my question. You didn't answer my question. I'm also aware, Mr. Minister, that you have directed half of your staff to come to the symposium from various offices. I'm aware of that. You didn't answer my question: will you confirm that you in fact have put pressure on directors of NGOs to attend your symposium, or else?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will confirm that NDP coalitions have tried to sabotage this Canadian conference on the family. I will also confirm that the staff at Social Services have volunteered and worked very hard to assist in the hosting of this conference. They have done a phenomenal job.

And I will confirm that the NDP government of the North . . . Where are they? — of the Yukon. The NDP have one government in this country in the Yukon, and they are also participating in this conference as are all the other provinces and territories. Only the NDP in Saskatchewan are trying to sabotage this conference.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Participating Loans from SEDCO

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for SEDCO. Madam Minister, I have a couple of letters with me that were sent to owners of a Saskatchewan hotel within a week of each other.

The first states that hotels aren't eligible for participating loans from SEDCO because they're a highly competitive industry. And the second from another official of your department says that the first official is wrong, and that there is no blanket denial of participating loans for the hotel industry, but because of the viability of the industry they may not qualify.

Now my question to you, Madam Minister, is: does anyone in SEDCO, your officials, your deputy, or yourself really know what's going on in that department?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, in response to the member, the letter signed by Mr. Duplessis and sent out was done in error. And the letter sent by Mr. Offet, the VP of programming is correct. Hotels are not denied SEDCO funding. We have a number of hotels on our portfolio.

With regards to the new programming introduced by SEDCO this spring of which there's been a phenomenal response, Mr. Speaker, any hotel may apply for the participating loan of up to 300,000. However, as was stressed all along, only viable companies will qualify.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Madam Minister, there seems to be a problem within your department. The people that are administrating these new programs don't know what's going on. One department gives one story and one department gives the other, and I'm not sure, Madam Minister, if you've given any direction as to what these programs are really about.

And my question to you is then: are you telling this House that all hotels in this province have eligibility for the participating loan program? Is that what you're saying here today?

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I'm saying is that any Saskatchewan business may apply for SEDCO funding.

#### Federal Sales Tax on Farm Machinery

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. My question is to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, last week when you were asked about the implementation of the federal sales tax on farm machinery, you said that it probably would not apply to farm machinery. And you said your source of that information was that you had seen the technical papers.

Mr. Minister, last week your deputy minister was asked whether or not the federal sales tax would apply to lotteries. He said he thought so, but they hadn't yet seen the technical papers. Mr. Minister, once again, as in the past, you and your deputy have given different information to the public. Once again, the public are likely going to believe your deputy minister.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Shillington:** — He has after all, Mr. Minister, a much better track record than you in the past. Mr. Minister, my question is: are we to again conclude that you just concocted that information on your feet to get yourself out of a difficult situation, never expecting that anyone would ever know whether or not you've seen the technical papers?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — What I said last week, Mr. Speaker, was that in the briefing papers that came with the federal budget, briefing — b-r-i-e-f-i-n-g — papers, that farm input costs would be exempt under the national sales tax. That is what I said last week; I will say it again today.

We do not have the technical — t-e-c-h-n-i-c-a-l — papers to deal with the national sales tax or the goods and services tax which we have been promised, as the hon. member knows, we were promised in June. The federal government now says that those technical papers will be released at the later period of time.

So what information I had, as I tried to make it clear to the hon. member that the briefing papers that came with the federal budget said that farm input costs would be exempt from the goods and services tax.

Let me remind the hon. member that it's the hon. members opposite that have stood up and said, Mr. Speaker, they don't want the national sales tax, but if it's coming anyway, they want us to join with it, Mr. Speaker. The federal government's saying it's coming anyway. The NDP have endorsed whatever's coming in the national sales tax. We haven't taken that position, Mr. Speaker. I think the NDP are going to be terribly wrong on this.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### MOTIONS

#### Resolution No. 13 — Support for Small Business

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my remarks this afternoon, I will be moving the following resolution:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to implement immediately, positive, concrete, and effective measures to support small business and to enable Saskatchewan small business to expand local economic activity and local job creation.

Mr. Speaker, I introduced this resolution on behalf of the families and the managers and the owners and operators and the employees, and on behalf of the communities in which small business in Saskatchewan operates.

I introduce it today because the Progressive Conservative government has simply battered and attacked and then ignored small business in Saskatchewan. Small business and those who depend on them are hurting and suffering all over the province as a result of the economic policies of the PC government opposite, and I can say, Mr. Speaker, with all honesty, as a result of the lack of any economic policies opposite as well.

As a result of seven years of the most incompetent, mismanaged, and corrupt government in our history, the Saskatchewan economy is in a simple shambles. This government's economic plan has been based on four basic premises. It's been based on privatization, which is the sale-off of assets owned by the people of Saskatchewan at discount prices to friends of the Conservatives.

It's been based on, secondly, large tax subsidies to big business, who are the friends of the Conservatives.

It's been based on running up the largest deficit both in operating and Crown corporation capital debt in the history of the country.

And fourthly, Mr. Speaker, it's been based on the largest tax increases for the middle class and the lower income people in the history of this province. And I want to talk about each of those four elements of the Conservative economic policy.

They have neglected, Mr. Speaker, the three engines of the economy. They have been working on the one engine

of the economy, and that is, the premise that big business will run things in this province; that big business will bail them out in times of tough economic ventures.

And of course what we've seen is not big business coming into this province and looking after the interests of the people of Saskatchewan; on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, what we've seen is large multinationals and big corporations coming into this province taking large tax subsidies and maximizing the profits for their shareholders who live and reside outside of this province.

They've neglected the small-business sector, they've neglected the public sector, and they've neglected and beaten up on the co-operative sector in this province.

And what we've seen as a result of this miserable economic thrust, this cowardly economic positioning of a government, is an economy in this province, Mr. Speaker, which is so out of whack with the rest of the country, that is so beaten up and is so wanting for an economic policy, that in my view the people of this province who work in business, and in particular in small business, will be changing this government come the next election campaign.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Solomon:** — When I speak with a number of small-business people they're not telling me that they want hand-outs like the Cargill want hand-outs or the Husky Oil want hand-outs or Peter Pocklington want hand-outs. Small-business people are telling me that all they want is a thriving economy; all they want is a government which is consistent and a government that is fair to everybody in this province, rather than a government that is only fair and only consistent with big corporations. That's what they're telling me, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to illustrate today what the government has done and what the government has not done for small business. And I can tell you that it's a disaster for small business, as well as the provincial economy as a whole, in every single respect. It's a disaster, in particular, in the eyes of the men and women who own and operate and work for small business everywhere in Saskatchewan. And I want to start by talking a bit about the small-business sector in this province.

The dynamic growth potential of the small-business sector in Canada and many other countries has been well documented. The small-business sector has demonstrated its ability to provide employment and to generate new jobs. In Saskatchewan, from 1978 to 1986, the employment growth rate for firms of fewer than 20 employees was 70 per cent, compared to less than 25 per cent for all Saskatchewan firms.

In addition to these quantitative aspects, there are other elements involved here. As Albert Shapero of Ohio State University has written about small business, and I quote:

Small businesses are personal and local. Small businesses are products of their local economies and cultures, and the business decisions made by their owners are permeated with consideration for

the communities in which they live and carry on their business.

This statement in particular is fitting for a province like Saskatchewan. Economic renewal will largely depend on hundreds of small businesses emerging and remaining in the local communities.

Consequently, it is important that government remain attuned to small-business concerns and create a favourable environment for small-business activity. A superb business climate and new ideas and initiatives for small-business development are obvious corner-stones for this approach. And as I've outlined, Mr. Speaker, this government has not provided any of the four corner-stones of this approach.

Unfortunately, the present government has proven itself incapable of developing or sustaining a co-ordinated economic plan or strategy, especially in the small-business sector. In meeting the small-business challenge, they have displayed insensitivity, a lack of serious commitment, and a lack of balance. In reality, what we have seen is a wide assortment of programs introduced to attract or aid the business community in Saskatchewan, and then do their little bit for a few months, and they've withdrawn the programs.

All of them were initiated at the politically appropriate time, but abandoned not long after. And I have four examples that I have is: the industrial incentive program, the small-business interest reduction program, aid to trade, and the market development fund. To date, none of these programs have been replaced. In effect, what it has meant is big money give-aways to their large multinational corporations, and hand-outs to a few large out-of-province businesses while Saskatchewan's small and medium-size businesses suffer through economic times of great difficulty.

I want to now take stock of the health of the small-business community in Saskatchewan as a result of this government's efforts and talk to you about a few economic indicators which are very important in presenting this resolution.

The poor growth in the number of new businesses in Saskatchewan indicates a lingering sickness in the provincial economy, and I want to talk about the business growth in this province. Statistics from the corporation data file at Saskatchewan Consumer and Commercial Affairs indicates a strong growth rate in the corporate sector in the late 1970s when the New Democratic Party was in government, and a significant downturn in 1982 when the Conservatives came to power in this province.

Between 1975 and 1981, the number of businesses in this province grew by 10 per cent or more each and every single year. In 1982, when the present government took office, the figures dropped, not to 9 per cent, or 8 per cent, or 7 per cent, but down to 3.2 per cent.

Between 1978 and 1981, under the NDP governments, there was an annual increase in the number of businesses of 10 per cent each year, or more. Under the Conservative government it's been less than 4 per cent, somewhere

around 3.2 per cent.

The highest growth rate in new businesses during the PC government administration has been 4.5 per cent, substantially less than the highest during the NDP government reign, which was 12 per cent. And in fact the highest growth rate in Saskatchewan under the NDP was three times greater, or 300 per cent greater than under the Conservative government. And I have a whole list of comparative figures from 1975 to 1987, Mr. Speaker.

When you see the growth and number of businesses in terms of a percentage, in 1975 there was an increase of 13 per cent. In 1976 there was another increase of 14.2 per cent. In 1977 the numbers of businesses grew by a further 11.9 per cent. By 1978 they grew again by 10.5 per cent. In 1979 the number of businesses that were created in this province under the NDP grew by 13.2 per cent; in 1980 the increase in business growth was 11.2 per cent; in 1981 it was 10.7 per cent — an average of about 12 per cent each year, Mr. Speaker.

What we've seen instead, since 1981, is a very interesting comparison. We've seen in 1982, the first year of the Conservative government, a growth of only 3.2; in 1983 a growth of 4.2 per cent; in 1984 a growth of 3.7; in 1985 a growth of 3.9; in 1986 a growth of 4.5 per cent; and in 1987 a growth of only 2.1 per cent. The PC average growth in the number of businesses for the six years was less than 4 per cent — 3.6 per cent compared to over 12 per cent during the comparative seven years that the New Democratic Party was in government.

Moreover, between 1986 and 1988, the number of new business incorporations declined from 3,557 to 3,008. As well, the number of corporate disappearances has shown a disturbing increase since 1981, and it remained over 2,000 per year and rising. I want to just go over a few numbers here in comparative terms about the corporate disappearances, and that is when a corporation disappears from the Consumer and Corporate Affairs registered rolls, either through bankruptcy or going out of business or closing down the business at their own choosing.

And as you see, in 1978 there was about 1,600 corporate disappearances. In 1979 there was about 1,200 compared to 3,629 new incorporations. When you get down to 1981, the last full year of an NDP government, there were 3,500 new incorporations and 1,000 disappearances.

And the first year of '82 you'll get about a 230 per cent increase of corporate disappearances, from 1,018 to 2,299. And you go from 1984, 2,045 corporate disappearances; in 1985 there were 2,210 corporate disappearances; in 1986 there were 2,234 corporate disappearances, with only 3,557 new incorporations.

We see, in 1987, 2,568 disappearances, compared to only 3,208 new corporations formed. So you're seeing, Mr. Speaker, during the course of this government, a very negative impact on the number of small businesses operating in this province, very negative impact on the number of jobs that small business is creating as a result of the economic policies of the government opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a few minutes now about bankruptcies. As a result of poor economic conditions provincially, business bankruptcies have sky-rocketed to unprecedented levels in this province. The year 1987 represented five consecutive years in which business failures had exceeded the 300 level. In 1988 that figure increased above the 450 level to 461 business failures — 461 failures in 1988 alone.

In 1988, as in 1986 and 1987, Saskatchewan had the second highest bankruptcy rates — the second highest bankruptcy rate increase among all provinces, an increase of 27.7 per cent. This is significantly higher than the Canadian percentage rate increase of 4.9 per cent.

So small business is under attack. They're being battered by this government's economic policies in a way that is unparalleled in this country. The second highest bankruptcy rate increase among all provinces was 27.7 per cent, compared to the national average of only 4.9 per cent.

(1445)

And I want to compare the bankruptcies to the last seven years of the NDP government to the first seven years of the Conservative government, and this will be quite enlightening, Mr. Speaker.

The number of Saskatchewan business bankruptcies in 1975 were 38. In 1976 they went to 84. In 1977 they went to 80 — went down to 80. In 1978 they went down to 77. In 1979 they went up a bit to 102. In 1980 they went up a bit, because of the high interest rates, to 114. And in 1981 they went up to 167.

But then the Conservatives came over. Now I'll go over seven years, the NDP government's last seven years of office. There were about 662 total bankruptcies in business, which is almost what they had in 1988 all in total. But it averaged about 94 bankruptcies each year.

But you look at the next seven years of bankruptcies — 1982, the first year of this government, there were 280, up from 167. From 1982 to '83 it went from 280 to 314. And then it levelled off in 1984 to 309, but in '85, with low interest rates, 302. Then in 1986, with lower interest rates, it went from 302 to 351, the highest ever recorded in the province. But that record only lasted one year, because in 1987 the number of business bankruptcies went from 351 in '86 to 361 in 1987. And that was the highest ever recorded in the history of this province.

And then we go to 1988, and that '87 record only lasted one year, Mr. Speaker, because the 361 increased to 461 bankruptcies of small businesses and businesses in this province. And the seven-year total under the Conservative government, as a result of their economic policies, the total number of small businesses and other businesses that went under in this province, went bankrupt, was 2,378, or 340 each year, compared to the seven-year NDP government's reign of 662, or 94 for each year.

The Conservative record is number one in this country;

it's number one in this province. It is 360 per cent greater than the seven-year comparable term under the NDP. What a record, Mr. Speaker. What a proud record of this government's economic policies. They stand in this House and they say what a wonderful business government they are. They stand in this House and they say that their economic policies are making the economy of this province flourish and grow at unprecedented levels.

The Premier in this House has stood on a number of occasions and he said that we are going to make this province number one. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, with regard to bankruptcies in business he's made this province number one. He has increased the number of bankruptcies in this province from an average of 94 per year under the NDP to an average of 340 each year. He's broken every preceding record of the higher number of bankruptcies in this province that his government, himself, has established. What a Premier. What a government. What a great economic record of this government opposite, Mr. Speaker!

But those are stories that can be told individually, not only as a summary that I have told them. And I'd like to stand in this House and relate some of the experiences of these people because it's not a matter of economic policies -

\_ you drop a number from one column and add it to another. These are families and the lives of families that have been affected, that will affect them in almost every course for the rest of their lives, Mr. Speaker.

And what I'd like to talk to you about — and I could talk to you about those experiences for the next 16 or 17 weeks but we won't have that time; I want to get on to another topic — but I want to talk to you about some business bankruptcies as they compare to other provinces. I've said that we're the second highest in number of increase in bankruptcies in the country, and that is a fact.

We've seen in neighbouring provinces, not an increase of 27.7 per cent from '87 to '88 in the number of bankruptcies; we've seen a decline of 3.8 per cent. And that was from '87 to '88 during the course of an NDP government. We've seen as well in Alberta a decline of 2.4 per cent, not an increase. We've seen in British Columbia a decline of 7.8 per cent. We've seen in almost every province except for Quebec and New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan, a major increase in bankruptcies for small business.

And yet they have the gall, they have the audacity to stand up here and they attempt to whitewash their economic record by saying that they've got a terrific economic program. The minister responsible for SEDCO sits in her place and natters about her economic record. She won't stand in this House and debate this issue; she won't stand in this House and talk about the resolution that I plan to move at the end of my remarks. She won't stand and be held accountable for the record of this government opposite. Saskatchewan small business and their employees have been abandoned, in my view, and in the view of the opposition, in face of tough economic times, by this government.

If we examine a couple of sectors, the reality of

bankruptcy becomes very clear. The number of farm implement dealers has decreased by 47 per cent from 1974 to 1988. In 1974 there were 450 farm implement dealers in this province, and now in 1987 there were 275. And of course in 1988 they lost another 35 implement dealers; they were down to 240.

And similarly, 24 rural hotels were either closed or repossessed in Saskatchewan during 1988. And my colleague, the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake, will have a lot to say about the hotel business when he seconds my motion.

Now this is an indication, in my view, an economic indicator of the Tory record in business in Saskatchewan. The member from Canora sits in his place and he thinks about what's happened in his town. He's seen the population of his town of Canora go from 2,667 to 2,602. That's not so bad; that's one of the better records in the entire province. But what's happened around his town of Canora is the area has been depopulated and the young people have moved and migrated away from his constituency, and they've gone to the larger centres and in many cases they've gone to other provinces. And we can talk about those details in due course, and I will.

I want to say a few words now about retail sales. In terms of retail sales growth, Saskatchewan has not fared particularly well either. There's a number of indicators I've got to raise, and here's another one. The percentage increase in retail sales in this province has been substantially lower than the national average, ranking near the bottom in comparison to other provinces.

The total retail sales, percentage change by province, Saskatchewan is shown from 1984 as . . . was the worst in terms of change. They had a decline in sales in 1984 — minus 0.1 per cent. Everybody else had at least a 4.7 per cent increase or higher. In 1985 they increased a bit, by 8 per cent, but they again were the worst province in terms of retail sales in the nation.

I guess it's the reverse arithmetic of the Premier; they've made themselves number one in retail sales. Instead of making themselves number one, they've made themselves number 10.

In 1986 in Saskatchewan we bumped it up a bit — 6.3 per cent increase in the retail sales value. In 1988 we are at 4.5; we're the second lowest. So as you see, Mr. Speaker, from 1984 through 1988, in good times and in bad, this government's economic policies have shown that the retail sales in every year, in every financial fiscal year, has been the lowest in all of the nation of all the 10 provinces. Even Prince Edward Island has done better. Even Newfoundland has done better than Saskatchewan when it came to an increase in retail sales in this province.

Total retail sales growth in Saskatchewan was the second lowest only to Manitoba in 1988. And this doesn't indicate, in my view, it doesn't indicate, in the view of the business people in this province, a good business climate within which small business can operate effectively and hope to flourish.

The member from Melville has stood in his place and



talked about his free enterprise desire. He's talked about what a great job they've done in manufacturing and all the great jobs they've increased in manufacturing.

Well within this sector, the provincial economy has also witnessed a drastic reduction in the number of people employed. From a record high of 21,479 people employed in manufacturing industries in 1981, Madam Minister, this province has now been reduced to a level in 1987 to 19,122. That's a decline of about 2,300 jobs in manufacturing, total, overall in this province.

And she can question these figures, and I'd like her to do that, but they're bureau of statistics figures from the Department of Consumer and Commercial Affairs.

And this is the same number, I mean, of manufacturing employees that Saskatchewan had in 1978 — 11 years ago. In '81 we had 21,479. It's declined every year consistently to '86. It went in '86 from 18,166, it bumped up about 90 or 80 jobs to 19,122. But as of 1987, they've declined substantially. They've lost manufacturing jobs.

So despite the Tory rhetoric about diversifying the provincial economy, Saskatchewan has lost over 2,300 jobs in the manufacturing sector from 1981 to 1987 — a decrease of 11 per cent, a minus 11 per cent on the economic indicator scale.

More than seven years of diversifying the economy and there are no more people employed in manufacturing and processing now than there was in 1978, 11 years ago. This is as a result of their wonderful initiative in manufacturing and processing.

There are other general economic indicators which reveal a dismal business environment in this province, economic indicators which this government has the lever of — and they've got control of the lever. Saskatchewan's annual percentage increase in gross domestic products has seriously deteriorated in recent years. The gross domestic product in Saskatchewan, when you compare it to Canada, during the course of the last seven years of an NDP government was consistently higher than the national average.

The gross domestic product in Canada in 1978 was 13.9 per cent higher than '77. That compared to 10.9 of the national scale. We were 30 per cent higher. In 1979 yet a further increase of 12.9 per cent; the nation was at about 14 per cent. In 1980 we are 18.6 per cent increase in gross domestic product — 18.6; the national gross domestic product increase was 12.2 per cent. We are 50 per cent greater than the national average in 1980. In 1981, the last full year of an NDP government in this province, there was an increase in the gross domestic product of 15.5 per cent over the previous year; the national average was only 14.9 per cent.

And then in 1982 the Conservatives came to power with their wonderful economic program. Rather than 13 or 12 or 15 or 18 per cent increases over the previous year, the 1982 increase in the gross domestic product in Saskatchewan was only 3.2 per cent, which was only 60 per cent of the national average. We were always 10 or 40 or 50 per cent greater; we were only 50 per cent of the

national average . . . 60 per cent.

In 1983, it wasn't 14 or 16 or 18 per cent greater; it wasn't even 3.2. It was 2.7 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker. The national average was 8.4. Only 25 per cent of the national average increase under this economic policy of this Conservative government.

In 1985, it wasn't 12 or 16 or 18, like it was under the NDP in terms of an increase in gross domestic product, but it was 2.7 per cent. The national average was 7.7 per cent. We were 35 per cent of the national average.

In 1986 — you think that's bad — in 1986 under this government, this government promised the world. The member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, the Minister of Finance, stood in this House and he said to the people of this province that the deficit was only going to be \$328 million. He only missed by \$1 billion, because a year later when it came out it was over \$1.3 billion in terms of a deficit. And that was his economic policy to give away a billion dollars to the big multinationals that year.

But you know what happened in 1986, Mr. Speaker? In 1986 the gross domestic product increased, not 16 or 18 or 14 per cent like it was under the NDP on an annual basis, but increased by 1 per cent compared to the national average of 5.8. We were 15 per cent of the national average. As opposed to 150 or 160 per cent, we were 15 per cent. Unbelievable! In 1987 it didn't get much better. We were only 45 per cent of the national average.

(1500)

These are figures which can be laughed at, and the members opposite laugh at them because they're having a great time being elected officials. They're having a great time living in their cocoon of insulation. They're having a great time spending the taxpayers' money like drunken sailors, except drunken sailors . . . There's a difference, Mr. Speaker, between drunken sailors and this government, because drunken sailors spend their own money, they don't spend money from the taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan. So even drunken sailors have far more credibility and accountability than this government opposite.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Solomon:** — But this poor economic record of a gross domestic product increase in Saskatchewan reflects a general pattern where since 1982 Saskatchewan's growth rate has been consistently lower than the Canadian annual rate. This disturbing trend is also reflected in a per capita gross domestic product.

And we can talk about what the Saskatchewan average income was from 1981 through to 1987, and when you look at the ratio between Saskatchewan and Canada in 1981, the average per capita gross domestic product in Saskatchewan was 101 per cent. And every single year since 1981 the percentage has declined. Rather than being the leaders in this country with regard to per capita gross domestic product, we've gone from 101 per cent down to 99 per cent in '82, down to 94 per cent in '83,

down to 95 per cent in '84, down to 90 per cent in '85, down to 87 per cent in 1986, down to 84 per cent in 1987.

Between 1977 and 1982, total personal income in Saskatchewan increased from \$6.1 billion to \$12.1 billion, or 98 per cent. So under the last seven years of an NDP government, the total personal income in this province increased 98 per cent.

But the Tories got elected in 1982 and what happens? And you look at their increase and the personal income rose from 12 billion to 16 billion, which was about a 35 per cent increase — 35 per cent increase — compared to 98 per cent increase under the NDP.

So the economic indicators, as we go through them one by one show to the members in a very painful way, in a very painful fashion, what kind of an economic program the Tories have put forward in this province since '82.

When you look at unemployment in 1982, there were 28,000 people unemployed in Saskatchewan — 28,000 unemployed — which is a very high figure and one which should cause any government concern. But in '88 it wasn't 28, it wasn't 29, it wasn't 30, it was 37,000 people not working in this province, and that when you consider that the out-migration of the population has been the on the rise on top of that. So we see a drastic increase in unemployment and it's grown. It's grown.

Saskatchewan's labour force decreased by 6,000. When you look at the numbers, the unemployment rate, or the unemployment numbers went from 28 to 37 per cent, but on top of that, the labour force decreased by 6,000 persons to 472,000 in February, '89, from 478,000 persons in January, '89 — 6,000 decrease in one month alone. And there were 43,000 people unemployed in Saskatchewan during February of '89 — an increase of 1,000 from the previous month.

So we've seen an increase in unemployment rates under the NDP when it was around 2 to 3 to 4 per cent — the highest was 4.1 per cent in 11 years of the New Democratic Party government — where we seen the lowest rate of the Conservative government has been around 4.5 per cent; and it was, in February of '89, 9.1 per cent, an increase of about 100 per cent in the unemployment rate in this province as a result of economic policies that this government has put forward, or not put forward.

And in Saskatchewan, between 1982 and 1987 investment increased from \$3.6 billion to \$4.5 billion, an 18 per cent increase. But when you compare it to the NDP's seven years, investment increased 65 per cent. Under the PCs it was an increase of 18 per cent.

The Premier stood in this House and he stood in front of this House and he said in 1982 that we're open for business — we are open for business. People from all over the nation and all over the continent will flee to Saskatchewan because they've elected me Premier of this province. The member from Estevan has been elected the Premier, and through three words, open for business, he's going to turn this province around.

Well unfortunately he's turned the province around, but it was in the wrong direction. He went, rather than being open for business, being closed for business. We have seen the bankruptcy rates at the highest level ever. We've seen investments flee this province at record numbers. We've seen unemployment rates the highest ever. We've seen people leave this province that will never come back, which is particularly hurting for those who still remain, those family members who remain here, but in particular, as well, when you look at the promise the Premier made to bring back the families of Saskatchewan. And of course he said that's what he was going to do, but he's done the opposite.

So when you look at this government, you have to wonder when they say things, whether they mean it or whether they mean the opposite. And I've shown here in glowing terms, in numbers and statistics which this government has provided themselves, that they've done the opposite in every single small-business economic program that they've ever talked about or said they would work on.

I want to talk to you about, now, out-migration. We've seen out-migration in this province accelerate at levels that are unprecedented in the history of this province. We've seen in 1988 a total of 13,346 people, in a net sense, leave this province — a population loss of 13,346 people. That was in 12 months of 1988, Mr. Speaker.

In the first five months of this year we have seen almost the same amount of people leave this province in a net way. We have seen the population of Saskatchewan in the last 12 months of '88 and the first five of 1989 drop by over 25,000 people, 25,000 population loss. We are now under a million people in this province. We saw, in February, 6,261 people alone leave this province in a net way, and that's over the number of births and people in-migrating.

This is an example, another indicator, economic indicator that the government has failed dismally in its economic policy. When you've got a flourishing economy, when you've got an economy that's strong and vibrant, and you've got an economic program that makes sense and helps the business community in this province, you don't have people leaving in record numbers. You have people working in this province and contributing. You have people who are graduating out of our high schools and technical schools and universities, staying in this province to contribute, to help pay off their education and the education costs by getting a job in Saskatchewan, contributing through paying income taxes and sales taxes and other provincial taxes, and thereby contributing to the growth of this province.

That is not happening in Saskatchewan. This government has not been a very good government — and I'm using that term very complimentary — when it comes to helping out small business. And the record shows in the economic indicator of out-migration.

One of the very, very significant facts about this out-migration, and one of the important facts I want to raise today, is that the young people are leaving this

province in record droves. And the future of this province, Mr. Speaker, the short-term future I think is in the hands of some of us that are in this House and many of us in the opposition, but the fact of the matter is that the future of the province of Saskatchewan depends upon its young people. We need their energy, we need their ideas, we need their imagination, we need their skills, and we need their contributions in a community sense and in a family sense so that when we are done, when our days are done in this House, there's someone to take over the running of this province, there's someone to take over the running of businesses and working in the co-op sector.

When our young people leave this province, we are left with a very major problem down the road because we won't have those people that are skilled and have the ties to the province and have the knowledge about the province and can work in this province to make it a better place to live. We're losing those people in record numbers.

And what I want to quote from is a couple of newspaper stories, one from the — I believe it's the *Leader-Post*; the title is "Young people fleeing rural Saskatchewan". And I quote:

Saskatchewan youth are fleeing . . . in record numbers, an "ominous" trend that could decimate rural Saskatchewan unless its crippled economy is revived, say university researchers.

And it talks about this researcher:

He found that young people under the age of 20 make up a shrinking proportion of the population of towns and villages which are losing residents, while a proportion of senior citizens is growing.

In 1971, young people made up 37.9 per cent of the rural population; by 1986, it had dropped to 27.2 per cent.

It dropped about, oh, 25 per cent. That's a very disturbing headline, but these are the facts. And this is information that's come from Statistics Canada.

Another headline reads "Saskatchewan youths found leaving farms in record numbers" and pretty much the same line but it talks about repeated drought:

. . . an unstable marketplace and bankruptcy among family and neighbors have convinced many young people that country living is no longer viable, says Alan Anderson, a University of Saskatchewan sociologist who studied rural depopulation for a federal population survey.

And he goes on about . . . Another individual here is being quoted as saying that:

(We have to create) . . . an economic development strategy for rural Saskatchewan.

And I've given you some indication as to what the economic indicators are, at least some of them.

Talk about out-migration, another headline, "Province's fastest-growing export:" and I want you to guess what it is. Do you think it's potash? Do you think it's water? Do you think it's forest resources? Do you think it's oil or natural gas, or what do you think the province's fastest growing export is? It's people. That's what the headline says. Saskatchewan exports more people at the fastest rate than any other province in the country. And the member from Moose Jaw North has indicated very clearly, as other members have indicated, that this is a sign of the people of Saskatchewan voting with their feet. They're leaving this province in record numbers because they can't stand the economic policies of this government.

**An Hon. Member:** — Can't stand the Tories.

**Mr. Solomon:** — The member from Moose Jaw North has indicated that the people who've left this province also can't stand the Tories. I want to just make a comment about that because that's not entirely true. Because I've known a number of people who have left this province because of the economic record of the Conservative government, and I can tell you that a lot of those people who left were card-carrying members of the Progressive Conservative Party, they were supporters of the Conservative Party, and it's unfortunate they have had to leave because of their family ties and the fact they were born and raised here, but they've even knifed their own people.

They don't care whether you're supportive of a government, or whether you were born and raised in Saskatchewan, or whether you have skills and energy and ambition and something to offer and contribute. All they care about is what kind of patronage and corruption and what kind of hand-outs and dollars they can give, tax dollars they can give to their big-business friends.

That's the only policy of economic substance the government's put forward in the last seven years. And even their own members are being disgusted and are disgusted with their performance, and they're leaving in record numbers as well. So the member from Moose Jaw North is right, but he's not right totally when he says they're all NDP supporters. I'm sorry, it wasn't the member for Moose Jaw North — Moose Jaw North was always correct — it was the member from Pelly, I think, who mentioned that, and I think he's got something to look forward to.

I have more statements to make about . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm pleased to hear that the member from Regina South has awakened from his nap. The babbling member from Regina South has always spoken well from his seat, but he's never spoken well from his feet. And it seems to me that he'll be getting up in this debate and defending the policies of his government with regard to small business.

He'll be telling us in this House, I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, how the government has implemented positive and concrete and effective measures to support small business, so that these bankruptcies of the record numbers that I've quoted from his own government, he'll get up there and deny them or he'll explain them away. I'm sure he'll do that. And if I'm wrong, then I suppose my

comment about him being the babbling member from Regina South will likely have some relevance.

(1515)

But you know, the member can also recall when he was at the . . . he reminds me of another economic indicator that I haven't yet raised. He was a participant in the Saskatchewan Home Builders' Association, I believe it was, annual meeting where they hosted a number of MLAs. And they talked about the state of the housing industry in this province.

And the minister had the courage to go, number one. He had extra courage, number two, to go and say a few words and talk to these people without having a smirk on his face. And he had the triple courage of getting up and standing in front of these business people, these construction home builders, and saying what a wonderful job the government's done with regard to the economy.

And then of course the home builders say to him, well in 1982 there were 6,822 housing starts in the province of Saskatchewan, but in 1988 there were not 6,800, there were not 5,000, there were not 4,000 — there were only 3,800 housing starts in Saskatchewan, which was the worst year on record in this province, and they had a great deal of concern.

And what did the member from Regina South say? He said, we're the best government since sliced bread. We're the best government . . . we've got the best economic track record of any other government in the world. We can manage. We know how to manage. We know how to balance budgets. We know how to cut taxes. We know how to do all these things.

He was saying those things to these people, but do you think they believed him? I don't think they believe him. I don't think the member from Moose Jaw North believes him. I don't think the member from Saltcoats believes him. I don't think the member from Meadow Lake believed him.

**An Hon. Member:** — Who believes him? Put up your hand.

**Mr. Solomon:** — Nobody believes the member from Regina South. But do you know what the sad point is here, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the business community in this province? The bad news is that 1988 was the worst year for housing starts in the house building industry in this province.

But the worst thing is that this year, 1989, was only 47 per cent of last year's. So '88 was the worst year on record; '89 is starting out as another record breaking year for the housing industry, only record breaking in a negative sense and a costly sense because fewer people are working.

And the member from Regina South knows better than I can tell him that one of the major employment sectors in the entire province is the housing industry, because it creates a lot of jobs and a lot of spin-off jobs. Yet he has the gall to stand before this group, to sit in this House and

babble on about what a great job they're doing. And I can't believe that.

He got up and he said 22,000 new jobs were created. He must have been thinking about B.C., because that's where all the booming house construction is going. Or he must have been thinking about Toronto, because that's where they're building some more. Or maybe he thought about the 13,000 that left the province and plus the 11,000 this year and didn't add it right, and it's supposed to be 25,000 but he said 22,000, and they left to build houses in other provinces. Maybe that's what he meant.

Twenty-five thousand people — net loss of young people and women and children and able-bodied people have left this province as a result of the economic policies of this government.

But there's other economic indicators. I'm just scratching the surface. The small-business people and others are telling me that they're very worried. They've got worries about out-migration, they've got worries about this government's record, and they've got worries about the unemployment rate and other things that I've mentioned.

But one of the other worries they're conveying to me is they say, look, how can we in business, how do you expect us in business to stand there and be involved in the community and create jobs and try and get new business when this government is not? And they're telling us we should be doing this, we should be out there working and hustling and uncovering every stone in the country to increase our business when in fact this government preaches that but does the opposite. What have they done with regard to small business to get them to worry?

The small-business community has said one of the other factors that concerns them is the deficit of this province. We have gone in 1981 and 1982, the '82 fiscal year, from a balanced budget, a surplus budget in fact, 125, 150 million, depending on who you talk to, but over \$125 million surplus budget, to where we now have as a result of the wonderful job — and I can't compliment the minister on this — but the incredible job; it's not wonderful, it's incredible — of the Minister of Finance, both the member from Kindersley and the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden who have driven this province to the brink of bankruptcy.

We've gone from a surplus budget to a budget, an operating deficit of over \$4 billion. That's \$4,000 for every man, woman, and child in this province, and it's increasing daily because the debt is increasing daily and the population is decreasing daily. So we're starting at 4,000. A year from now, it may be 5,000. Who knows?

But they're telling me they're worried about that. And they're worried as well about the Crown corporation capital debt, which has gone from a self-liquidating position of about 2.3 billion to where they've driven it up to \$8.8 billion — almost \$9 billion.

So the total debt of this business government — anti-business government I call it — has increased by \$12 billion. Twelve billion dollars increase in debt, operating in Crown corporation capital. And that is affecting the

business community, because people are saying, if this government is careless and they've mismanaged and they're incompetent as they are, as they have shown in the past, and if they have no regard for the future of this province, we don't want to work with them to try and solve the problem. We want a new government that is consistent and is fair. And that's what they want.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, come the next election, the people of this province will elect a government that is consistent and fair, and it won't be the members opposite.

Another economic indicator is interest rates. We've seen interest rates impact on the small-business community, and this government has a part to play in that. There's an uneasiness in the business world, in particular in Saskatchewan with the small-business owners that I've talked to in the past, about the floating rates, about their inventory costs are unpredictable because of the floating rates, and the bank rates, and so on.

This government has been told about that issue. They are aware of it. We know they're incompetent and they're corrupt, but they're not stupid enough they don't read the newspaper. They are; they are smart enough to read the newspaper. And I think they've recognized, even from the Minister of Finance, that interest rates have gone up in the last couple of years.

But on two occasions the NDP in this House, as a result of the pressures applied to the business community because of the increasing interest rates, have attempted to bring forward an emergency resolution to debate the interest rate question and to try and get a resolution of the problems so that this government could go to Ottawa and talk to Mr. Crow and talk to the Bank of Canada and talk to the Prime Minister, who ultimately set the rates, and request some kind of special consideration for the province of Saskatchewan, and in particular the farming community and the small-business community in this province.

We've done this . . . we've made this attempt, Mr. Speaker, on two separate occasions. And what has the Conservative government opposite done? They've rejected the opportunity to debate this issue. They've rejected small business by not paying attention to the concerns of small business. They've rejected those concerns because they've rejected the opportunity to discuss and debate the issue of small interest rates.

And the member from Regina South sits there and he says he agrees. He knows that. He knows that. And the member from Meadow Lake, the member from Meadow Lake, he's concerned too, but he sits back and he lets the Deputy Premier and he lets the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden pull his string. He's got no control over what happens in that caucus. The member from Meadow Lake sometimes does a good job. In this instance I think he supported the interest rate motion. But his colleagues, they said no, they didn't want this to happen.

But they had a contingency plan. The government's contingency plan was to say, well we're not going to accept the NDP opposition's motion; we're going to

come in with our motion. So they came into this House and they laid on the Table the motion which said they were going to talk about interest rates and try and help the business community and the farm community. And they put it on the order paper about, oh, eight or nine weeks ago, and every day from that day forward for the first couple of weeks we said, bring the motion forward; let's debate it; let's talk about it.

They boldly strode into this House and they said, here's the motion on the resolution on interest rates. Let's talk about it. But they are the ones who set the agenda. They determine what's on the business of this House on a daily basis, and they have not to this day, after two months, brought that resolution forward to discuss. The government sits there on its hands. They sit there. The motion sits there on the order paper. They do nothing. All they do is they wish and they hope that their big-business friends will come in and resolve the problem.

Well we've got news for them, which is no news to anybody else in this province except to them. Their big-business friends have not helped them and they will not be helping them, because they're the only ones that can help themselves. And if they don't do that and they don't help the people of this province and the small-business community of this province, then I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, the next election will show very clearly what their actions have been.

Now we're seeing here, Mr. Speaker, a couple of other things that I want to talk about. And there's a trend forming in this province. As rates increase, interest rates increase, fewer businesses are starting. As interest rates increase, more businesses go bankrupt because the floating rates increase and there's less business. As fewer people are there to support the businesses as a result of a net out-migration of over 25,000 in 16 short months, then businesses close down.

Now how can a business in Saskatchewan, in this province, survive with rising interest rates and other economic policies of this government? People have come to me on a number of occasions, because I've done some consulting with small business over the years, and they've asked me: how do you start a small business? How do you start a small business in this province?

And the members laugh, the members opposite laugh at small business and their problems. They sit there and they laugh heartily about the problems that people in small business are having. They are insensitive; they have no consideration for the people that are going through the problems that they've been the authors of.

And in the business consulting that I've been involved with . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member from Meadow Lake stands there nattering, or sits there nattering in his chair, and he talks about business. He's never worked a business in all his life. I don't think he's even earned the pay when he was employed.

But the problem we've got here . . . People say to me, well how do you start a small business. And do you know what the standard answer has been? You start up a small business . . . you start up a big business in Saskatchewan,

Mr. Speaker, and you wait a year and then you've got a small business. That's how you start a small business in this province these days as a result of this government's policies.

And they sit there and they laugh because they think it's wonderful news that small-business people are going out of business. They think it's a joke because they're sitting there in their \$84,000-a-year cabinet positions, with their cars paid for, with their travel expenses paid for. They claim 50 or \$60,000 a year in travel expenses and they're getting it out of the taxpayers' dollars while small business, Mr. Speaker, is struggling to pay their fair share.

What we've seen is an exodus of skilled people, an exodus of young people. We've seen central Canada booming. We've seen a great demand for money to support central Canada, moving there. And now we're in the same position as we were in the '30s and in the '60s where Saskatchewan has become a net exporter of cash and a net exporter of people and labour.

And there's a parallel. And the government, in our view, has to show some leadership in terms of our economy. The government is obligated, in our view, when business, small business in particular, is having the problems that it's had as a result of their own programs, to jump into the economy and to participate.

And the member from Meadow Lake sits there. He talks about small business with the very little knowledge he has, and he says to me, why don't you hurry up and finish your comments about small business; tell us all you know about small business; it won't take that long. Well I can tell the House, I can tell all I know about small business and all the member from Meadow Lake knows and it won't take any longer. That's exactly what we're doing here.

Now the member from Meadow Lake says he wants to participate in this debate, and I look forward to listening to every single detail that he'll provide and he'll explain away with regard to statistics that his own government has provided to the people of this province.

He was a failure in opposition, and he's a failure as the Minister of Health, and now he's shown the people of this province that it's not good enough to be a personal failure like he is; he wants to make sure that every small-business person in this province, including the farming community, fails as well.

(1530)

We've seen as well, Mr. Speaker, others comment about interest rates. We've seen the wheat growers and businesses, and I refer to a *Leader-Post* article which says that, and I quote:

The Saskatchewan-Manitoba director of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business agrees, adding that 45 per cent of its Saskatchewan members are finding that business is slower than normal and will slow even more if interest costs continue to rise.

So it's not a figment of the imagination of the opposition that business is suffering as a result of the interest rate policies of the cousins of the members opposite. The CFIB (Canadian Federation of International Business) which is an organization which I've been a member of over the years, speak for small-business people, and they're saying that the small-business people in this province, 45 per cent of them, find interest rates a problem in this province. And I continue to quote:

(That) Garth Whyte, CFIB director, said Prairie business is just now climbing out of the recession that central Canada rid itself of three years ago.

But interest rates have reached a level now where they are stifling sales and expansion plans.

The federation's 5,000 Saskatchewan-Manitoba members are being squeezed three ways, he said.

Business people with short-term, variable rate loans are immediately hurt every time interest rates rise.

(Second,) sales fall off when consumers delay making major purchases because interest carrying charges become too high.

(And) third, high interest rates affect entrepreneurs' attitudes towards expansion.

And each one of those three elements that the CFIB quotes and the businesses of this province and Manitoba quote, are directly controllable and influenced by the Conservatives' economic policies. And while the Ontario . . . and here's an understatement in this article. This article understates the obvious.

While the Ontario economy might be overheated, Saskatchewan's is far from burning (far from burning, it says).

Can you imagine? I think perhaps there may be some element of truth in that. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, it's my view that they've burned up the economy to the point where it may not recuperate unless there's a new government in this province.

And I can tell you that the business people that I speak to — and I've spoken to business people in Stoughton and I've spoken to business people in Weyburn and Swift Current and Canora and Melville and Regina and Saskatoon, and I've spoken to a number of them who used to be supporters of this government, and they're telling me the same thing: this government's days are numbered. When's the election? Let's bring them around, because they're not going to be around very long. That's the bottom line from the people of this province.

Yet the members sit there, rather than put forward a government-initiated economic development program that will work with private enterprise, that will work with small business, that will work with the co-op sector, and that will work with the public sector, they sit there and they laugh at small business. They laugh at the initiatives that these struggling people undertake. They laugh at the

fact that when you're in small business you have to work 60 or 70 hours a week for far less pay and far less secure pay than the members opposite.

Cabinet members opposite, they think this is a big joke. They think that the small-business community is going to support them in record numbers. They think they can take the word of a business person who is . . . on some business matters, who didn't finish off his business himself downtown Regina. He's closed down his businesses because he didn't operate. And they think that's hilarious. Well they've got some Conservative members who've gone through that process; it's not just those who supported the Liberals or the NDP.

And I can tell you as well, Mr. Speaker, that come the next election, these small-business people are going to remember the arrogance, the insults that they've been hurled, that have been hurled by this government at them, and they will never ever forget what this government has done to the economy of this province.

I want to talk about the flagship of the government opposite in terms of their economic policy. When they got elected in 1982, oil prices were on their way to getting to be record prices, world prices. In 1985 and 1986 the prices hit \$35 U.S. a barrel, which is about 10 times what it was in 1975, in the early part of '75 and '74.

And they talked about what a wonderful job the oil business was going to be, what a wonderful big-business friend the oil business was going to be to this government and this province. They talked about oil patch activity second to none. They said, you elect us and we're going to get the finest exploration record in oil in this province.

Well I have an article out of the *Leader-Post*, July 8, 1989, a recent article, page A8. The headline is, "Oil patch activity slows down." That again, Mr. Speaker, is an understatement because it has not slowed down; it has almost died out there.

I've talked to oil people in Estevan, Weyburn and Swift Current and Kindersley and Lloydminster, and the Tories have told me, as well as the Liberals and the NDP and those that are apolitical, have told me that this government's record in oil is not bad when it came to 35 bucks a barrel, but now they're not too pleased with the record of the government. Don't know what that means precisely, but I think they've got some problems even in the oil patch.

But the resource companies have cut their drilling activity in Saskatchewan. The big friends, all the Conservative friends of the Conservative Party, the major oil players in this province, have cut their drilling activity in Saskatchewan by half overall from last year — 50 per cent of last year.

So you got the member from Regina South saying to the home builders that all these jobs are created, and yet they've got the worst record in the history of Saskatchewan. You got the Energy minister saying that we've got the booming energy and economic province that we have with regard to oil, and you've got the oil patch saying it's the worst record in 10 years.

And it shows here it's down 43 per cent from the same period in 1988. But that's gas and oil. When you look at the oil record in 1988 there were 762 oil wells drilled. This year, in the first half of the year, there's 143; if you doubled that, it would be 286. So you're looking at a third, a third of the oil wells are being drilled this year that were drilled last year — one third, one third of last year's number. That's not a great deal of activity.

But it says here, it says here, I quote:

The latest six-month total shows activity in Saskatchewan's oil patch is the slowest in more than a decade despite oil prices hovering around \$20 U.S. a barrel for bench-mark West Texas intermediate crude.

In 1974 it was \$3.59 a barrel. It's now 20 bucks a barrel and the drilling activity is not anywhere near what it was in oil than it was in 1974. What a record. What a wonderful economic record!

(1530)

How do you expect businesses in this province to be created, those that exist to flourish, and those that want to sell and get onto other businesses sell those businesses, when you've got an economy that this government has created which is the worst possible economy of any other province in Canada. Not in one indicator, not in two indicators, but in every single economic indicator that I've talked about today, be it the oil patch, be it the gross domestic product, be it the personal income, be it unemployment, be it interest rates, be it bankruptcies, every single economic indicator I've talked about today has shown absolutely no confidence in the economy and the people of this province.

On the contrary, they're trying to "deep six" this province, in my view, Mr. Speaker, and I think that that's abhorrent, and I think that what has to be done is that, come the next election, the people of this province have to be told about this dismal economic performance in spades — most of them know about it now, but they have to be reminded, so that people never forget what they've done to the families and the people of this province.

I talked to some business people the other day, and do you know what they told me? They said, well we've got some gas tax problems too. This government . . . It's not just the economic indicators that I've talked about. There are some other economic points I want to make with regard to this government, and I want to raise them in order, starting with the gas tax.

This government made a number of promises to small business. They said they'd eliminate the gas tax in this province. The Premier stood in front of this legislature in 1982, a week after the election, the day he got sworn in, and he said that we will eliminate the gas tax, effective today; we will never, ever reintroduce this gas tax as long as there's a Conservative government in this province. At that time the gas tax was 29 cents a gallon; it's now 45 cents a gallon. It's increased 16 cents, or over 50 per cent. It has not only been reintroduced but it's increased by

about 50 per cent.

Now what this does to small business is hurt them very significantly. And I want to talk to you about the small business impact, or the gas tax impact on small business.

A trucking firm that we spoke with, with 12 diesel units, will pay \$107,000 annually in gas tax alone. That's \$107,000 increase to their operating expenses — \$107,000. A Regina taxi driver who works 246 days a year will pay \$5,000 more.

Another group to feel the gas tax hike will be the couriers. Ron Coutts, president of Coutts Courier Company Ltd. in Regina, said some independent drivers working for his firm burn unleaded fuel worth about \$250 every month. New provincial charges on the fuel add expenses of \$34 a month or \$400 annually to couriers running vehicles with regular gasoline.

So you hear about those concerns. People are not happy. Another business man said to me that he has 10 cars, 10 cars that they operate in this city, and the increase in the gas tax is a 43 per cent increase in gas tax payable in his operating. And he pays about \$7,800 a year now in gas tax for these 10 cars alone.

So where does all this extra money come? Where does the \$107,000 in extra gas revenue come from the trucking firm? Where does it come from the couriers? Where does it come from the taxi driver? Where does it come from this business I referred to with the 10-car fleet? It comes from the taxpayers directly; that's where it comes from.

Because effectively, Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina Wascana can't figure this out, but he wonders where the increased operating expenses are going to come from. Well from a business point of view, the business people will tell you that the increase in operating expenses is tacked on to the increased price of the service that that business provides or the product that that business sells.

And of course that means that the member would pay more. But he's not going to pay that much more because he's a legislative secretary and he makes \$8,000 a year over and above the 44,000. So he makes 52,000 or 53,000 bucks a year as an MLA and a legislative secretary, and he gets a car and he gets a secretary and he gets all kinds of other help. And he's got a very cushy job. He doesn't do any work for it.

The only work he does from time to time, Mr. Speaker, is chatter from his box, from his seat. And he would chatter with some degree of relevance if he had a teleprompter beside him, because in his former life I think he did something with regard to teleprompting; I wasn't sure which. I think it was reading partial sports scores. Anyway he did very well in reading partial scores because he kind of partially . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. The member from Regina Wascana will have an opportunity to get into this debate if he wants to, so I'd ask the member to allow the member for Regina North West to make his comments.

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member from Regina Wascana was acting a bit childish, and I concur with your comment.

I guess I want to sum up now with some of the comments that I've made. I want to relate to you one final comment that I had with regard to the business community.

One business person told me — and I've made some notes about this — that the only kind of government program to effectively stimulate business would be a program to expand market opportunities and to do what is necessary to help business to get into markets. He says he wants less smoke and mirrors from the government, and he wants a more realistic effort from the government to buy locally. And this is a concern that has been shared with him and others in Stoughton and Weyburn and Regina and so on.

But I guess I want to summarize my comments by saying that the length of this session has been — we're now into day 74 — has been a long session. Some say that the PCs have no economic program, but in fact they've put into effect their pure Conservative economic plan.

Their economic plan has four bases to it. One is privatization, which is the sell-off of Crown corporation and public assets at discount prices to friends of the Conservative Party and to big business . . .

(1545)

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. I've allowed the member pretty far-ranging debate. Order, order. I've allowed the member far-ranging debate, but I would like him to keep his comments on the motion as it is in the blues.

**Mr. Solomon:** — Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will move:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to implement immediately, positive, concrete and effective measures to support small business and to enable Saskatchewan small business to expand local economic activity and local job creation.

That's what I'll be moving when I'm done.

But what this government has done with regard to their economic plan for small business is they've put forward a privatization plan, they've put forward as well a plan to subsidize big business in this province.

We've seen Cargill being subsidized to \$290 million a year to build a fertilizer plant — \$290 million; we have seen this government give Weyerhaeuser \$248 million — a low-interest loan; we've seen them give \$222 million to Husky Oil for the Lloydminster upgrader for a very small share of the plate; they've given Peter Pocklington money — \$20 million.

The other third element of their plan, they've given their big-business friends money. That's part of their economic plan, at the expense of small business and small-business



families.

The third problem we've got with this economic program, their third base, is that they believe in having the highest possible debt. They've instructed the Crown corporation heads to leverage up their debt, witnessed by SaskTel paying out a \$235 million dividend out of their retained earnings.

And fourthly, we've seen their most harsh and mean and tough measure on the people of this province, the fourth element of their economic plan, and that is to tax the people of this province to the point where they hurt. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that people are hurting. They've increased the sales tax 40 per cent, from 5 per cent to 9 per cent, when they promised to eliminate it. They increased personal income tax by 108 per cent when they promised to reduce it by 10 per cent. They increased the gas tax by over 50 per cent when they promised to eliminate the gas tax in total.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's my view that this government's policies in regard to small business have been a dismal failure. I've talked about the economic indicators. And I move, seconded by the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake:

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to implement immediately, positive, concrete, and effective measures to support small business and to enable Saskatchewan small business to expand local economic activity and local job creation.

I so move.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I watch the reaction of the members across today when the member from Regina was speaking to this motion, I thought of the time that I'd been spending in rural Saskatchewan, in small town Saskatchewan and in the larger cities, and what the business people of those communities were telling me about their thoughts on this government's action since 1982. And I think the member from Regina South will be especially interested in this, given the fact that he's always wanted to be the mouthpiece for small business from that government caucus, although he was removed from that position a short while ago and replaced by the member from Maple Creek.

And I was thinking of the things that the business community are telling me about their thoughts on this government, about how deceitful they've been towards them, how they've been double-crossed, how the small-business community in Saskatchewan feel double-crossed by the Premier and his cabinet and the caucus members on that side; and how they're waiting for a chance to get rid of them; how they're waiting for a chance to vote at an election where they have a chance to explain to them their feelings in terms of economic development through small business, in terms of the treatment that small business has received at the hands of this government, because they've chosen megaprojects

and large, multinational corporations over the Saskatchewan small-business community. And as they're telling me, they're waiting for an opportunity to indicate their displeasure.

They're telling me that programs that are supposed to be delivered to Saskatchewan small-business people through SEDCO are not there when they go to get them. They're telling me that this government doesn't understand even how they're going to deliver programs that they announce. And I can use the example of the hotel association and people involved in the hotel industry, who one week get a letter from this government telling them that they can't participate in a SEDCO loan, and a week later after someone straightened someone out — and we're not sure who — get another letter saying, well they may be able to participate if their financial position is not too terribly, terribly bad.

That's the kind of treatment that the Saskatchewan business community is getting from this government. And I want to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the small-business community in Saskatchewan no longer trusts this government, not only because of the incompetence that they've displayed, although that's part of it, but they don't trust them because of the deceit in announcing a program that's supposed to be all-inclusive to the Saskatchewan business people, but when they apply for a loan through SEDCO or through whatever program they're delivering it through, it's not there for them — it's just gone. And that's why this government isn't going to survive another election, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter whether it's the member from Shellbrook-Torch River who goes back to his business community, or whether it's the member from Regina South or the member from Rosthern.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to tell you, I've been in some of those small towns and I want to single out one of those constituencies especially, Shellbrook-Torch River, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I've been in there often and I've talked to the business people in there, and they no longer trust their MLA; they no longer trust the government that he represents; they no longer trust the Premier that leads them.

And that's why I'm telling you that those business people are waiting for a chance to show their dissatisfaction in Shellbrook, in Smeaton, in Weirdale, in Meath Park, so that they can replace that MLA with one that they respect and one that they can trust.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — And I want to say that there as well are some reasons why they no longer trust them, because they know the millions of dollars that they've spent on advertising through Dome Petroleum; they know all of the money that they've spent on trips, and I'll cite some of them for you.

The Deputy Premier flies to Geneva and to New York — a cost of \$2,600 to Geneva, a cost of \$1,800 to New York. And those business people know that that's money that should be delivered through a small-business program for

some of the industries in this province; as an example, the hotel association, the hoteliers that are having financial difficulties.

And the implement dealers know that the Justice minister's trips to Brazil and Japan, that spending money, their tax dollars that should be going back to programs to help them, they're waiting for a chance to display their displeasure.

And that's why I say the member from Shellbrook-Torch River and the member from Rosthern and the member from Wilkie are going to have some problems when it comes to the next election in terms of their electoral chances.

And they know that the Minister of Finance, who flies to Zurich and to London and Toronto and China and Japan, and all of those thousands of dollars that are expended that could be delivering small-business programs, they know that that's not fair and it's not proper. And as I said before, they're waiting for a chance to show this government exactly how they feel about it.

When I go through the list of air travel, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I list the number of dollars that the different departments have spent; as an example, the Executive Council, the cabinet and Premier, \$104,655, and this is from September of '87 until May of '88. What waste! What total irresponsibility of public funds. What a shame that this government has delivered this kind of unfairness to the people of this province and the business people especially.

You look at the number of bankruptcies in this province, the number of people who have closed their doors and left this province for good. It shows a lack of distrust, it shows a lack of dissatisfaction, and it shows a lack of opportunity. And all of this has happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since 1982. In the 1970s we didn't have this kind of an economy in Saskatchewan, but then again we had a decent government that had its priorities right. But since 1982, that's been missing; it's been sadly lacking.

There's so much more that could be said about this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We could be talking about the deficit that's been draining money out of this province. We could talk about the total provincial debt. We could talk about a million dollars a day being spent on interest alone through the deficit. We could talk about your \$9 million birthday party that's planned for 1990, that is taking away from programs that should be there to deliver small business.

We could talk about spending \$2 million to advertise plastic health cards. We could talk about \$25 million a year that's nothing but blatant political advertising that comes out of the taxpayers' pockets. We could talk about the \$34,000 a day that this government spends on empty office space.

Maybe we should talk about that, but maybe instead we should just talk about the advertising that's been spent, the \$25 million a year that for the most part has been funnelled through Dome and through Roberts (and) Poole.

We should maybe talk about the fact that this government's blowing \$27,472 a day. Can you imagine that, if that was put into the hands of the business community, a young entrepreneur or a young business person with a good idea of what that might do? But oh no, this government's got its priorities straight — self-serving advertisement funnelled through the hands of their friends and into the pockets of their friends.

And we could talk as well about the \$5 million that they've blown on the GigaText scandal that could have been used for the small-business community. Could talk about the money that came through SEDCO to the Northern Lights game farm when other business people get turned down — and I've got letters in my hand where they've been turned down. People that want it for legitimate and decent reasons and they're turned down through SEDCO, but others have access.

That's the kind of fairness that the people in this province, the business people in this province no longer see. And that's what I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the reason that this government won't survive another election.

And I wonder what kind of a story some of these MLAs are giving their business people as they watch them close their doors and move out of their small towns, out of small towns like Smeaton or Shellbrook or Weirsdale or Duck Lake. I wonder what they say about that. Because I don't believe that there's a politician, if he wants to be honest in this province, there isn't one politician that can stand up in front of those people and say, it happened because of world conditions, and truly believe it.

There's got to be some admission that this government has been incompetent and they've destroyed the economy and they've made it a place where you can't do business any longer. It's not the open-for-business province that they promised. Oh no, far from that. And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, wish that it were, wish that it were what was promised in 1982.

But there's going to come a day, a day of reckoning when an election comes, where this government is going to have to account for its incompetence and its bad management of this province. And I want to suggest to you that there are going to be members on that side of the House that are going to be looking for opportunities in the private sector in this province, and they'll have some understanding of what it's going to take to make a living in this province in private enterprise like some of the people who've been bankrupt by their inaction and by their incompetence and by their bad management.

And I want to suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Tory caucus, after the next election, is going to be miniature in comparison to what it is now. They're going to have to look far and wide to find a colleague sitting beside them, because I would suggest to you, the people want to pass judgement on them, and that judgement means they're no longer going to be around this place. They'll replace them with some decent, competent MLAs and with a government that cares about the future of their province and about their families. And I think that's what they're

looking for, and that's why I'm pleased to second this motion.

(1600)

And as I said, I look forward to a change in government where there won't be a necessity for the opposition to bring forth motions of this nature condemning a government for incompetence and bad management and the way it's treated government.

And with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll take my place. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to speak to resolution no. 13, moved by the member for Regina North West. I'm prepared to enter this debate and speak to this resolution until at least 10 o'clock tonight, and if necessary, into another day as I in fact intend on speaking about reality and indeed what this government has done.

Lately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, many members of the opposition are trying to make out that they are the great saviours of small business in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — The only applaud they're getting is indeed from themselves. They're trying to make out that they'll bring action to solve any problems that small business may have. Well what a joke!

The member from Regina North West who came from Manitoba as a political hack and couldn't even run a successful Dairy Queen franchise, claims now in this Assembly that he has been a consultant to business. Well he couldn't recognize a business problem if it hit him where it hurts.

You know members stood opposite . . . that member stood opposite and simply quoted statistics — no understanding, no solutions, no reasoning, nothing at all about new starts. Why? Nothing about diversification, nothing at all about economic benefits, nothing about jobs. No, sir, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not a word — just comparing old statistics.

And I guess that's business to them. Lord knows, they have no policies. He didn't offer one solution, spoke for an hour. Not one solution, not one practical answer to any of the business problems because they don't understand the business problems. They never have and they never will.

Prior to my present public service, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think most members of this Assembly are aware, and certainly the business community and all of my constituents, that I was active in business in the city of Regina for some 25 years, most of it, unfortunately, when the NDP was in power.

Now they were small, family-type operations and at one time I guess we had about eight of them running

simultaneously. And my family, as they were involved with me in these operations, just couldn't believe the difficulty that we had of operating these family businesses in this city under the NDP administration.

So I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from painful and bitter experience, that the NDP are certainly not saviours of small business and never will be. They tried to stifle and choke off small business at every opportunity. Their *Regina Manifesto* simply puts everything, their whole idea of business, into proper perspective. The government should own and operate everything, nationalize everything, and that's exactly what they understand about business.

When I was in business with my family, when they weren't hitting us with their tax bites, they were regulating us to death with their maze of regulations which we had to comply with if we wanted to remain in business. Their solution to business seemed to be a meaningless series of grants, hand-outs to the business community . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. I'd ask the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake to allow the minister to make his comments as . . . Order, order. Allow the minister to make his comments on the motion.

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That member from P.A.-Duck Lake that's presently shouting from his chair, and when he had the opportunity to speak, you know, he displayed no respect for his business community in P.A.-Duck Lake, no respect at all for his local chamber — he didn't even speak about them, and he never does.

I think the very first time he ever came to a local chamber of commerce meeting when I was addressing it, and they didn't even know who he was. It's no wonder that he won't speak about it. You can understand why. It's no wonder why he doesn't have any respect. He too has no policy; he too has no solutions.

And, you know, only political rhetoric against the government is all he can talk about. And, you know, then he made reference to a member, knowing full well that member wasn't in any position to do anything about it. And he figured that that's his big, glorious speech about business.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I was saying, when we were there operating, I remember my daughter who ran two or three of my operations. She said, you know, the government has introduced this new small-business program but we have to hire three or four accountants if we wanted to implement them into our business, and by the time the smoke clears, it's going to cost us money. So I said, well forget about going into the program; we don't need that kind of help.

Same as they would throw grants at a business person. What did a grant do? Was a grant any good? They'd say here, friend. I guess it was good for them because they could buy people with these grants if they wanted to — oh, come on over here, we'll give you this grant. I guess that was their solution to the business problem.

And what did the grant do? Unfortunately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was a lot of business people that didn't have the knowledge that they required to go into business as we have done by supplying our business resource centres. But they would get this grant and they would think that it was some kind of an approval or a licence from the NDP to get into business, only to find out later in time that that meaningless grant cost them their life savings. Because what they really needed, an understanding government that would help them through their business problems — didn't understand. And that grant happened to be a licence for them to lose money.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was one of the reasons why I got into politics in the first place. I knew that there had to be a better way. Small business in Saskatchewan did not have to be mistreated the way they were being mistreated by the NDP government of the day.

That same member from P.A.-Duck Lake who quite often stands in his place and starts condemning the role of SEDCO — well let me tell you about the high response level for our new SEDCO programs, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and these are just the recent ones. The motion attends to 1982 and on. I've got scads of material from here.

You want to talk about business assistance from 1982 on, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We'll get into it. And I won't finish by 10 o'clock tonight, and I will need another day to continue this. And this is all factual information, not some figment of my imagination, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or something that we would like to do, or some meaningless, hollow political rhetoric, or statistics that where they compare, well you did this, we did this. These are real good solid programs installed by this government.

The four new programs launched by SEDCO May 1 has exceeded even the most optimistic expectations. And during the first six weeks of operation, the programs drew nearly 2,150 inquiries to SEDCO offices. And that's more than they normally receive in a full year.

Thirty-seven hundred additional inquiries were received at the 12 business resource centres that I referred to a moment ago that are operated by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. The inquiries had been followed up by 191 applications for financial services, totalling more than twenty-one and a half million dollars. And of those 56 involved, nearly three and a half million dollars have been approved. Now that's action. That's real true assistance for the small-business community.

That same member from P.A.-Duck Lake that knocked SEDCO in 1988 — 4,000 new manufacturing and processing jobs directly related to loan applications approved at SEDCO; 157 loans that averaged \$156,000. Is that big business? Is that our so-called big business friends? They don't even understand how that part of the operation works, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Yes, when I decided to enter politics, I felt that there was so much more that we could do to be of assistance to small business instead of blocking their path at every opportunity.

And since our government has been in office, the small-business people of Saskatchewan know, they truly know that they now have friends in the provincial government who are strong supporters of their business community, people that they can meet and converse with, people that understand their problems, people that listen and will do something to address their problems and concerns, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

As I've said many times before, I meet and talk with more members of the business community in this province in any one week than the member from Regina North West or member from P.A.-Duck Lake does in a whole year. And that goes for every member on the opposition benches, including the Leader of the Opposition who's working hard to sell themselves as the great friend of business. What a laugh. What a laugh! Now I'm hitting a nerve with you people. I speak to more people in the business community in one week than you do in a year.

The member from — one of them — either North West or P.A.-Duck Lake, spoke about my meeting with the home builders. But what did he tell? Did he say anything meaningful? He kind of just skirted around the issue and said that I said this, and said that I said that.

I'll tell you what I did talk to them about, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I talked to them about our home program. I talked to them about our home program, the one that you people wouldn't have the courage to talk to them about, the one that has generated a billion dollars worth of economic activity in this province for them — for the home builders. And they know that.

I talked about the low interest loans that this government provides — nine and three-quarter per cent mortgage — that when they were in office, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 1982, they let the interest rate on mortgages soar to 22 per cent. What did the home builders say to you then, and what was your response? We can't do anything about that. That's all you understood.

And talk about the home owners — the home owners. Do you care about them? You're laughing now and they're making mockery out of the low starts in Saskatchewan. Sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — That's your fault.

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Ah, that's our fault, the member from Regina Elphinstone says. Now he's applauding to that. What we have here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a mortgage rate that's affordable for our people to own their homes. That's why there are more people in Saskatchewan per capita own their homes than in any province in this country.

And I'll tell you what else. We have affordable housing.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. The member from Moose Jaw North, if he wants to get into the debate, certainly will have an opportunity without doing it from his seat.

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — We've got affordable housing here in

this province and we're proud of it.

They talked about the hot market in Toronto; they talked about the hot market in Vancouver. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just came back from the housing ministers' conference. I talked to all of the housing ministers across the country. They're not too pleased with the hot market that they have in B.C. They're not too pleased with the hot market that they have in Ontario.

And you know, the NDP can't recognize that. You know why they're not? People can't afford to buy their homes in those provinces . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member says, oh, go on. Well why don't you do some reading on the topic? Why don't you talk to some of those ministers? Why don't you talk to some of those other governments and find out what's true? I'm proud of the affordable housing that we have here in our province. And part of the reason, and the home builders understand this, is because of the interest rate protection plan that we have implemented for our people.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Sure, the government and the home builders both would like more starts, but we don't want artificial programs that will inflate this market and then everybody pays for it at the end.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, several months ago I had the pleasure of announcing another program, one which provides assistance to the business people of this province in the form of the business tax assistance.

Now that's been an issue that's been of concern to the small business in Saskatchewan for as long as I can remember, and certainly as long as the NDP were in power. And what did they do about it at that time? Nothing, of course.

Well, except perhaps maybe they did do something. I know that there's certainly one member, and maybe there's more, but certainly one that served in local government. And during his tenure in that position, he was part of the machine that put in massive business tax increases in the city of Regina that we still live with to this very day. So that's what they have added to the business community.

But what did they do, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They just swept the business tax problem right under the carpet the way they did with all the issues and concerns that we in small business had right across the board. They didn't have the sense to deal with that business tax issue, so they ignored it.

(1615)

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not the way that our government operates. We knew of the concerns of small business with the business tax, and we acted. We had always said with that regard, that although it was a municipal tax, that if this government could be a part of the solution, we would be, because we have faith in our small-business community. We must diversify this economy. They know that and they understand that. So we listen and then we

act.

The NDP, as much as they might like to try to listen, particularly in the business community — and what gives me a little bit of humour — they don't understand it when they hear it in any event. And even if they did, their record clearly indicates that they're not prepared to act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have much, much more to say, and at another time I will amend this motion, but at this time I will adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd seek leave of the Assembly at this time to move directly to motions for returns (debatable).

Leave granted.

## MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

### Return No. 1

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving a motion that requests that the Department of Education provide to this Legislative Assembly information regarding the number of student loans that have been defaulted upon from students who are attending private, post-secondary educational institutions.

Now as the members are aware, we've heard a lot in the media recently about students who are not able to complete their courses at private, post-secondary education institutions for a variety of reasons. And one of those reasons, Mr. Speaker, is that students are being allowed into these institutions without having the necessary prerequisites in terms of a grade 10 or a grade 11 or a grade 12, and they aren't in an academic position to complete the course.

We also have a situation in Saskatchewan where we have some students or some private educational institutions that are providing courses when really there is no necessity in the work place for those particular courses because the jobs simply aren't there.

There is some information that has come to our attention in terms of the proliferation of these private schools in the United States and the problems that it has presented to the American government, because students are taking out very large student loans, and as a result of not being able to complete the course, or being able to complete the course and having a certificate that's really worth nothing on paper, not being able to find a job, we're finding that the taxpayers in the United States are having to pick up these tremendous student loan payments.

The onus then becomes the taxpayers', because these young people simply can't pay those student loans back. And so we want to get some idea of what's happening here in Saskatchewan. We think that there are a number of students in this province who've attended these private vocational schools; they have left for whatever reason; they're either now unemployed or back on social

assistance. They're simply not being able to pay for these student loans.

Someone is benefitting from the student loans, and that may be the private operator of some of these schools which aren't regulated very well. But in the long run we've got young people who simply can't afford to pay back the loans. The taxpayers are picking it up. They go into default; we're picking it up. And we have a situation where really in some cases students are getting a worthless education. So we think it's important that the government of the day provide us with this information so we can get an accurate handle on what's happening in these private schools.

Now we hear rumours that people aren't paying their student loans, and the real tragedy is that when these young people want to attend a bona fide university or a bona fide post-secondary vocational school and they go to apply for a student loan, once they defaulted they will never be able to get another student loan. And we think it's incumbent upon the government to provide us all with this information, because I think it really will paint the picture in terms of what is happening. So I'd urge the members opposite to provide us with that information, and I would therefore move the following motion, that:

The number of student loans which the Department of Education made to Saskatchewan students to attend private educational institutions and the number of these loans which have gone into default for the period January 1, 1987 to the date this return was ordered.

I would move that, and it has been seconded by my colleague, the member from Moose Jaw North.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to just make a few brief comments on this motion and in effect say to the members opposite that the information requested by them in this return is certainly fair and reasonable, and I'm certain would be and will be of interest to members on both sides of the House. I do believe that by providing this type of information to the Assembly will be living proof of the fact that this current government has indeed expanded access to post-secondary education in a number of areas. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you yourself would have to agree that by way of new technical institutes in various parts of the province, by way of expanded programs, and indeed by way of encouragement of other learning centres, that this government has been instrumental in expanding the access to post-secondary education; further, Mr. Deputy Speaker, expanding that access, I might add, by way of 6 per cent interest money, low-interest money for student loans.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would be pleased to recommend to all members of the legislature to approve this return as written, and I'd urge all members to join with me in approving this return. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the information will be of interest to a wide number of people.

Motion agreed to.

## Return No. 2

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, each year when the minister gives his budget, the papers which accompany it seem to get more voluminous and, I think, more expensive. The information which is provided to this Assembly seems to get scantier and scantier.

Mr. Speaker, it is primarily through documents which are given to this House by the Assembly that this House attempts to maintain some semblance over government spending. We obviously have not been able to do that in recent years with government spending ballooning out of sight.

One of the ironies is that as annual reports get later, and they have, as my colleague from Saskatoon Eastview pointed out the other day, a number of them have been very late; in one instance we got three years all at one time. As this kind of information has got scantier and scantier, the minister has got all the more lavish in his attempt to put a good face on the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that much of the documents that are provided, I think at very considerable expense by the Minister of Finance, are not read by anyone. I'd be very interested to know the number of people who read *Challenges and Opportunities* from cover to cover. I'd be very interested in knowing the number who read it. I think it was very few. I think almost everyone concluded it was political propaganda not worth reading, and went on to analyse the number for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, that's why we think that it's germane to know the cost of this. We think the cost of this booklet is all out of proportion to its value. I therefore move, seconded once again by the very willing member from Moose Jaw North, with respect, that to move an order of the Assembly for return no. 2 showing:

With respect to the budget documents: (1) the total cost of printing the 1989-90 provincial budget speech and all accompanying documents, including estimates and the *Challenges and Opportunities* booklet; (2) the cost of the *Challenges and Opportunities* booklet alone; (3) the name of the company or companies that performed this work; (4) whether this work was awarded by public tender.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to say that this request for information certainly will be provided by the government, and indeed it will be interesting information for all to have. I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if you were to talk to people throughout Saskatchewan, I think it would be safe to say that a very important issue that is on the agenda of virtually the entire populace is that of the economy.

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that people throughout Saskatchewan want to know where their moneys are being spent; people want to know the different programs with respect to taxation and where those taxation dollars are being spent. And I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there's one thing that this government can be fairly

criticized for, it is, perhaps, not getting out to the public a good communications effort to provide the public with this type of information.

The economy is high on the agenda with people, and I feel that only by producing documents such as referred to in this motion can we as a government distribute to the people relevant information to the economy.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be very pleased to recommend to all members of the Legislative Assembly to pass this return and provide the requisite information.

Motion agreed to.

### Return No. 3

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks I'd like to move:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of the flights taken by the Government of Saskatchewan's executive aircraft, including in each instance: (1) the purpose of the flight and the minister who authorized it; (2) the date of the flight; (3) all destination points of the flight; (4) to which department, agency or corporation the cost of the flight was charged, and the amount of that charge; (5) the name of each MLA on the flight; (6) the name of each government employee on the flight; (7) the number of family members of MLAs on each flight; (8) the total number of persons on each flight.

Mr. Speaker, the government opposite has been very secretive with respect to information. Every year they get up and they talk more and more about all the information that they feel is out there that the public wants, except it's the information that their advertising agencies have put out.

We have seen example after example in this session alone, Mr. Speaker, of mismanagement of government funds. We have seen scandal after scandal come forward. We've seen abuse and waste of public funds like never before.

We have seen the auditor come forward and in his scathing, devastating report for the government opposite, counted 46 times in which this government has broken the law, the laws that they have been elected to uphold and improve and to follow. And so with regard to this resolution, what we're trying to find out is exactly what the government is doing with their executive aircraft. There's a host of allegations out there. We'd like to clear them up.

(1630)

And I think it's pertinent in light of what the Minister of Justice has said in the past. The member from Kindersley has stood in this House, on this side of the House in the 1980-81 period, moving a Bill called the freedom of information Act. He stood in this House and he eloquently spoke about the need of increased

information.

He spoke about government secrecy, government power, government for the government and not for the people of this province. He spoke eloquently about attempting to get more information that was kept private and secret to the members of cabinet only, out to the opposition, and members therefore of the public.

So what we've seen is the Minister of Justice talk about providing more information, talk about getting cabinet secrecy cleared up a bit, but in the duration of his term as Minister of Justice, we have seen not more information come forward but certainly more secrecy and less co-operation when it comes to the opposition requesting information such as this.

We also want to know where the government aircraft has been flying and who is authorizing these flights, because it's important to the people of this province that they know where the tax dollars are being spent. We've seen the GigaText affair where cabinet members are taking free rides on aircraft, on the jet that was leased by Guy Montpetit from one of his companies, with taxpayers' money, to ferry him around to San Francisco and Montreal and Boston.

And I think the minister who was on the flights, that took the flights, we'd like to make sure that there's no skullduggery or secretive things going on with regard to Mr. Guy Montpetit and all of his dear friends in the cabinet.

So I would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 3 showing:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of the flights taken by the Government of Saskatchewan's executive aircraft, including in each instance: (1) the purpose of the flight and the minister who authorized it; (2) the date of the flight; (3) all destination points of the flight; (4) to which department, agency, or corporation the cost of the flight was charged, and the amount of that charge; (5) the name each of MLA on the flight; (6) the name of each government employee on the flight; (7) the number of family members of MLAs on each flight; (8) the total number of persons on each flight.

Now this is seconded by the member from Regina Elphinstone.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. With respect to this particular motion, this is a comprehensive motion asking for a significant and large amount of detailed information, and I do want to advise the legislature at the conclusion of my very brief remarks today, I will be proposing an amendment to the motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that indeed there is lots of information here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that as a matter of course, as a matter of normal day-to-day routine business is kept by the department of supply and services, or now

as it is known, SPMC, Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, that is basically the agency through which flights are funnelled and booked and recorded.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in keeping as well with the past traditions of this House, and without quoting, I repeat, Mr. Deputy Speaker, without quoting all of the arguments and all of the justifications that were so eloquently put forth a few years ago by the now opposition leader, the member for Riversdale, I would like to make an amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And once again the amendment would keep in line with the past practices, and yet it would provide, Mr. Speaker, as the members have requested, it will provide with the amendment the purpose of the flight and the minister who authorized it. And I think that's fair to ask. It will provide the date of the flight, it will provide the destination points of all the flights, and as well to which department or agency the cost of the flight was charged, and the amount of that charge.

So, Mr. Chairman, or Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move an amendment, seconded by the member for Kelvington-Wadena:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words and numbers following the word "charge."

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I've seen the Deputy House Leader stand in this House and really contradict the member from Kindersley, the Minister of Justice, who calls for less secrecy and more information for the people of the province of Saskatchewan, contradicts his colleague in cabinet and stands in this House and promotes more secrecy and provides less information to the people of this province. And from that we can only conclude in the opposition that you're trying to cover something up.

I would not — I think what the member's trying to do here, Mr. Speaker, is he's trying to eliminate the names of each MLA on the flight. He's not going to provide that; he's not going to provide the name of the government employee on the flight or the number of family members of MLAs on each flight or the total number of persons on each flight. We in this opposition found out that the former minister of Highways, Mr. Jim Garner from Wilkie, abused the aircraft.

We have found in this House that the former minister of Justice himself abused the privilege of using the aircraft . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Abused the aircraft?

**Mr. Solomon:** — I stand corrected. My colleague says, abused the privilege of using the aircraft. He didn't abuse the aircraft, no. I'd like to know how he abused it as well.

A very serious matter here, and the seriousness is emphasized by the fact that the members opposite are in uncontrollable laughter when it comes to hiding information as it pertains to their members abusing privileges.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's really key for the opposition to determine who was on the flight. And I would be prepared to amend this in the following way, if the House Leader would pay attention, and I would propose a subamendment of . . . We would agree to deleting everything after "charge" if you add:

(5) the name of each person on the flight.

That would certainly be acceptable to us. Don't have to distinguish between family member or whomever, but just a straight name. And I would propose that subamendment, seconded by the House Leader, the member from Regina Elphinstone.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. If the member wants to move a subamendment, he has to . . . Order. If the member wants to move a subamendment, he has to put it in writing.

**Mr. Solomon:** — Mr. Speaker, I just asked in a very co-operative and friendly way the Government Acting House Leader whether he would agree with that amendment. He has indicated in very clear terms with a no. Now I'm not certain whether that means a maybe or a yes, because in everything else the government has said, they've meant the opposite. So I'm assuming that's a yes, or is that a definitive no? It's an absolute no. The member, the Deputy House Leader, says no. What that means, Mr. Speaker, is that the member from Melfort, the Minister of Highways, the Acting House Leader . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. The member proposed a subamendment. He should put it in writing. If he is not proposing the subamendment, he has already spoken to the motion and the amendment, so I'd ask the member . . . The member has no opportunity to speak to the amendment again.

Amendment agreed to.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. I believe the ayes have it. Why is the member on her feet?

**Ms. Atkinson:** — To speak on the motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The vote on the amendment was called. I believe the ayes have it. Order, order. I'd ask the member for Regina North West to be quiet while the Speaker is on his feet — Moose Jaw North, I'm sorry.

Order, order. The member will certainly have an opportunity to speak to the amended motion. Order. I'd ask the member for Regina Elphinstone to quit interrupting the Chair. The Chair has not called the motion as amended, but the member from Saskatoon Nutana will certainly have an opportunity to speak after the motion as amended is called.

Order. And the member from The Battlefords, I would ask him to also be quiet while the Speaker is on his feet. Order . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The reason I'm standing here is to wait for the members to be quiet so that everyone in the House can hear what's before the Assembly.



The question before the Assembly is return no. 3 showing, as amended.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm glad that you finally made the ruling that you did, but you certainly wasted a lot of time in the process.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what's unfortunate about this is, as you're probably aware, this province has a deficit that's in excess of \$3.9 billion.

And you know, a lot of us come from backgrounds where our grandparents and our parents told us: if you watch the pennies, the nickels and the dimes and the quarters will soon start rolling in. Now this government has not been keeping it's eye on the pennies and the nickels and the dimes and the quarters, but it certainly has been prepared to spend over \$5 million on a fiasco in this province called GigaText.

Now what we're trying to get a handle on is how these high rollers in Saskatchewan are spending the taxpayers' dollars. And we know that they regularly jump onto government aircraft and go parading around Saskatchewan at taxpayers' expense when they really should be jumping into their cars and travelling up and down the highways, and they'd understand how poor and how bad the highways of Saskatchewan really are.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(1645)

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Now by amending this motion, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan will not have access to information. We will not know how many of these high-flyer, high-roller cabinet ministers and members of the Conservative Party are spending our taxpayers' dollars; we won't know how many government airplane trips they've taken; we won't know if they've taken their friends — they tend to like to take their friends along for a joy ride — we won't know any of that information.

As the opposition we have an obligation on behalf of the taxpayers to count the pennies and the nickels and the dimes and the quarters, because if we had more people in government counting the pennies, the nickels, the dimes, and the quarters, we may not have a \$4 billion deficit.

I, certainly, and my colleagues will be voting against this amendment to our motion because we think the people of Saskatchewan deserve to know exactly how these people are spending our hard-earned taxpayers' dollars.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Motion as amended agreed to.

#### Return No. 4

**Mr. Anguish:** — Mr. Speaker, I certainly hope that the House Leader from the government side doesn't also amend the motion for return that I have on the floor here this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, we have a government here in Saskatchewan that has been the most secretive, the

most power hungry, the most corrupt, blatantly partisan government in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

If they disagree with the Provincial Auditor, they attack the Provincial Auditor. If they disagree with the motion asking for more information, what the government's doing in the expenditure of taxpayers' dollars, they change the motion. If they disagree with the Legislative Counsel, they attack the Legislative Counsel. If they disagree with the human rights commissioner, they attack that person. If they disagree with the Ombudsman, they attack that person.

Now one of the things that you have to look at, Mr. Speaker, is when it extends beyond this institution, that's become very partisan over recent years, when it extends into the Gravelbours of Saskatchewan where local members of the Legislative Assembly attack local people with verbal abuse and daring them to say anything against the hospital in that community.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has gone hungry with power. They've been so hungry for power that it ends up that's all that means anything to the government of the day. The Progressive Conservative government in Saskatchewan cares nothing for individual rights; they care nothing about the administration of government; they care nothing about the economy; they care nothing about people who go hungry; they care nothing about people who leave this province in record numbers. We have record numbers of bankruptcies, and at the same time this government wants to withhold information. They appreciate only raw power.

So in the motion for return that I have here today, Mr. Speaker, we're asking for information that's similar to the information that was asked by the hon. member from Regina North West; the difference being is that we're now asking, in this motion for return, the aircraft that have been chartered. In the motion for the member from Regina North West, it was to deal with the executive aircrafts that belong to the Government of Saskatchewan. In this case we'll be asking for information about flights that were chartered by government departments, agencies, by Executive Council, to fly from one point to another.

And I think it's important we know who utilizes the flights and whether or not those people are actually authorized for the usage. And I know that there's other motions in here that we have to deal with this afternoon. Some of them will bring out further examples of abuses by the government, and also condoning the abuse of government power.

And I take, for example, the case of the GigaText affair, Mr. Speaker, where Guy Montpetit . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. That has nothing to do . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Order, order. The member from Moose Jaw North keeps interrupting the Chair when the Speaker's on his feet, and I would ask him to refrain from . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And I'd also ask the member from Regina Elphinstone . . . The question — order — the question before the Assembly, and I'd like

the member to keep his comments to the question that's in return number . . . Order. I'm going to ask the member once more from Moose Jaw North not to interfere with the Speaker when he's on his feet, and I'm just warning him that this Chair will not tolerate this.

**Mr. Anguish:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This motion for return deals with aircraft being chartered by departments, agencies, Crown corporations, the Government of Saskatchewan. We have in Saskatchewan a agency of government that right now, we're told, is 100 per cent controlled by the Government of Saskatchewan through SEDCO, Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation. We have documented that that organization is called GigaText.

We also have documented that GigaText paid for a flight from GigaMos Air Services Ltd. to fly one Guy Montpetit down to San Francisco, not by himself, but also his assistant, one Ms. Grace Sim was on the flight. The flight went from Montreal to San Francisco to Minneapolis back to Montreal, paid with by taxpayers' dollars. It was a chartered flight through an agency of this government, and we can't talk about that in this legislature? I say shame on the government members opposite.

I would point out to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to members of this Assembly, that why would Guy Montpetit and Ms. Grace Sim go on a flight from Montreal to San Francisco to Minneapolis back to Montreal. Was it business one would ask themselves? Oh, was it business?

Well it was on a weekend, and we've asked members in this House, of the Executive Council, members of Executive Council, what the purpose of that flight was. And the member from Maple Creek, who sits in this Assembly this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, has not brought that answer back. We want to know the purpose of a flight on a weekend.

Was that a business flight on a weekend to San Francisco, paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, so some high-flying financier from Montreal can run around with his assistant to places like San Francisco when people in Saskatchewan don't have enough food to eat, people leave the province for economic opportunity and jobs, and businesses are going broke at record numbers in the province of Saskatchewan. That's the information we want to know, Mr. Speaker.

So I would think . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well one of the members opposite asks: how many flights do you take — once a week? I would point out to members of the Assembly and to the public watching this afternoon, that members who live more than 350 kilometres outside of Regina are allowed to fly home on the weekend and fly back so they can be with their family.

We have going on a family symposium right now that the government says is very good. It seems to me to be able to have young members participate in the democratic process in this province they should have easy access to spend some time with their families. And I would say that some MLAs on this side of the House use the government aircraft to fly home on the weekend and they fly back on Monday. So I point out to the member from Kinistino, that

that's all above board.

I don't deny that, that I have been on the government aircraft. I have also been on a chartered aircraft when members of cabinet have all the planes tied up so members can't fly home on the weekend. So when the member from Kinistino jibbers and jabs from the back of his seat, he should stand up and participate in the debate, not to try and cast some innuendo on members.

What we want to know, Mr. Speaker, is the information that this government tries to hide. Is there corruption there? We don't know. Are there dealings that the government wants to hide from the taxpayers in the province of Saskatchewan? I don't think so; do you?

Many members of this Assembly do think that the government has something to hide. Some people think that there's corruption involved. The public in the province of Saskatchewan would like to have an election so this government can be turfed from office.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Anguish:** — So, Mr. Speaker, I would dearly hope that the Government House Leader not amend this motion for return because it is an issue of accountability.

The taxpayers in Saskatchewan might not like some of the things that happened even if they're authorized and above board. But what they like even worse is the government hiding information that is under the table, that is secretive, the most secretive government we've ever seen. The public cannot stand that when the government hides the information. A government that hides information to maintain their own position of power will not be forgiven by taxpayers who have to have their money hard-earned and put into a type of system where we have secrecy and hidden agendas and information that they don't want to bring to the public.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Anguish:** — Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

For the period May 17, 1988, to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of the aircraft chartered by each department, agency, or Crown corporation of the Government of Saskatchewan, including in each instance: (1) the purpose of the charter and the minister who authorized it; (2) the name of the individual or company who provided the charter service; (3) the total cost of the charter and the name of the department, agency or Crown corporation to which it was charged; (4) the date of the flight; (5) all destinations on the flight; (6) the names of each MLA or government employee on the flight; (7) the number of family members of MLAs on each flight; (8) the total number of passengers on each flight.

Mr. Speaker, I so move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Nutana. And as I say, I dearly hope that the government will not try and amend this motion as well to

hide even further information as they did in the case of motion for return from the member from Regina North West.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I shall not take much time of the Assembly to deal with this motion for return. I do want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we will provide to the members opposite a substantially . . . most of the information that they have requested.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to you that these types of requests have to be dealt with, I believe, in the realm of common sense, in the realm of understanding that civil servants do have their work to be done. And, Mr. Deputy Chairman, there is much of this information that is kept as a matter of record, much of this information that has traditionally been supplied to opposition parties in the past.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, many of the same arguments used by members in previous years, such as the member for Riversdale, who I quote from April 1, 1980, when the member for Riversdale sat in government as the Deputy Premier under the NDP, and what did he say? He said:

I don't know when our officials can be expected to do the job. I don't know how long it will take. I'll be very interested in knowing how many man-hours or man-years, depending on the measurement, that will be used in this area.

And on and on, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendment that I will be proposing to the legislature will provide to members of the opposition the date of the flight. I believe that that is something they might want to know. It will provide to the members opposite the charter company, which charter companies have been used. I believe that that is fair and reasonable information that is readily available.

The information will provide to members of the Legislative Assembly the number of passengers on the flight — once again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, information that is readily available by the members of the civil service.

Fourthly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this amended motion will provide the destination of the flight. I believe that that is fair and reasonable, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And number fifth, and ultimately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will provide the minister who authorized the flight. And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that is important information. Ministers of the Crown, as you may well know, Mr. Speaker, have to answer to these flights that they authorize. Every flight should be authorized by a minister, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will provide that information.

(1700)

I do say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that some of the words used by the member opposite in this debate are words that I do

take exception to. Using the word "corruption" I don't believe is an accurate or parliamentary type of statement to be used. And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that using those types of words in the Assembly is indicative of an opposition who does not have the courage, who does not have courage to walk outside of this Legislative Assembly and use those words in a forum where they are not protected from immunity, in a forum where the courts of the land will challenge them for libel and slander and cause them to prove the words that they speak.

So, Mr. Chairman, that is perhaps a side issue, but I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that those are not words that should be used in this Assembly. If the members have proof of those types of allegations, stand outside the legislature, state your fact, go to the Justice department or wherever else the appropriate place is.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do propose this amendment. It is moved by myself and seconded by the member for Kelvington-Wadena:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words and numbers appearing after the word "instance", and by substituting therefor, the words:

(1) the date of the flight; (2) the charter company; (3) the number of passengers on the flight; (4) the destination of the flight; and finally, (5) the minister who authorized the flight.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member from Melfort, seconded by the member for Kelvington-Wadena. Will the members take it as read?

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words and numbers appearing after the word "instance," and by substituting therefor, the words:

(1) the date of the flight; (2) charter company; (3) the number of passengers on the flight . . .

I'd ask the member for Regina Elphinstone to be quiet while the Speaker is reading the amendment to the Assembly. Order. Members are making reflections against the Chair, and I'd ask them to refrain from that. Order. The member from Humboldt, I'd ask him to keep decorum.

(4) the destination of the flight . . .

Order. The member for Moose Jaw North keeps interfering with the Chair. I've warned him before, and I will warn him once more and that's all.

the destination of the flight; and the minister who authorized the flight.

Is the member ready for the question?

**Mr. Anguish:** — I can't let the amendment pass without putting a few comments on the record . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. It being 5 o'clock the

Assembly is recessed until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.