

August 1, 1989

The Assembly met at 1 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and to the members of the legislature, some members of the Assiniboine Plains Rural Development Association who are in Regina meeting with Rural Development officials. They are located in your gallery, sir.

And I would like to introduce His Worship Mayor Glen Leson from Canora, His Worship Mayor Paul Chermcora from Hyas, Paul Stankewich, Nick Stasiuk, and Mike Stasiuk. Would you please welcome the members here.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Written Briefs for Barber Commission

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the acting minister responsible for SaskPower. Yesterday following question period, a Regina public relations firm, Giles Communications, confirmed that it has prepared more than 20 briefs for groups and individuals to be presented to the Barber Commission. And it confirmed that it has been contacting people referred to it by the PC caucus office, offering to prepare briefs for them.

This amounts to nothing more than the PC Party preparing phoney briefs, paid for at taxpayers' expense, to stack the Barber Commission. How do you justify this, and how much is it costing Saskatchewan taxpayers?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I understand that Giles Communications Inc. has offered to write briefs for the people of Saskatchewan. I think they charge \$20 for an individual for a brief, and the individual pays for that, because not everybody is able to put their thoughts down on paper in the concise form they would like to have it.

The accusation made by the member opposite, it's being paid for by the PC Party, is absolutely false. Individuals are making briefs. Our caucus, as is the caucus of the NDP, as is the NDP caucus, encouraging people to come forward and put their position forward.

I heard the member from Elphinstone on the radio today saying that probably the member from Rosemont had been sending out packages of information, which is correct of political caucuses to do that, but as far as the Giles Communication, my understanding that individuals can pay for that if they wish to have that assistance — both positions for the NDP or the Conservatives.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, your answer ignores the facts, it ignores the facts about your own constituents, that both Mr. Williamson and Mrs. Tubman, by their own admission lifelong PC Party members, have told the press that they were approached and asked to submit a brief to the Barber Commission.

These were people who were not asking for help; these were people who were approached and told that somebody could prepare a brief for them. Mr. Williamson confirms that he was contacted by someone from the Giles Communication. And Giles Communication, in turn, confirmed yesterday that it was given his name by your PC caucus office.

How do you explain those facts, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — It may well be that Mr. Williamson and Mrs. Tubman and many other people in my seat will be putting forth briefs for the commission. As late as on Sunday I was at a function and had a number of people coming forward and asking me, as their representative, how they could go about preparing a brief, where they present, and so on.

And I encouraged them, I encouraged people from Indian Head-Wolseley and other constituencies in Saskatchewan to come forward and give that commission the true feeling of the people of Saskatchewan, and to put to bed the lies spread by the NDP Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the same minister, Mr. Speaker, to get to the bottom of this, will you table before this House today each of the 22 bogus briefs presented to the Barber Commission? Will you let the public see what those briefs say, who they were prepared for, and let them see what the public is paying for? Will you do that, Mr. Minister? Or are you afraid that that will expose the fact that the Barber Commission is nothing more than a PC Party propaganda machine, paid for by Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, we see the people on the other side of the House want to cast innuendo on Dr. Lloyd Barber and the commission he heads up. And I say that that is absolutely wrong . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The hon. member hardly rose to his feet and he was already being interrupted. I think he's going to have great difficulty answering a question of that manner when he's immediately interrupted as he rises to his feet. And that applies to everybody in the House, whether they're answering a question or asking it.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, we've heard it time and time again in this House where the NDP see fit to cast innuendo against Dr. Lloyd Barber, a person who I think

has eminent credentials to do this task, and the other people that are working with him. And I think they will rue the day that they do this, and they should apologize.

But they want to see what's happening at the commissions. I have a piece of paper here, which is a public document that I will table after question period. It gives the outline of the people that will be presenting at the Estevan hearings in the Derrick Hotel on August 3. And let's just hear who some of these people are. The mayor of Weyburn, Ron Barber, and everybody in Saskatchewan knows Ron Barber is a PC. There's Mr. Steve Foley, of the Weyburn Labour Council; and Mrs. Charlotte Hookenson, on behalf of the Souris NDP Party; and Marj Nyeste, on behalf of the PC Party. What's wrong with that? I'll table that in the House to show who's on that agenda.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. I think the member has made his point.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Same question . . . a question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, this is part of the problem that your government is facing. You see it as perfectly okay to waste taxpayers' money, to spend money by the people of Saskatchewan for your narrow, partisan political ends.

Sir, can you tell us, can you tell us how you can stand here today in this Assembly, say that the Barber Commission is independent, when you appoint the commissioners, when you appoint the people who are going to work with it, and when you appoint the people who are writing the briefs to be presented to it?

Will you confirm, sir, will you confirm here today that the Giles Communications that the taxpayers are paying for is the same Joan Giles that used to work for the Deputy Premier in the SaskExpo corporation? Is this the same Joan Giles that's been on the PC Party and on the government payroll for a long, long time, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I say again that, you know, if there is a firm out there, if Miss Giles' firm is wanting to assist people regardless of their political stripe, to help them formulate briefs, so well be it. That's just a business that's out there helping people in advertising. I believe she put a news release out to that extent.

And I see the hypocrisy of the member opposite standing in the House here, when his own House Leader today said, I wouldn't be surprised if our critic, the member from Rosemont, wouldn't have thought to send out packages of material to people . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. Now I just want to remind the hon. members once more that they are not to constantly interrupt a minister when they're answering a question. That is out of order. It is also discourteous and not in keeping with decorum in this

House which members often talk about. It's your responsibility, gentlemen, to try to preserve decorum by your actions.

Mr. Lyons: — New question. Another new question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, there's a difference, and this is what we don't understand. We have said from the very beginning where we stand on this issue. We haven't used taxpayers' money to cynically try to manipulate a staged road show, which is what the Barber Commission is, simple and plain as that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — It is a propaganda tool for the Conservative government's privatization agenda. Mr. Minister, now that we know that people like Nonie Heinrich from your own Tory caucus office are involved in trying to cynically manipulate this road show, will you urge your colleagues in the cabinet to do the honourable thing, disband the Barber Commission, and let the people of this province decide who is right on the issue of the privatization of SaskPower. Will you do that honourable thing, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I and my colleagues on this side of the House will certainly do the honourable thing, and that is to go forward to the people of Saskatchewan to tell them the truth and to put down the lies perpetuated by the NDP when they travelled during their strike.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Unparliamentary language is language that we are trying to root out from this Assembly, and has been brought to the attention of members several times.

And I'd like the member from Regina Elphinstone if he would be quiet while the Speaker is on his feet. And I would like to ask the hon. member from Indian Head-Wolesey to withdraw and apologize for that remark.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I may have to withdraw the words, but what happened was exactly what I said.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Would the hon. member simply rise and withdraw his remarks unequivocally.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the remark.

Continued Operation of GigaText

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, a new question. I didn't quite hear an apology there, but I have a question . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. The hon. member will simply put his question, not make any comments on the ruling, or he will be ruled out of order.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you on that excellent ruling, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order. Put your question, and I will not tolerate those kinds of actions.

Mr. Anguish: — I'd like to ask a question to the Acting Premier, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Acting Premier concerns another unhonourable activity of the government and that has to do with GigaText. Yet another month is beginning and we find the government's going to have to put another at least \$50,000 into the operation of GigaText to keep it churning out nothing.

And I'm wondering if the Acting Premier today could tell us how long they're going to keep churning in at least \$50,000 a month, how many months before you finally come to the logical conclusion that most taxpayers have come to and realize that you are blatantly wasting taxpayers' dollars by pumping it into GigaText. Can the Acting Premier today please tell us when you're going to stop funding GigaText?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I understand that the decision with regard to the investigation by the RCMP will be coming down this week. The decision on that, I am advised, will be coming down this week. I am further advised that a final decision will be taken by government very shortly as to the future of GigaText. And I would simply leave it at that.

Mr. Anguish: — Well, new question to the Acting Premier. The police investigation has nothing to do, Mr. Speaker, with the blatant waste and mismanagement of taxpayers' dollars in the province of Saskatchewan. We were told at the beginning of July by Mr. Larsen, vice-president of SEDCO, that they were making the decision then. And now the Acting Premier tells us, well we're going to make the decision very shortly.

We want to ask you today, aside from RCMP investigations, will you make the decision this month, and this will be the last month in which you will fund GigaText at \$50,000-plus a month and stop wasting taxpayers' dollars on this project gone astray of waste and mismanagement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I would expect, Mr. Speaker, that a final decision will be made on GigaText this month.

RCMP Report on GigaText

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. And it's been indicated, Mr. Minister, that there are several weeks have passed since the RCMP investigation was completed. You indicated in this House that you would make a report to this House as soon as you received and analyzed the RCMP report.

I'm asking you, Mr. Minister, in light of the fact that you have had it since July 15, why the delay? The people of Saskatchewan are entitled to know in respect to the scandalous GigaText affair whether or not criminal

charges will be laid.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I indicated to the hon. member some time ago that the matter was referred to the Department of Justice. They referred it to the RCMP. The RCMP came back to the Department of Justice with the volumes of whatever they had; they were going through that. A final decision will be taken, as I understand, this week. Now I've been advised about that from the RCMP through the Department of Justice that — last week and the week before as well — but I'm advised now that that decision will be taken this week, and when that decision is taken, a statement will be made by the RCMP and the department of public prosecution.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Minister, we'd like your commitment, as soon as it's completed and the Justice has had an opportunity, will you undertake to provide us with the RCMP report; or alternatively, in light of the fact that the government itself and the credibility of the government is involved in this and that justice must not only be done but must be seen to be done, would you in fact go so far as to clear the cloud of doubt by appointing an independent prosecutor to review the evidence of the RCMP and to make a report to this House?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I think two answers to the question advanced by the hon. member. Answer number one is that for police reports to be made public to a Legislative Assembly, I think, is a dangerous precedent to get into in the sense of their investigation. That has never been done, nor do I think that it should be done.

With regard to the second question of an independent prosecutor, I can advise the House that an independent prosecutor has been appointed about 10 days ago and has reviewed the file.

Mr. Koskie: — Two matters, Mr. Minister, of . . . New question. I'd like you to inform us as to who the independent prosecutor that was appointed. And secondly, I want to ask you in respect to this, because it does not only rest with the criminal charges, I'm asking you whether or not your department have taken the opportunity to investigate whether or not civil action, in fact, can be taken in order to recover the \$150,000 that was stored away in Ken Waschuk's company in Bermuda, and whether or not the millions of dollars that was taken by Guy Montpetit, whether criminally or otherwise, can be recovered on behalf of the taxpayers?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, whether or not the Department of Justice has reviewed any potential civil action, they have been involved, obviously, in looking at this question from a wide sense on the civil side, and their advice will be make available to government at an appropriate time.

Study on Community Clinics

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Minister of Health, and it has to do with a study that was done by the Department of Health on community clinics. And we asked in this legislature several months ago, Mr. Speaker, for a copy of that study, and we still have not received a copy of it. Now I understand that the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses is also asking that that study be made public. And, Mr. Minister, we are asking once again whether or not the government will make the study on the community clinics public and whether they will table it in this House at an early date.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of the reply that the Minister of Health gave to the member in her original question. I will take notice of it and confer with the Minister of Health and report back.

Ms. Simard: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, the minister had said words to the effect that he would probably release the study at some time. He has to date failed to do that.

New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, as you are aware, Dr. Michael Rachlis and Carol Kushner, in their book, *The Second Opinion*, has indicated that there are substantial savings through community clinics in the health care area. Now your government is constantly asserting that health care costs are spiralling out of control, and yet I understand you have sat on this study for several years, Mr. Minister. We do not want any further delays, Mr. Minister, and we're wondering why this study is not being tabled. Is it because it goes contrary to your political ideology?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well that's nonsense, Mr. Speaker. I mean, I was minister of Health in this province for five years. I met many times with the community clinics in Saskatoon and Regina. I also know the one at Wynyard or Wadena, whichever town it sat, and it just slips my mind now, but I can tell you that we funded the community clinics, and that's one way of delivering health services, as there are other ones that speak for service, and so on.

I believe in Saskatchewan. We have a good mix of delivery of health services. Our record stands in nursing home construction, in hospital construction, in new cancer facilities and new rehab facilities, in chiropody programs. The record of the Devine government in health in the last eight years exceeds any other government in the Dominion of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Excuse me, excuse me. While the minister slipped it by me, I was listening closely and I believe he used the name of a member in the House, and I'd like to bring that to his attention. When he referred to the Devine government, I believe he used that word, and he's using a member's name. That is not permissible.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — I would substitute, the best government in Saskatchewan's history in health care.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Appointment of Independent Prosecutor

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I address my question to the Minister of Justice and I asked him — and I repeat — he indicated to this House that he has in fact appointed an independent prosecutor. I would like to ask the minister: would you advise this House who the independent prosecutor that you have appointed in respect to this case?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I can advise that some time ago the hon. member from Quill Lakes had asked that the matter be referred to an independent prosecutor. I can advise this Assembly that that matter was . . . that that suggestion was conveyed to the Department of Justice, that our Department of Justice chose a reputable lawyer in the city of Regina to review the file, Mr. Speaker. And that information, along with the decisions, will be made hopefully later this week.

Mr. Koskie: — A new question to the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice has indicated that he's appointed an independent prosecutor. I ask you, Mr. Minister, what are you hiding from in advising this House of the name of the independent prosecutor who you allege is a reputable lawyer?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I'm advised that the individual involved is one Gerald Gerrand, from the city of Regina.

Sale of Silver Lake Farm

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the minister in charge of privatization, and it's regarding the sale of the Silver Lake farm in Green Lake, Mr. Minister.

And by way of information, the Silver Lake farm was built up over many years with a lot of hard work by the citizens of Green Lake.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. I ask the hon. members to allow the member from Athabasca to put his question, whom I have now had to interrupt, without interruptions so he can get the question to the Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I direct my question to the minister of privatization, regarding the sale of the Silver Lake farm.

And by way of information, Mr. Speaker, the Silver Lake farm was built up over many years with a lot of hard work by the citizens of Green Lake, to a point where it now is a financial success, and now you have sold it.

Mr. Minister, I wonder if you are now prepared to present

some details to the legislature today. Can you tell us what the new owners paid for the farm? And can you tell us whether or not there was any government grant subsidies or promissory notes or guarantees involved in the purchase?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well the member opposite may feel that the northern farms were a financial success, in actual fact they were costing the taxpayers of Saskatchewan about a million dollars a year to operate them. And in talking to people in northern Saskatchewan as the minister of that portfolio, many of the communities said they would like to have the farms themselves, and as I've said in this House before, each community received the farm.

The Silver Lake farm, however, was put out for public tender and has been awarded to a group from Prince Albert. I told the member opposite that at the time of the completion of all the legal documents I would provide that to the House, and I stand by that statement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. Could we have order. Member for Turtleford and the member from Regina North East.

MOTIONS

Suspension of Private Members' Day to Continue Debate on Bill 20

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Speaker, just prior to orders of the day, I would once again ask leave of the Assembly that given the fact that we are currently undergoing a major filibuster of the Bill No. 20, potash Bill, I would seek leave of the Assembly in order that our members have an opportunity as well to get on the debate, to move to government orders for the day.

Leave not granted.

An Hon. Member: — On a point of order.

The Speaker: — What is your point of order?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I make the suggestion to the Deputy House Leader that this evening we would move to other government business and in the spirit of co-operation move to some of the Bills or estimates that we have before us, and in a serious way I would ask for leave of the Assembly that we would move to other government business other than Bill 20 tonight.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. It's not a point of order as was obvious. However, the member essentially asked for leave, and I'm going to ask the House if leave is granted for his request.

Leave granted.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley and the member for Regina Elphinstone — I'm asking the member for Regina Elphinstone again, again — I believe members should respect the Chair being on their feet and not continue to chatter.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTIONS

Resolution No. 12 — Spending Details of Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my remarks, I'd just like to read the motion that I'll be putting forward:

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for its abuse of the democratic principle of accountability in its refusal to provide detailed accounting of the spending of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

In this motion, Mr. Speaker, we will be bringing into the debate some of the mismanagement of government, their lack of accountability and then, in particular, as applies to the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, which has extensive commentary by the Provincial Auditor for the Provincial Auditor report ending March 31, 1988. In fact, he goes on for extended number of pages pointing out some of the inadequacies about the accountability system within the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

But before we get into that specific part of it, we'd like to talk somewhat about what has happened within this government and why people in Saskatchewan have conveyed to us their concern for the government's lack of accountability and the waste and mismanagement within government, that people find it very mind-boggling and they feel the reality of what happens in their everyday lives, whether they be in business or whether they be in farming or whether they be wage earners.

Certainly everyone across the spectrum in society of Saskatchewan has been affected by the actions of the government. And those who are in a position to pay tax to the provincial government, either through personal income tax or the many, many other forms of taxation this government has levied on them, they find an increasing tax load. And still even with the increased tax load the government has a great inability to make the books balance and to be accountable for the millions of taxpayers' dollars that are utilized by the government every year.

I'd like to go through just briefly, Mr. Speaker, the first example that shocked Saskatchewan citizens about the waste and mismanagement of the government, and that has to do with the forecasting of budgets and also the actual expenditure of those budgets. Each year the people in the province who follow this Assembly would know that we come in in the spring session traditionally to

approve a budget and give guide-lines as to how the expenditures of government should take place. In that process, at some point early in the spring session the government presents a budget, and when that budget is presented it details a number of the expenditures by government department and government agency.

The process seems to have broken down somewhat this year, because soon after the presentation of the budget something happens in our process here, the budgetary process, which is called the estimates, whereby the departments and the agencies are gone through department by department, agency by agency. There's debate from each side of the House, and the minister is answerable for the expenditures that they're proposing over the particular fiscal year. And of course right now we're dealing with the fiscal year 1989-1990.

But the government in their obsession with dealing with privatization moves have not even gone half way through the budgetary process. And that budgetary process has historically been very, very important. It's been important to the extent that people would know very early in the fiscal year, which starts April 1 of 1989, they would know very early in that fiscal year what particular departments and agencies are able to spend in the guide-lines in which they will spend that money during the 1989-1990 fiscal year.

But here we find ourselves into early August and the government, who controls the agenda of this Legislative Assembly, has chosen not to deal with the budgetary estimates. So people who rely on government or are affected by government, still do not know what the expenditures are that are finalized because the government refuses to proceed with estimates. They tend to deal almost totally with privatization, and currently the topic that has dominated the legislature has been the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

So in putting that process into some kind of perspective historically, people have not seen the budgetary process drag out over several, several months, which should begin in the spring and be concluded some time, at the latest, early summer. People in Saskatchewan this year will find that the budgetary process can quite well possibly take until the snow flies because this government chooses not to put the estimates on the agenda.

So putting that into some kind of perspective, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say that the other end of the budgetary process is when *Public Accounts* are brought forward. And the *Public Accounts* aren't an estimate any longer. The *Public Accounts* actually tell where the government made expenditures during any particular fiscal year.

And that's a very important part of the process because we find whether or not the government has met their projections — sort of in business you call it your business plan over the course of the year — so that come March 31 of the following year, which is the end of the fiscal year, we know whether or not government has met their business plan, met the estimates that they had projected they'd be spending in various and particular government departments and agencies.

The record of this government is not a good one, and that was the first indication I think people had that there was a great deal of mismanagement within government. The first fiscal year that this government had, Mr. Speaker, was the fiscal year 1982-83. This government came into power in April of 1982 and it was very close after the end of the fiscal year, the fiscal year that ended March 31, 1982, was for the year, fiscal year, '81-82. And so they came into power, Mr. Speaker, almost at the beginning of two governments over one fiscal year, it's total responsibility on the government of the day who became government in 1982.

So let's look at what they forecast for the year 1982-83. When this government brought down their first budget, they projected that there would be a deficit there of \$219 million. Well people saw this as a new government. They didn't know whether or not the government could meet their projections, but expected that they would, because historically governments in Saskatchewan have met what they projected to meet during the course of the estimates.

But in that fiscal year '82-83 when the actual tally was done on the expenditures of government, the *Public Accounts* were released, we found that the government was out by some \$8 million. The actual expenditures during that fiscal year totalled \$227 million. Well being out by \$8 million isn't too bad for a new government.

Then we look at '83-84 which was the next fiscal year and the government projected that they would have a deficit of \$317 million. When the public accounts were tallied, Mr. Speaker, the deficit was actually \$331 million. You see their projections, instead of getting better are getting worse, because in that particular fiscal year they were out by some \$14 million, spending more than what they said they would spend.

In the fiscal year '84-85 the government forecast expenditures of \$267 million and they actually spent, it was determined when the *Public Accounts* were tabled for that year, that they spent \$380 million. Well it's getting worse, Mr. Speaker, because we're now looking at an error of over \$100 million on the part of the government.

So people could no longer say to themselves and justify in their mind that, well, the government is still learning, because if they were learning you would think that their projections compared to the expenditures would be closer, not a widening gap to the point where you have a difference of over \$100 million between what they said they would spend and what they actually ended up spending. So the government started to figure at this point in time that there's some mismanagement going on here because the government is not doing what they're saying that they're going to do.

Then, Mr. Speaker, in 1985-86, that particular fiscal year, the government forecast an expenditure of \$291 million. Well when the *Public Accounts* were tabled for that particular fiscal year, the actual expenditure was \$585 million — almost double what they said they were going to spend, Mr. Speaker.

You look at 1986 to '87, which is a great example of waste

and mismanagement and misleading the public in the province of Saskatchewan. This was a fiscal year that was affected by an election. In this particular year, the government forecast during their estimates that they would have a deficit of \$389 million. When the *Public Accounts* came out for that particular year, Mr. Speaker, the actual expenditures by the government were \$1.235 billion, Mr. Speaker — out be almost \$800 million.

Now anyone who would follow the accountability of the government would be led to believe that the government had totally lost control of the public purse. There was no planning, there was great waste, and in no doubt in anyone's mind, gross mismanagement of the public economy in the province of Saskatchewan, because you can't just estimate that you're going to spend \$389 million and then spend \$1.2 billion.

I mean, you're several hundreds of per cent out, Mr. Speaker. And no business, there's no farm, there's no law practice, there's no organization in the province other than a Progressive Conservative government that could be out by so many millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker. But this government in fact did that, and it portrayed the great, blatant disrespect that they have for the public purse.

And it doesn't just stop there, Mr. Speaker. In '87-88 fiscal year, they forecast an expenditure and they didn't meet the forecast, and now we're getting to areas already, Mr. Speaker, where the *Public Accounts* haven't come out, so we don't know whether or not they're going to meet their expenditures.

But the record of this government has been a dismal one, Mr. Speaker. They have not done what they've said they would do, and that goes right from election promises to bringing in budgets in the provincial legislature. And how has this impacted on Saskatchewan's economy, Mr. Speaker? How is it impacted when you have an operating deficit that's accumulated since 1982 of almost \$4 billion, remembering that there was not an operating deficit there before? And on that deficit of almost \$4 billion, this government projects in this year's budget, in the 1988-89 fiscal year, that they'll spend in excess of \$380 million a year just on interest to service the debt that they've created since 1982.

(1345)

Now what impact has all that money had coming out of the economy that should be going around, circulating in the economy of Saskatchewan; what impact has it had because the government has had waste and mismanagement and taken that money out of the economy so it can't circulate through businesses and consumers and farmers and the economy of Saskatchewan?

Well, in 1982 there were a total of 787 bankruptcies in the province of Saskatchewan; 1983, 901 bankruptcies in the province of Saskatchewan; 1984, 838 bankruptcies in the province of Saskatchewan; and you go up to a high, Mr. Speaker, of the year 1988 where there were 1,236 bankruptcies in the province of Saskatchewan. And one of the greatest reasons for the bankruptcies happening, Mr. Speaker, in the province of Saskatchewan, is that this

government is taking away the spending power of the consumer in the province of Saskatchewan to service their own largess and to service the interest on the debt that they have solely created. And they must take that responsibility on their own shoulders. And when you have that money, Mr. Speaker, coming out of the hands of the consumers and the economy in the province of Saskatchewan, it affects business and it affects . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'm going to call on the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster to cease continuously interrupting the member from The Battlefords. I'm calling on you, sir, and I'm warning you. And let's not make a flippant joke out of it.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So these are sort of the macro-examples that people can see. They can look at the *Public Accounts* of the province of Saskatchewan, they can look at the budget papers in the province of Saskatchewan, and they can see these facts documented; that are documented by a time-honoured process of the accountability of government.

And this government is greatly lacking in accountability. It's not only pointed out by the media and by members of the opposition, it's pointed out in the annual Report of the Provincial Auditor, Mr. Speaker — many, many examples of lack of accountability and waste and mismanagement of the government of the day, Mr. Speaker.

I think that, just turning for a few moments to the whole area of taxation as well, not only has money been taken out of the economy by the government's waste and mismanagement, it's also been taken out of the economy by an increased taxation load on all people in the province of Saskatchewan. Many, many times I hear from people who say, how can the government expect us to pay more taxation, at the same time maintain our business or maintain our farm or maintain our families.

And it's just a government that's gone astray, Mr. Speaker, because they cannot longer manage the affairs of the Government of Saskatchewan. And one of the best examples of the secrecy that surrounds some of this, Mr. Speaker, would have to be in the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, more commonly referred to as the SPMC.

Now, Mr. Speaker, prior to the introduction of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, there used to be a government department called supply and service. Supply and Service were responsible for providing office space and services to other government departments, and there was a budget item specifically in the budget process for the department of supply and service.

Today we have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where the department of supply and service no longer exists. We have the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, which tends to be able to hide many things away from the public and, apparently, away from the Provincial Auditor. And I'll turn to his report to point out into the debate here today what the Provincial Auditor is actually saying about the property management corporation.

But nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, when the Saskatchewan department of supply and service was in existence, it was totally accountable because they were appearing in the budgetary process, they had the various subvotes like any other department, and they also appeared for full and complete accountability in the *Public Accounts* at the end of the fiscal year.

However, this is no longer the case, and I want to turn to some of the things that the Provincial Auditor says about the property management corporation in his report, a *Report of the Provincial Auditor* to the Legislative Assembly for the year ended March 31, 1988.

Now in chapter 29 on page 96, one of the first things that the Provincial Auditor points out, and I quote:

The appointed auditor was not able to express an opinion on the adequacy of SPMC's control systems to safeguard and control public money because he had not been appointed until after the year end.

This brings up a little debate that we've had in the Public Accounts Committee, Mr. Speaker, and has also gone on to some extent on the floor of this legislature. In the past, this Legislative Assembly has always relied on its officer, the Provincial Auditor, to look at expenditures of government and to maybe not necessarily like all the things that the Provincial Auditor says, but to act on the deficiencies that the Provincial Auditor points out.

Now when this Provincial Auditor reports in this particular year on departments and agencies, such as the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, what did the government choose to do? They chose to attack the Provincial Auditor, rather than saying, well, we don't like what the auditor is saying, but we do want to respect some of the things he's saying, because we should try and improve government accountability and not hid away from the public eye and hide away from members of the Legislative Assembly what is happening within Crown corporations like the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor does not audit all of the Crown corporations in the province of Saskatchewan. In fact there has been an increasing move in recent years to appoint private sector auditors to audit especially Crown corporations. Now the fact I think is well established that if the Provincial Auditor does not want to rely for his eyes and ears on the appointed private sector auditor, the Provincial Auditor has within his responsibility and mandate under the Act of this Legislative Assembly, the right to go in and do an independent audit, because the Provincial Auditor is the ultimate authority when it comes to a dispute within this Legislative Assembly in terms of accountability on public expenditures, expenditures that are made from the public purse, from the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars.

So I think that we cannot dispute that. Possibly individual members can enter into a dispute about it, but if you check across Canada with public accounts committees or if you checked with the Auditor General in Ottawa, who

performs a similar function with the federal government, or if you checked with other provincial auditors, I think you would find overwhelming consent and consensus that the Provincial Auditor is the ultimate authority and has the ultimate responsibility for reporting to legislatures and through the democratic process for the expenditure of taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Speaker, what else does the Provincial Auditor go on to say in his annual report about the property management corporation? He says, and I quote from section 29.10:

I am unable to rely on the work of the appointed auditor for the following reasons:

The appointed auditor has, in my opinion, issued an inappropriate opinion on SPMC's 1988 financial statements.

The documentation in the working paper files of the appointed auditor was not sufficient to permit me . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'm going to once more draw to the attention of the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster that I don't want repeated interjections in the hon. member's remarks.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, I was quoting section from 29.10. I'll start the second part of that:

The documentation in the working paper files of the appointed auditor was not sufficient to permit me to form an opinion on the adequacy of SPMC's control systems to safeguard and control public property.

the documentation in the working paper files was not sufficient to permit me to form an opinion on SPMC's compliance with authorities.

Mr. Speaker, this is a condemnation by an individual who has worked within the Provincial Auditor's office since the 1960s, and maybe not serving as Provincial Auditor all that time, but certainly serving in the Office of Provincial Auditor under three different administrations — Liberal, New Democrat, and in fact the Conservative administration of the day, Mr. Speaker.

So this person has no political axe to grind. The person reports fairly on what they find in the accountability process of government. And although the Provincial Auditor doesn't really point to waste and mismanagement, because that's not within his mandate, the Provincial Auditor reports on non-compliance of spending of taxpayers' dollars without the authority to do it.

So he's obligated to investigate and do an audit to determine whether or not taxpayers' dollars were spent with the proper authority and safeguard to protect the public interest. It's up to public accounts committees and the legislature and individual members to make the case as to whether or not there is waste and mismanagement.

And the federal auditor, the Auditor General, has many times referred to this as due regard for economy, efficiency and effectiveness. And how would members know for sure in a department like SPMC whether or not there is waste and mismanagement, because you can't tell whether they've even got the proper authority to do the expenditures and the hundreds of millions of dollars that come into contact with the property management corporation.

I would go on, Mr. Speaker, to quote from section 29.14. And the Provincial Auditor says:

In my opinion, SPMC's financial statements contain significant departures from generally accepted accounting principles . . . which I describe later.

Section 29.15:

The appointed auditor has issued an audit opinion without reservation on these financial statements. Therefore, in my opinion, the appointed auditor has issued an inappropriate report.

Section 29.16:

Accordingly, I have reported this matter to the Institute for Chartered Accountants of Saskatchewan. I will report its ruling when I receive it.

Mr. Speaker, this is very, very serious, in that one auditor, the main auditor for this Assembly, reports a private sector auditor who has not fulfilled the mandate of reporting on a corporation of the Crown; a Crown corporation which was set up by this government, I maintain, to hide public expenditures and keep away the public accountability so they can manipulate money within the property management corporation, not to the advantage of the taxpayers and the government but to the advantage to the partisan political motives of some members of the cabinet, so that they can manipulate this money more to the interests of their re-election than to the good of the public purse and to due regard for economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the government is also under criticism in property management corporation of other statements that are made within the auditor's report. But before I go on with the sections of the auditor's report that are appropriate, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that there is a concept called Statement 1 of the Governmental Standards Accounting Board, and I would like to read that into the record:

"Accountability requires governments to answer to the citizenry — to justify the raising of the public resources and the purposes for which they are used. Governmental accountability is based on the belief that the citizenry has a "right to know", a right to receive openly declared facts that my lead to public debate by the citizens and their elected representatives. Financial reporting plays a major role in fulfilling government's duty to be publicly accountable in a democratic society."

Mr. Speaker, that quote, as I said, comes from the Governmental Standards Accounting Board. It's a statement that this government has blatantly overlooked. They want to hide from the public where they're spending their dollars. They don't want the public to know.

(1400)

In one section, it doesn't deal with the property management corporation, but in one section of the auditor's report the auditor states that he is no longer able to see 50 per cent of the government expenditures — 50 per cent of the government expenditures. That's certainly in violation, by this statement, of the Governmental Standards Accounting Board. The accounting board says very clearly that the public should have access to all expenditures made by government, not just 50 per cent of government expenditures but all government expenditures. It's not good enough for government to give access and information about half the expenditures in terms of telling the government fairly and accountably where that money is spent, what it's used for, and it's a responsibility of the government to do that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Maybe what the public should do is only pay half their taxes, Mr. Speaker, if the government will only tell them where they're spending half of it. Does the government really need that other 50 per cent? Well if they do, they should be accounting for it to the taxpayers in this province of ours, Mr. Speaker.

What are some of the other things that the auditor says about the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation? I quote from section 29.19:

The financial statements do not disclose the nature and significance of the Participation Credit of \$42.7 million in the Statement of Income and Retained Earnings. In my opinion, this is essential information which is required to be disclosed by G.A.A.P. (generally accepted accounting principles).

Well, Mr. Speaker, in some questioning of ministers in this House, in some correspondence, we find that the participation credit basically means that a government department or agency has overpaid the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation by a certain amount. And if that's determined at the end of the fiscal year, they would get a participation credit because they have overpaid. Now we don't know whether this is done on a department agency by department agency, or whether it's all pooled together and then distributed equally.

That would seem to be an unfair system. We would think that a participation credit that exists should be given back on the basis of the actual overpayment and not be dispersed equally back amongst government departments.

It seems to me also, Mr. Speaker, that if there is a participation credit whereby government departments

and agencies have overpaid the property management corporation for the office accommodation, storage accommodation, services provided by the department — if they've overpaid, they shouldn't be increasing their rent in the following year. And this is exactly what's happened by this government, Mr. Speaker. They're building a larger and larger pool of retained earnings within the property management corporation by increasing the rents. And obviously, if there's participation credits there, some departments and agencies were overcharged. But in every case in the following fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, the property management corporation has proposed to increase the rents to all government agencies and departments. So there's something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the accountability process.

Mr. Speaker, there are other examples as well where the auditor points out that there are deficiencies in the system in terms of control, in terms of the expenditures that are dispersed and the money collected by the property management corporation. And we know that this is a new Crown corporation, but we also find it incumbent upon the government to put into place as soon as possible the proper controls, because they are utilizing taxpayers' dollars. It's important to remember that there are no revenues come into property management corporation other than those paid by departments and agencies of the government. So, Mr. Speaker, they're not operating in the private sector; they're operating with public funds in the public domain, and they must be accountable for that.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that it's inconceivable that SPMC is allowed to spend taxpayers' dollars and not to have to account for it. The reasons given for not disclosing spending information are basically very weak and not well-founded. They simply do not stand up to the light of sound scrutiny by the opposition or others who care to look at the documents that are available from property management corporation. And those documents certainly are sketchy, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that the government is not forthcoming with many of the items of information that we would like to see.

The interests of Saskatchewan taxpayers are being jeopardized, and "now we see it, now you don't" type of bookkeeping within the property management corporation. Many of the statements of the minister and the president of SPMC in defending the corporation are filled the usual rhetoric about business principles, about operating efficiency, about real costs, about market forces. And their jargon claims basically what they are, that SPMC is more accountable and an efficient way of doing things than was the department of supply, and service; and at the same time, SPMC is going to make all other government departments more efficient and accountable. Well if this is actually true, why don't they give full disclosure about what's happening at the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation?

They operate almost in a veil of secrecy, Mr. Speaker, and it's pointed out that the auditor is hampered in terms of getting the information required to disclose full accountability.

The property management corporation says in terms of more efficient and more accountable for other

government departments and agencies, it says that by removing expenditures of tax dollars from legislative scrutiny, does not increase accountability — at least I want to point that out to them. The amount of payments that all departments must make to SPMC is set by SPMC, so how does that make the government departments and agencies more efficient?

Anybody we've ever talked to about what they pay, through Public Accounts when we question the witnesses there, what they pay, do they have any say in it — no, you have to talk to Sask property Management. So it seems that there's no justifications for increases, as I mentioned just a few moments earlier. The departments and agencies are just simply told to pay, and so they have to pay it.

Now this isn't how the free market system, how entrepreneurs work in the business world in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if what they're saying is making these departments and agencies more efficient, they would be allowing them to negotiate for better office space at the most reasonable price they could obtain, office space that would serve their needs. But this just isn't the case. SPMC says, pay X dollars, and the department agency is obligated to pay that. It appears in the budget documents and the estimates what they have to pay and it's clear-cut.

When is the minister going to announce pay-backs or reductions in payments to SPMC by the government's departments and agencies that have participation credits? We're waiting. We know that there's a \$42.7 million participation credit there now. But in the current estimates, which they don't want to deal with that either, in the current estimates every department agency's rent has gone up.

Mr. Speaker, the increased payments to SPMC, the government claims to have increased spending in many departments, okay? The government increase in departments quite often is not as big in increase as the government would indicate, in fact in some cases may not be an increase at all, because they are payments now made to Saskatchewan Property Management that they didn't have to pay there before.

If you look at the Department of Education, Mr. Speaker, in the current estimates for '89-90, the department, if you go through item by item, Department of Education, they pay around \$45 million in the fiscal year '89-90 to Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. Department of Health is in the ballpark at 30 million.

Well this isn't money that goes into increased services. This is money that goes into an unaccountable system in the property management corporation. So in practice these budgets are not increasing by the amounts the government says. All they're doing is channelling more money into property management corporation, which they don't account for.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should look at the Ramada Renaissance for a minute. Ken Brehm, vice president of corporate affairs for SPMC, has basically claimed that renting space in Ramada Renaissance fits with their

general plan of making programs more efficient. Yet, Mr. Speaker, he goes on to say the government took the space to make the project more viable. Well which is it? Will the minister some day tell us whether it was to make the Ramada Renaissance more viable for the Remai family, or was it to get a good deal and to get more efficient space for government programs. You can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. The government just cannot have it both ways. They need to answer for this.

The minister claimed that the space in the Ramada was rented for business development move to help the convention centre. Well if they're going to help the convention centre, maybe they could do it through small business. Why does the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, which is supposed to have the great efficiency of government departments and agencies at the heart and soul of their objectives, why are they in the business of helping the private sector? That's not their business, Mr. Speaker. The action by SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) clearly has nothing to do with government efficiency, but it has everything to do with making the Ramada Renaissance more efficient at the taxpayers' expense.

In other words, the free market applies to farmers and workers and other average people and your average business, but when big business friends are involved, however, the government feels no obligation to meet its own business principles. They feel an obligation to help their political friends, Mr. Speaker, and not have due regard for the expenditure of taxpayers' dollars in the province of Saskatchewan.

In fact when they first entered into the Ramada Renaissance convention centre venture, they were paying for empty office space, many thousands of square feet, some of it located in the Ramada Renaissance. That's not efficiency and good use of taxpayers' dollars, which they block the Provincial Auditor at every more when he tries to make the government and the system more accountable to the good of taxpayers. What do they do? They attack the auditor. They don't try and honour the report.

You see also, you look at some of the things that the government is doing. There are a great deal of government employees now that work for the property management corporation, and they don't do very well. They've had an unfair labour practice filed against them by the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union. The minister mailed out information outlining how janitorial service employees could get involved in contracting out their own jobs, and that was an attempt to bypass the union. I think it's very important to work in harmony with the union, not to try and destroy it, Mr. Speaker.

And we've seen under this government just how valuable and the great asset that unions are to people in the province of Saskatchewan, because without unions and without democratic opposition and a government like this comes along, they'd run roughshod over all working people in the province of Saskatchewan to meet their own greedy political ends, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1415)

Mr. Anguish: — Well I think we should also look at a little bit of information about the Premier's office in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, going back to December of '88. Since Sask Property Management was formed, the Premier now has an extravagant office in Prince Albert, an office that costs \$46,000 a year to rent, and it cost them \$86,000 to renovate the office space. Now how is property management going to achieve its mandate for more efficiency and greater accountability by doing things like that?

I maintain to you, Mr. Speaker, that if we had a full-time Premier instead of a part-time Minister of Agriculture and a part-time Premier, not doing a very good job either one, if he'd resign from being Minister of Agriculture and appoint a back-bencher — surely to goodness, out of all those people with rural experience sitting on the government side of the House, there must be one that could fulfil the role of Minister of Agriculture. Maybe not.

An Hon. Member: — No.

Mr. Anguish: — Well some of my colleagues say no, there isn't. But the point is, Mr. Speaker, who would you pick from it? Maybe it's best to leave the Premier as also Minister of Agriculture. But the point I want to make is that if he was a full-time Premier, paying attention to the overall affairs of the province, wouldn't need an office renovation of \$86,000 and \$46,000 a year to rent and extend the office somewhere in other areas of the province. He could be in touch with the people of Saskatchewan, not only in his direct contact, but through his cabinet and members of the legislature and members of the opposition.

I know for a fact that the members from Prince Albert, the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake and the member from Prince Albert, both have extensive dealings in communications with their constituents and can tell the Premier on any given day what the concerns are of the people in the city of Prince Albert and the surrounding rural area. Mr. Speaker, there is not a need for what's going on here with the Government of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there was a payment of \$182 million that was paid out of general revenue to finance SPMC, yet this money was not properly accounted for when the deficit was reported. The Tories claimed that fiscal responsibility is their goal, yet they shrug off accounting for \$181 million — \$181 million, Mr. Speaker.

The truth is that they don't know how to manage money at all. Maybe the \$182 million is not significant to the Tories sitting on the government side of the House, but I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's important and significant to the taxpayers in Saskatchewan who have to pay that \$182 million in their taxes, their hard-earned dollars.

There was \$1.2 million spent on Air Canada tickets in 1986-87 and \$45 million spent for advertising, Mr. Speaker. Now is that just pocket-money for the government MLAs and nothing to be concerned about? I

say again, Mr. Speaker, these are figures that are significant and real to those citizens in Saskatchewan who have to pay the tax bill of this government who has used blatant waste and mismanagement for a period of six or seven years now in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Now what are some of the other arguments, Mr. Speaker, that SPMC has used to mislead, I would say, the people in the province? They've said at times, Mr. Speaker, that they can't reveal expenditures because it will hurt SPMC's competitive edge in the market-place.

Well again they talk out of both sides of their mouth, Mr. Speaker. At one point they say, we're getting out of all Crown corporations; we're going to sell them off because it's best in the private sector, and at the same time, they create the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation to conceal hundreds of millions of dollars within it.

And do they have a board of directors? Yes, they have a board of directors. Is there anyone from the public on the board of directors, is the next question I would ask, Mr. Speaker. The answer is no, there is no one from the public on the board of directors of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

In fact there are four cabinet ministers — the member from Meadow Lake, I believe; the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden; the member from Indian Head-Wolseley; and I believe the member from Weyburn, if I'm not mistaken, Mr. Speaker, are the board of directors of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

Now how do we get accountability from there? How is that accountable to the public? Again, even at the board level they block access to information from the public by not having any members on the public on the board of directors of property management.

Now going back to this competitive edge, Mr. Speaker. Since its inception, the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation has been used to avoid legislative scrutiny, really is what has happened. As the government department of supply and services was accountable for its spending through the legislature, and I've explained that earlier, and basically the function of the department of supply and service was the same function that is now performed by property management, but the issue is that there's no accountability of it.

Now SPMC is a Crown corporation, so the government refuses to make public its spending patterns and where it actually spends its money. The argument used is that they would jeopardize this competitive edge in the market-place, Mr. Speaker.

This is either a cover-up or a serious flaw in their reasoning, Mr. Speaker. SPMC does not compete for sales; government departments do not have a choice; they must use SPMC for their space and supplies. Furthermore, government departments do not even have

a say in how much of their budget will be skimmed off to rent from SPMC. Some competitive edge!

Some competitive edge, where government departments and agencies don't even have a say in how much they pay for their office space. They're at the whim and the will of the property management corporation and the secretiveness which veils the activities of the property management corporation.

Sometimes the people using SPMC are told that SPMC is the organization that will supply you with these services and this is what it'll cost you for these services. SPMC is not only . . . has a fixed set of clients, but it also sets its own price for those services. Is this what the Conservative government, Mr. Speaker, means by the free market, the competitive, the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness? Not at all, Mr. Speaker. They may mean that, or try to mean it, but by anyone else's definition they have not created an environment that is conducive to public scrutiny, and yet they're using taxpayers' dollars.

If this was totally in the realm of the private sector and Saskatchewan entrepreneurs, I can see them not accounting fully to the public because they'd be using their own money, hopefully, unless the government funds it and then gives it to their friends. But when you're using taxpayers' dollars to perform functions of government and government agencies, then there's no question you must be fully accountable.

There's not one scrap of competitiveness involved in the things we've spoken about, Mr. Speaker. Keeping these spendings a secret reduces the competitiveness, as a matter of fact, and clearly reduces accountability within government. SPMC can now charge exorbitant prices to all the government departments, and there is no mechanism to check this practice, or at least if there is, the government certainly hasn't been forthcoming with us to tell us about the checks and balances.

Making the spending of SPMC known to all would enhance it's competitiveness, I would think, for SPMC competes in the area of buying services and not selling them. In any private organization, if they were in the business of buying services, it would be good business to make its spendings for its goods and services known, to know that they're good competitors in the market-place and that they are efficient. And if that private sector firm happens to be efficient, then government should deal with a private sector firm like that if they're going to deal with the private sector. In the area of SPMC they have no choice, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn for a moment to government-owned versus rented buildings. Now the departments must make payments to SPMC even when the government owns the space that that department or agency is using. They may have had it totally paid for. Instead of charging them money for those spaces, if they could charge them a fee for maintenance, possibly, the departments could use those extra dollars to go into programs and services that they traditionally used to go to when the department of supply and service was in existence.

And since substantial amounts of public funding are being paid to SPMC, the public most certainly has the right to know if that money is being properly used. When the government rents office space from private companies, we can figure out who's making the profit in the case of the Ramada Renaissance, Mr. Speaker, but it's certainly not again to the benefit of the taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, the government has a great legacy of waste and mismanagement. We can look at the Provincial Auditor who we think was on the right track. We've always thought he was on the right track even when other administrations were in government and we thought the auditor was a bit harsh in terms of criticism. Governments in the past have always looked to the Provincial Auditor to make the public purse something that's respected, because it's not individual's money, it's the public's money. What does this government do? They decide to attack the Provincial Auditor. Mr. Speaker, that's not acceptable. We've pointed that out here.

We look at the great upheaval of people that went from supply and service to sometimes other departments, into property management, many people who had to forcibly pretty well take early retirement. We've asked for information from property management. It's been secretive; it's been withheld. We've criticized the government for this, and they still are not forthcoming.

The SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union) files unfair labour practices against the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. I've talked about the Premier's office renovations, the great cost of unused office space.

At one point when we figured it out — and it's an ongoing problem, it's difficult to figure out on a daily basis because we don't have full information — but at one point, I believe it would be back, oh it must have been six months ago or more, where the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation was spending \$34,000 a day or \$8.4 million annually on vacant office space, office space that was not being used by government departments or agency, and yet at the same time the government can find money to enter into contracts with their friends to take on even more office space.

Now, Mr. Speaker, possibly even if the budgets were balanced in the province of Saskatchewan, some taxpayers might overlook \$34,000 a day, but there aren't any taxpayers in Saskatchewan when we have a \$4 billion deficit, a government that's created a deficit where we have to pay 380-some million dollars a year in interest to service the debt, there isn't anybody abuse of spending \$34,000 a day on vacant office space to help Tory friends, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the government should be accounting for these things. If they would come clean on it, if they would try and admit their mistakes of the past, if they would try to correct the deficiencies in their system, I think we would find that the odd person in Saskatchewan may forgive, but they certainly would not forget. It's just like this government is running — it can run but it cannot hide.

Mr. Speaker, we need to have better accountability, especially in Crown corporations like the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. It's not the only one, but it was the major thrust of the motion that we're dealing with here today.

And so with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that there are other members that wish to enter into the debate, and I would move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the hon. member from the constituency of Prince Albert-Duck Lake:

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for its abuse of the democratic principle of accountability in its refusal to provide detailed accounting of the spending of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1430)

Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise to speak to this motion put forth by the member from The Battlefords, a motion that is basically condemning this government for turning aside itself and not being accountable for the expenditure of public funds.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the comments that my hon. colleague made regarding the comments by the Provincial Auditor, the person who is here to serve the people of this province and the members of this Legislative Assembly, when he delivered his annual report this year in March, year ending March of 1988, I would have to concur with, and I would want to suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the majority of the people of Saskatchewan would agree as well.

I've had some time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to look through the auditor's report and to study his comments and to share his thoughts with people of my constituency and others throughout this province. And I think it's become clear, Mr. Speaker, to all people of Saskatchewan why members of this government and members of the Executive Council of this PC government would want to hide expenditures from the people of this province.

The property management corporation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would in my estimation, and I believe many others throughout this province, be one of the prime examples of a Crown corporation that's been set up by this government and that has been probably less accountable than even other departments and other Crown corporations in terms of expenditure of public funds.

The minister of privatization, when he would refer to this corporation, would talk in glowing terms of having business-like principles surrounding this corporation and how the corporation would be operating efficiently, and that it would reflect the real costs of delivering government and would be responsive to market forces, a more accountable and a more efficient way of delivering

services to the people of this province.

Well I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in light of the performance of this particular corporation, or maybe just the cabinet minister that runs it or is responsible for it, that that's clearly not what's happened. What they've done is taken public funds from different government departments, paid into the property management corporation, and they've hid them. They've not been accountable to the Provincial Auditor; they've not been accountable to the press. In short, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they haven't been accountable to the people of this province.

We've seen increased costs to different government departments throughout the term of the property management corporation, which means basically there's been more public money spent, funnelled into a Crown corporation that won't respond to people's desires to know how they're spending that money. And we're not just talking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, rental for provincial government office buildings, although that's a major portion of what these departments are expending. We're talking in terms of the provincial budget, some small amounts. And in this House this minister has clearly indicated that even he doesn't know where it's gone, or if he does know where it's gone, he's not willing to tell us where it's gone.

And I want to refer you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to page 98 of the auditor's report of March, 1988, and he indicates under section 29.24 that the property management corporation took over some of the assets of the people of this province, some \$2.2 million worth of dental equipment that used to be an integral part of the children's school-based dental program.

The property management corporation took this \$2.2 million worth of equipment but can't account for it. And I recall when the minister of this Crown was questioned in this legislature, he, well, wasn't quite sure. He indicated that, well, some are in this department and some are in that department and some are in other departments, but a detailed analysis of where this dental equipment that was providing a good service to the people of this province before it was privatized, \$2.2 million worth of dental equipment just disappears.

Now I understand that the grandiose schemes that the cabinet and the Premier of this province have become involved in since 1982 and the hundreds of millions of dollars that have — and the billions of dollars — that have passed through their hands, that they might not be terribly concerned about \$2.2 million worth of dental equipment. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would want the members on that side of the House not to forget that \$2.2 million represents an awful lot of money to the average Saskatchewan taxpayer, especially in sight of the fact that he's looking at a new flat tax, newly implemented, a new tax that comes directly off of his pay cheques. It's not big dollars maybe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the members on that side of the House, but I want to tell you, to the average Saskatchewan person it's an awful lot of money.

It means that they're looking at an increase in the fuel tax. And every time they fill their tanks they're paying another

10 cents a litre — a promise that was broken by this government, by the way, when they promised in 1982 that under a PC government there would never be a gas tax, a fuel tax. But now we're saddled with one of the highest taxes, the highest gas tax anywhere in this country.

And partly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's because they've frittered away \$2 million here and \$3 million here and \$5 million for GigaText, and another 50,000 a month to keep that corporation running for merely political reasons because this government doesn't want the embarrassment of having that Crown corporation scrutinized in Crown corporations estimates, because the only excuse they can give for not giving answers in Crown corporations is that it's still a company that's up and running.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wouldn't want the members on that side of the House to fool themselves into believing that the people of the province are going to overlook the hiding of \$2.2 million worth of dental equipment and not being accountable for where that dental equipment went. Bad enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this government would mutilate, disband, and tear apart one of the best dental programs anywhere in North America. I mean, that's bad enough, but then not to be accountable for the equipment that they pulled out of those dental clinics in schools all across this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's unforgivable.

Accountability is one issue here, and the loss of services through the lack of accountability is clearly another. Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the same page in the auditor's report, and I'm going to quote from it, it says:

The financial statements do not disclose the nature and significance of the Participation Credit of \$42.7 million in the Statement of Income and retained Earnings. In my opinion, this is essential information which is required to be disclosed by (generally accepted accounting principles) G.A.A.P.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've cited an example of some \$2.2 million that that minister, the minister of privatization, can't account for. And now we find another \$42.7 million that wasn't accounted for. And I want to go back to the day when he was questioned in the House as to what exactly this participation credit really was. Well now, he didn't know. The minister didn't know what a participation credit of some \$42.7 million was.

Well now, the minister in charge doesn't know; who should know? I mean, it's only \$42.7 million, and to the minister across that's yapping from his seat as usual, it may mean little. He's running a fairly big department, a big budget in the billions, and maybe \$42.7 million doesn't mean a lot to him in these days, in these days when his government has amassed a total provincial debt of some \$14 billion, and a debt from general revenue of \$4 billion.

Now that may mean little to him, but I want to say to that minister and members on that side of the House that that's how you got yourself in the kind of financial difficulties

that you have. You've put these people of this province behind the eight ball, Mr. Speaker, because they know that their families are going to have to be paying this debt off that they've amassed through incompetence and through a lack of accountability.

Now I would want to ask anyone in this province if they know what a participating credit might be. I mean, clearly the minister didn't. Maybe he's educated and instructed himself as to what it is now, although I doubt it, but clearly he didn't when the auditor reported it. And maybe one of his highly paid bureaucrats may know. They may have an idea now of where this \$42.7 million is, or what it's all about.

But I tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there are a lot of people in this province who feel that it's part and parcel of a political slush fund that that government is trying to build for the next election so that they can try and buy the people of this province with yet more promises.

But I want to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in spite of the lack of accountability, and no matter how big that slush fund that members on that side of the House plan to build or how many millions of dollars they plan to put into it, or if indeed it's billions, you can't buy the loyalty of the people of this province in any longer because they no longer trust you. They've seen through the kinds of government you deliver, and they're waiting for a chance to show you at the polls.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've seen unparalleled patronage in this province. We've seen a lack of accountability. And part of the patronage, I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the reason why there's a lack of accountability. When you have the Minister of Justice on one side of the House attacking the motives of the Provincial Auditor simply because he wants access to the government's expenditures, and you have that minister shamelessly and publicly attack an official of this Assembly here to serve all members of the legislature and through them the people of this province, it tells you something about the mentality of this PC government that we have in Saskatchewan. It tells you something about the kind of people and the kind of government through their ideology that we're facing. And it also tells you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why we're in financial difficulties.

Well to this day I would still like to know what this \$42.7 million, this participation credit might be. I would like to know who it's credited to. I would like to know who's going to be participating in the benefits of the \$42.7 million. I'd like to know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why in fact it was in that department and why it was listed as a participation credit.

But these are all answers that that government either fails to provide because they have decided they don't want to, or don't have answers for — it's one of the two. And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people of this province will no longer accept that kind of administration, and they're asking this government to reassess what they've been doing. And I sincerely hope, in the dying days of this government, that they'll see the light and turn their minds to delivering a decent accountable government which they've failed to do since 1982 in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this same auditor's report, the auditor reports, the Provincial Auditor reports that he hasn't had access to 50 per cent of government expenditures. Well I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, shame — shame on this government, shame on this cabinet, and shame on those back-benchers for sitting idly by while that happens.

(1445)

They talk about delivering a business-like government, a well-managed government, deliver it like you would a corporation and run it like you would a corporation. Well I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the shareholders of any corporation wouldn't stand by while their board of directors hid the expenditure of 50 per cent of their money. It wouldn't happen in private enterprise because there'd be a revolt. And I want to tell you that the members or the shareholders of a private corporation would see that that board of directors was changed or else their methods were changed.

And I want to say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the same thing is going to happen to this government. The same thing is going to happen to the Executive Council and members of the back benches. They're going to be accountable to the people of this province, and that's going to be on election day. And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I would guess many of them will not be returned to this House simply because they haven't been open and honest with the people of this province, and they deserve to have just that happen.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I refer to the next page of the auditor's report, page 99, and you see where Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation has charged the department of parks and renewable resources \$1.4 million for the use of four Canadair CL-215 aircraft.

Well now it goes on to say when the assets managed by the department of supply and services were transferred to the property management corporation, these four aircraft were excluded from the sale. Well now that's to me a little strange that the property management corporation would be sending invoices to a government department, the department of parks and renewable resources, for the use of aircraft that they don't own. It doesn't make sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this would happen. It doesn't make sense that the auditor would have to put in his report that that's what has happened.

So the question members on this side will ask and people of this province will ask is: who does own those aircraft? If they were excluded from the sale, who owns title to them? Is it the defunct department of supply and services? Where did they go? Who holds the title to them? Was there any money exchanged for the purchase of them? Where did these four aircraft come from? We know that, but where did they go? We don't know that.

I mean, conspicuous in the absence of those four aircraft in the sale to property management corporation, that's bad enough, because you wonder where they went. But that the property management corporation would have

the audacity to invoice another government department for use of aircraft that they don't own is beyond the comprehension of members on this side of the House and people of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster may sit here, he sits here and shakes his head, and what I would ask of him is that he might want to stand up and explain where these four aircraft . . . where they went and where they came from. He might have some comments on this, and he may not in fact by out of order by getting up and forgetting that he's already spoken on a particular issue. I can inform him today that he hasn't spoken to this motion, and if he feels he would want to do so, I'm sure the Speaker or Deputy Speaker would recognize him.

And I'll wait for his comments on where the \$2.2 million for the dental equipment went, and if he can give us an itemized, detailed account of that, I would appreciate that. The minister couldn't; maybe he can. And maybe if this fellow from Cut Knife-Lloydminster could explain to us what a participation credit is, we'd be interested to hear that as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because what it is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is public funds. And the bright light from Cut Knife-Lloyd is indicating that he can in fact explain what these expenditures or what these items are all about. Then I'm going to be anxious to hear, when I conclude my remarks, him stand up and explain these for the people of this province. Perhaps he might want to especially explain them to the people of his riding, who he hasn't seen for months.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're talking here about accountability of government, and in particular we're talking about the lack of accountability of expenditure of public funds of the Crown management corporation. If it were just, Mr. Deputy Speaker, isolated to this particular Crown corporation, it would be bad enough, because there's so many hundreds of millions of dollars that are funnelled into it every year. That would be bad enough, but it doesn't stop here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it's all across the board with this government.

It goes into Crown corporations where they refuse to answer for frittering away \$5 million of public funds on the GigaText scandal. It's in public accounts where members of the opposition whose role it is to scrutinize the expenditures of all different government departments, there's a stonewalling and a lack of submission of answers to specific questions on government expenditures.

And the question I want to ask again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is why? Why does this have to happen; why is it happening? What is this all about? Elected officials dealing with public funds, but unwilling to explain to the people of the province who put those public funds at their disposal through tax dollars, unable to explain why they won't account for the expenditure of over 50 per cent of them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government has been described as corrupt, it's been described as incompetent, and it's been described as a government that deserves to be defeated. And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all of those who feel that way about this particular

government have an awful lot of allies in this province, as evidenced by the latest opinion polls, public opinion polls that this government is taking internally, and that we have been taking on this side of the House.

And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, unless this government turns its eye to the concerns of the people of the province, those figures aren't going to change. They're going to sit in the mid-20s in terms of the public's perception of their ability to govern, and perhaps even lower as it gets closer to election time and more of their mismanagement and their foolishness comes apparent and comes before the people of Saskatchewan.

I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it's a sad commentary on a government. They might have been forgiven in 1982 or '83 because of lack of experience. And I think perhaps, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they may have been forgiven in those years because of their lack of experience, but a government that's been in power for eight years doesn't have that for an excuse any longer, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And if there are some errors, the people of this province would, I think, forgive, if this government were willing to come forth and say, we're not going to hide our expenditures because we've made some errors. But if they were willing to come before the people of this province and say, yes, we've made a mistake, but we'll give you this commitment that we're going to change what caused that to happen and that it'll never happen again, there could be a forgiveness in the heart of the people of Saskatchewan.

But I don't believe that this government is willing to do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I can't understand that and nor can the rest of the people of this province. They can't understand why they've been forgotten and why their taxes have been increased in massive amounts. They can't understand why this government would rather put money at the disposal of Cargill, the largest grain company in North America. They don't understand those things why the government would prioritize Cargill over the needs of their children. They can't understand why there's money for Cargill, but that we can't afford to run the dental plan and the dental program where this corporation is hiding some \$2.2 million worth of assets.

Those are very difficult things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the average Saskatchewan resident to understand. And I tell you they couldn't understand the used car tax where people who can't afford new vehicles were asked to pay E&H tax. They can't understand that. And they can't understand why this government won't be accountable for the expenditure of Crown corporations like the GigaText, or like the property management corporation.

Those are things that are very difficult for the average Saskatchewan resident to understand. And I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the government has a responsibility. They have a responsibility either to explain in terms that Saskatchewan people can understand, or they have an opportunity . . . or a responsibility, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to resign.

And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I look forward to the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd's remarks because he's been delivering a parallel speech as I've been speaking for the last 25 minutes. And I really want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I feel a little bad because I would like to hear the brilliant remarks of that member opposite, but it's awfully difficult to do at the same time I'm trying to deliver a speech myself.

So I'm hoping, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that member will have his words in written form so that he can repeat them verbatim, because I'm sure I will find them as interesting as other people and other members on his side who can probably hear him quite clearly, as I can over here.

And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in terms of accountability, this government, there's a good reason why they would want to hide some of the expenditures, over 50 per cent of the expenditures. We understand that. When you look at the expenditures in terms of the convention centre here in Regina, the Ramada Renaissance, and if you look at the government's mentality with expending public dollars to lease space in that particular convention centre, it tells you sort of why they want to hide some of these expenditures.

And I want, Mr. Speaker, to share some remarks by Mr. Ken Brehm, the vice-president of corporate affairs for property management corporation, when he said that renting that space in the Renaissance in Regina, it really fits with the general plan of making programs more efficient.

Well some of us have a little hard time to explain that. He goes on to say that the government rented that space from the Renaissance to make that project more viable. It's a little difficult, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to understand — these the proponents of free enterprise, government off the back of business and out of the way of business, and hands-off approach, when public funds are required to make the project more viable.

I mean either it is viable as a private enterprise or it isn't viable. But you can't have it both ways. You can't have free enterprise, total free enterprise with government involvement. I mean, it doesn't work.

An Hon. Member: — Why?

Mr. Lautermilch: — The member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster asks why, so let me explain to him.

If you're going to have public involvement, sir, with public funds, it wouldn't make sense to me that that's the total and absolute crystal clear ideal of free enterprise. And if you need, sir, government funds in order to make a free enterprise operation viable, then clearly it's not a free enterprise operation that is viable. And you, sir, might not understand that, but as I said, I'm awaiting your remarks in the next few minutes before 5 o'clock before we adjourn for supper, because I'd really like to hear what you have to say about that.

The minister himself has some comments to make in terms of public funds that have been shifted into that convention centre. He says, it's a business development

move to help the convention centre — clearly not total free enterprise and clearly not in line with what this government indicates is their political philosophy.

I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I look through the auditor's report, I come upon a little portion in here, and I'll find it in a minute, where there's some public money expended to do a viability study on this particular convention centre, and I believe the figure is some \$12,000. But a study is done with public funds to indicate to the people who are going to be involved in getting this project going, as to checking the viability of it. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a lot of people in this province would like to see public funds put into their business or an expansion of their business to see whether the viability would be there or whether it wouldn't.

But the problem is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it goes to a precious few in this province, and, I would want to say to you, friends of the PC Party and people who support the kind of government that's been delivered because it does affect their livelihood in a very positive way. But there's very few who feel the effects of this government's involvement to that degree.

(1500)

And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that is evidenced by the number of bankruptcies in this province. It's evidenced by the number of businesses who close their doors and leave this province. It's evidenced by the number of young people who leave Saskatchewan because they can't find work. I would want to say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the base of those problems and the root of those problems hinge partly on a lack of accountability. It hinges on the fact that this government is not doing the proper job for the people of the province. And they're trying to hide that through hiding expenditures through the auditor, hiding expenditures of corporations like the property management corporation. And that's what the base of this problem is, and that's what the root of the problem in this province is, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I would want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when we speak about public funds and expenditures being hid, I think it's pretty clear why. I look, as an example, between September 15 of '87 and May 17 of 1988, a company by the name of Dome Advertising, closely connected with this PC Party, receives of public funds some \$37,610,215.

So it's pretty clear there's no money for average Saskatchewan men and women in terms of programs to help their small businesses. It's pretty clear that that's one of the reasons that you're seeing 6,000 notices . . . farmers affected by notices of foreclosure. And I think it's pretty clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reason there were 10,132 notices of foreclosure issued to farmers in this province. And I think it's pretty clear that it shows this government doesn't have any lack of direction for average Saskatchewan men and women, but rather for friends of the PC Party and friends of cabinet ministers and friends of this Premier.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this expenditure alone amounts to some \$27,472 a day. I mean, that's incredible. Can you

imagine if that money was turned into the hands of a couple of small communities just for a week, or for two weeks, or three weeks to develop a program that they maybe don't have the funds to explore? Can you imagine what a redirection of this government's priorities and expenditures that would assist Saskatchewan men and women? Can you imagine what that would do to this economy? Can you imagine what that would do to families on social assistance who are living far, far below the poverty level, who are struggling to feed their children? Can you imagine what that would mean to those families every day?

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's not the goal of this government, and the property management corporation is one of the tools that they're using to fulfil their goal. The goal of this PC government is to beat down the poor, to eliminate the middle class — and they're doing it on a daily basis — and to have two classes of people in Saskatchewan: the PC rich and the rest of us.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's been more and more clear as this government moves towards privatization and their privatization agenda that that's what they want and that's what their goal is. The privatization agenda won't include middle income families, because you see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they don't have the money to invest in these privatization moves.

The only way, sir, that they've been able to participate is through the strength of their provincial government. And through the strength of their provincial government they've been able to deliver a top-notch quality of health care and education. I mean, those are all the vehicles, as is property management — could be for property management corporation. The different departments of government could be vehicles and should be vehicles.

But what's gone wrong with Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation? Why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this corporation afraid to be accountable?

I think I have an idea why, and I think the people of Saskatchewan understand why. It's to carry on this right-wing Tory agenda, this destruction of middle income people and the pain inflicted upon lower income people. As I said before, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's nothing less than the political slush fund that is going to spread millions of dollars throughout this province whenever this Premier has the courage to call an election. That's what it's for. I think it's pretty clear that that's what it's for.

This government and former government members — and I can recall one prior to 1986 telling a friend of mine — the former member from Prince Albert, Mr. Meagher, indicated that he had no fear about the election of 1986 even in spite of the fact that they had built a massive debt. He indicated to this mutual friend of ours that there was no problem because they bought 'er in '82, and he said they could buy 'er again in '86.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this political slush fund that you're building through the property management corporation won't work this time, and the reason it won't work this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is because the people of this province know that however big that

political slush fund in property management corporation is, they can't trust what this government says. They were betrayed in 1986 on almost every point that this government campaigned on. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are well aware of the kind of people that govern them right now. And they understand very clearly that it's time to get rid of these people and put some politicians, some people, some neighbours of theirs in governing who will govern for them and not against them.

And I want to speak, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a moment about one particular politician that the people of Saskatchewan rejected, the former member from Humboldt. For a short term, this member was a cabinet minister in the administration of this PC government. But in 1986, the people of the Humboldt constituency decided that it was time for this particular MLA and former cabinet minister to be returned to the private sector, as so many people in 1982 were promised that opportunity — that they could leave the public sector and return to the private sector and work for private entities.

Well the constituents of Humboldt decided that this MLA should be retired. And in 1986 they elected the now member from the Humboldt constituency who serves as the NDP caucus Agriculture critic. And this former member was out looking for work. Well the former member was out looking for work. Well the promise to go to the private sector was not this man's particular dream — that's for "lowerlings." So where do you find him? You find this ex-Tory cabinet minister working in the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation at \$42,000 a year.

Well one of our colleagues here from Moose Jaw North is fond of saying that down pops a Tory and up pops a job, and I guess that's how it works. So we see this defeated ex-cabinet minister working within Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

Well what were his qualifications? The minister in charge, Mr. Taylor . . . I'm sorry, I won't mention his name, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the minister in charge indicated that Mr. Domotor was well qualified for his job. He had been a former cabinet minister, which I don't know would qualify anybody for any kind of a job given this government's track record, but that's what the minister indicated. He felt it was a good qualification. So they put thousands of people in the public sector on unemployment, and a lot of them eventually on social assistance, but there's room in Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation for a defeated PC MLA.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's why the people of this province no longer trust this government, because there's two sets of rules. And the lack of accountability is just one of the issues, and that's the motion that we're speaking today on, the fact that this government won't clearly indicate where they're spending public funds.

And people are leery of how they're spending their money, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for very simple reasons. In my home community in Prince Albert the Premier of this province in his wisdom decided that the representation by the member from Shellbrook-Torch River wasn't adequate, and that the representation in that area from the

MLAs from Prince Albert and Prince Albert-Duck Lake wasn't adequate. He decided he would have to open an office in Prince Albert, reason being that people wanted access to the Premier.

The rationale would mean to me that they can't get access through the member from Shellbrook-Torch River, that the member from Shellbrook-Torch River doesn't have the ear of the Premier. The reason would be to me that the member from Prince Albert doesn't have the access of the Premier or the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake doesn't have the access to the Premier.

And I want to say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I believe all of those to be true because I don't believe that anyone has the ear of the Premier any longer in this province or he would change the style of government that he's been delivering since 1982.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — And I want to say that the expenditure of property management corporation money on that particular office is clearly, to the public, it's a waste of money. They talk about access. Well what other aspect of access could there be? Could it be that the temporary office he set up in the McIntosh Mall wasn't wheelchair accessible? It's not the case, because of course it is.

So where did he move this for handicapped people? Have they got access in this present location? Well I'll tell you, not unless they sprout wings, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because there are stairs to get to that particular office. It's clearly not wheelchair accessible, so very clearly that wasn't the kind of access that they were meaning. I would suggest it was the former access.

But I want to say as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there were other reasons. The former federal PC candidate who was defeated — soundly, I may add — as were so many other of them in 1986 and in . . . or in '88 and in '84.

But anyway, this defeated Tory candidate finds himself working in the Premier's office in Regina because nobody would hire him locally. And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this member worked in Regina for a while, but apparently his qualifications weren't suitable to meet the desires or the requirements of the Premier, so he's moved from there to where?

Well this defeated candidate has moved into the new Premier's office at a cost of \$86,000 for renovations and \$46,000 a year to house him. Where did they move him? They moved him to Prince Albert. But to do what?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, clearly the people of this province know that the expenditure of their public funds was for none other than political reasons. But you've got to go through the list of staff in that office, Mr. Minister, to understand a little more clearly what that office is about. It's indicated to me that the same former cabinet minister defeated in Humboldt, the former MLA for Humboldt who works for the property management corporation, has some family working in that office as well.

So you see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's two sets of standards. There's one for friends of this PC government, and there's a set of standards for the rest of the people of this province. And the lack of accountability is one of the results of that kind of government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When a government of this province is afraid to tell the people of the province how they're spending their money, something must be amiss.

(1515)

The lack of accountability, I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is something that no member of any government would want to be proud of. The attack on the Provincial Auditor, simply because he wanted access to the way this government is spending money, was unparalleled and unforgivable. And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of this province will not be forgiving.

The people of this province understand what this is all about. They understand what this government is all about. They read the headlines: "Opposition fails to get information", "Government accounting methods blasted." I mean, it goes on and on.

The Provincial Auditor, trying to do his job to keep this government accountable, throws his hands in the air and has to go public. The Minister of Justice — of Justice no less — the minister in charge of the Department of Justice in this province unleashes a vicious, scathing attack on a man that's hired and whose role is to protect the people of this province and their tax dollars. And this government has the gall and the audacity to talk about a more efficient and a more accountable Sask Property Management Corporation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has to be some principles, and there have to be principles by people who seek and who attain public office. And I would suggest to you, one of those have to be accountability and honesty. And the people of this province know clearly that that's what's lacking with this particular administration.

Now I'm not suggesting that it's an individual thing with members on that side, because I, frankly, don't believe that. But I think what's happened is they've got into a collective political rut where they have no option but to hide the truth from the people of this province.

And I don't think that members on that side of the House came in expecting to have to do that. But I think in order to maintain power, that's what the end result has been, because their incompetence, because of their mismanagement, and because of the kind of Premier that we've had running this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've talked about the Premier's office in Prince Albert and the expenditure of public funds, and I've talked about the joke that it's become in Prince Albert because people know what it's about. It was set up for the federal election of 1988, and that was clear. And it's maintained for the next provincial election, whenever that happens to be, and that is clear.

But I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you haven't fooled the people of the province. It's not access to the Premier that they need, because they know it's not there, and they know where to phone in Regina. What they need is honesty in government, which is what this province needs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — You know, when you talk about honesty, when the property management corporation was introduced, they were talking about scrapping the department of supply and services, and it was to give accountability. Well let's look at what was accountable and what wasn't.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the department of supply and services came before this legislature annually to have its expenditures scrutinized because it was a line department of this government. This government sets up a Crown corporation to which they will give members of this opposition no access, but the reason was to set up accountability. And that's why people don't trust this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's why people can't trust members on that side of the House any longer.

They're no longer willing to take this Premier at his word when he promises a drought payment and makes them wait for a year. They're no longer willing to listen to the Minister of Health tell them that they've got the best health care system in North America, which there may be, but I want to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, certainly not what it was or not what it should be or what it could be. They're no longer willing to listen to that.

They're no longer willing to listen to the Deputy Premier stand up and talk about the way he squandered \$5 million and tell them that that operation is still going to spit out French translations. They don't trust that any longer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because they know that this high-flying cabinet and this Premier who travels around the streets of Montreal in the back of a limousine with Guy Montpetit, the man that fleeced us out of \$5 million, can no longer be trusted, and I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, they're going to pay for it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Why do we need this corporation, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Does this corporation compete for sales with outside interests? Not a bit. Every dollar that goes into property management corporation is public funds from different line departments. So what's the rationale for it?

I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is only two reasons that this corporation was formed. One of it was their ideology to privatize and get rid of public employees, and the other is to create a massive public slush fund that will find its way into the television cameras and to the radio stations when the next election comes. And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's the bottom line.

The bottom line is not whether the corporation was

required for the public good, because clearly that's not the case. The bottom line is that it's there for the good of the PC Party and of this Executive Council and the back-benchers who will try and be re-elected when the next election comes.

But I only say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you don't fool the people of this province another time. They know that you're blowing \$34,000 a day on empty office space that should go into the education system, that should be building highways, that could be developed into programs to help our young people through their education years.

They know that the \$34,000 a day that you're spending on empty office space could be going to pay for the school-based children's dental program that you scrapped, the program that you scrapped and then hid the equipment in the property management corporation and can't account for it. They know all that.

And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they will pay, this government will pay, and they'll pay dearly whenever the next election rolls around.

And there's much more, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that could be said about this particular corporation and about the way this government operates, but I listened with interest a few moments ago as the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster was delivering a speech as I delivered mine. And I'm very interested to see if in fact he'll stand up and . . . I'll send him over, if he would wish, a copy of the auditor's report and he can go to the pages that I was discussing earlier and he can talk about the participation credit — somebody can read it to him — of \$42.7 million. And someone might be able to read to him the article 29.24 where the auditor talks about the dental equipment costing \$2.2 million.

And someone might want to read to him about the \$1.4 million that the Department of Parks and Renewable Resources paid to the property management corporation for use of aircraft that the property management corporation doesn't own. I'm really interested to hear what his comments might be about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So in closing what I will say is that . . . and we're very pleased to second the motion put forward by the member from Battlefords. And I hope that the members on that side of the House will take heed to some of what the members on this side of the House have been saying about what people are saying about them.

And so with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will close my remarks and I wait with anxious breath the comments of the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I kind of hate to disappoint the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake in that I was able to persuade my colleague here, anxious as though he was to participate in the debate, that it was my turn this time, and shortly he will be following.

I want to begin — and I'm kind of pleased to be in this debate this afternoon — but I want to begin by congratulating my two previous speakers on this motion, and I say that with all sincerity, because having been in this House over the last few weeks and listening to the typical NDP filibuster going on, I was kind of taken by surprise that both members spoke just shy of an hour, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I would like to congratulate them on being able to get their thoughts together in that short period of time and to succinctly make their points. Because to take an example of the member from Moose Jaw North, I think, who spoke for about three days on a particular Bill, on Bill 20, or was it more than 20 days, but Bill 20 dealing also with corporations . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. The motion before the House is the motion moved by the member from Battlefords, seconded by the member from P.A.-Duck Lake. Bill No. — order — Bill No. 20 is not being debated now.

Mr. Neudorf: — I appreciate that comment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my enthusiasm to congratulate the members I got carried away and got into some other factors here.

However, coming back specifically to the motion then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to just read the version of that motion that I have here, moved by the member from the Battlefords, which states:

That this Assembly congratulates the Government of Saskatchewan for its support of the democratic principle of accountability in its willingness to provide detailed accounting of the spending of Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

And that is as I think that the motion should be read as well. The openness and the accountability of this government, which it has exhibited in its years in power, is indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a record that this government can be proud of. Now after the years of distortions, after the years of deception and cover-up the people of Saskatchewan have endured for a long time under the previous administration — and so I feel very strongly that the approach that our government is taking certainly is one to be commended.

Now either the members opposite have short memories, or whether they have selective amnesia I'm not quite sure, but they simply have chosen to forget their very own cover-up with regard to the Heritage Fund. And I specifically want to talk about the Heritage Fund and as how it relates to SPMC.

Let's talk about accountability, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Imagine back in 1982 this government's shock when we were elected, upon taking power after the people of Saskatchewan had turfed out the Blakeney administration, imagine our shock when we opened the books and found that the great sums of money that the NDP government had said were there, the great sums of money that were in the Heritage Fund, when we opened the books and took a look, they simply didn't exist.

And why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, didn't those sums of money exist in the Heritage Fund? Well we find now the \$418 million of that Heritage Fund was used by the NDP administration to do what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? To buy — to buy another Crown corporation; another potash mine was bought.

But not only that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was another \$106 million that, hat in hand, the Blakeney government ran to those big evil bankers in New York to borrow, to borrow money to pay interest to these evil bankers from the good, hard-earned, cold cash of the Saskatchewan taxpayer; to pay interest not to people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but rather to those evil bankers in New York — \$106 million.

But that was only the initial attempt by that government, by that administration, in its cover-up — not accountability, not openness — in its cover-up to spend the money of Saskatchewan. And they promptly followed by another \$550 million of money, of taxpayers' money, that we went to New York under the Blakeney administration to borrow from those bankers once more, as an expansion in Lanigan. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what did the people of Saskatchewan get out of that? Well we bought dry holes; we bought holes in the ground.

(1530)

Did this money do anything for the Saskatchewan people? Did it create any new jobs? Did it have any impact upon the new creation, not only of jobs but rather of the multiplier effect of subsidiary industries, of tertiary industries? Was anything being established because of this?

No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was the buying of that monolith that has been created of buying things that were in existence and doing nothing for the people of Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Equivalent, as my colleague says here, as buying land bank land, because that is the mentality of members opposite. Bigger government is better government. People should not be allowed to own property. That is their fundamental ultimate aim, is that government is to control everything. And they can control everything as long, obviously, as there is a cover-up.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was a government that was totally out of control. And do you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

An Hon. Member: — What about Nabu?

Mr. Neudorf: — Yes, we could talk about Nabu, and I'm sure we will as time goes on.

The NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker, paid for their mistakes. They paid for their mistakes in the ultimate demonstration of the citizens of this province when in 1982 . . . do you remember the 1982 election? Oh yes, they remember the '82 election. That's been with them for a long time, when the citizens of this province turfed them out for their insensitivity. and for their cover-up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, obviously they are hard learners. They don't learn their lessons very well because, by their attitude as an opposition, it was evident and it was clear to the citizens of Saskatchewan that they had not learned their lesson. So we had an election in 1986. And what happened in 1986? The citizens of Saskatchewan decreed that once more the NDP should be denied access to power, that they had not learned their lesson.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Now granted, we could take a look at Elphinstone, and we could take a look at Eastview. But I want to go on to something that the members opposite don't want to hear too much about. And I want to turn my attention just very, very briefly to a by-election that was held last fall . . .

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

Mr. Solomon: — Mr. Speaker, a point of order. I'm looking at the motion that we're debating at this point, and it's dealing with the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. I have been listening for five minutes to the member from Rosthern, and he has yet to relate any of his remarks to the discussion of the motion at hand. And I would ask you to rule, or at least advise the member to get on with the debating of the motion rather than to be rambling on about issues which have nothing to do with the motion.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. member stands and calls a point of order. The point of order is, in my interpretation, not well taken because of the fact that there was a wide range of debate allowed on this particular resolution in front of us. And I basically have heard the member distinctly, the member from Rosthern, distinctly refer back to the motion on a couple or few different occasions, if the member opposite would have been listening.

I tend to think he got a little bit irate, sir, as to when the member from Rosthern . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I've been listening very closely to the debate on both sides of the House, and certainly the members have strayed . . . both sides of the House have strayed, so the point of order is well taken. I would ask the member to relate his comments to the motion, but certainly other members were allowed to stray somewhat too.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you for that ruling, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I will certainly attempt to do exactly as you instruct. This motion does not deal with SPMC only, this motion deals with accountability. This motion deals with the principle of accountability and also the principle of detailed accounting. It was because of your lack of detailed accounting. It was because of your lack of detailed accounting, lack of accountability, that you were turfed out in '82, '86, and also in the by-election that we just finished in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. And I do not think, members opposite, that that is not relevant and pertinent to the issue that is at hand here. And having said

that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I'd ask the member for Regina North West to keep his comments to himself when the member is speaking. He'll have lots of opportunity to get into the debate later. Order. I ask the member for Regina North West to keep his comments to himself.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you for bringing them to order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This government realizes the importance of being accountable, being accountable to those very people that elected us. And we react to that, we respond to that, and we listen. And that is why government documents such as *Public Accounts*, the member from The Battlefords spent a little bit of time, although he shied away from that and I was kind of disappointed why he would not spend more time on SPMC and its relationship to public accounts, which is the ultimate in accountability.

And he is a member of the Public Accounts Committee, as I am a member of the Public Accounts Committee. And I found it kind of striking that he spent so little time on his role as a member of the Public Accounts Committee. And I want to address that a little bit because public accounts committees and estimates within this Chamber, when we are here in the Committee of Finance, these thick facts, these figures are freely available to the general public.

Now I'll grant you, not too many people in the general public are inspired by reading facts and figures and so on. But the fact remains these documents are on record and these documents do deal with SPMC. And I think the question becomes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just what does that member of Battleford mean when he, in his motion, talks about detailed accountability. By detailed accountability, does he mean that the SPMC should release confidential information and so jeopardize its position financially? The request has been made, the request has been made on a number of occasions where then it could actually jeopardize its financial stability. Not only could this put the SPMC into bankruptcy but the interests, the interests, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the citizens of Saskatchewan would be in question as well.

Now the member from The Battlefords claims to care about the people of this province, yet he would have no problem in causing hardships upon people. Obviously these members opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker, need to rethink their position on this matter. That they can't even come to terms within themselves on this matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and if I might quote from *Hansard* from April 2, *Hansard*, April 2, 1982, when the member . . . when the Leader of the Opposition, when the member from Saskatoon Riversdale commented:

No system is perfect, including public accounts. We are here trying to meld two competing objectives; the objective of doing an audit in a non-political environment in a hard, cold, detailed financial analysis versus, on the other hand, the public's right to know.

Here we have the Leader of the Opposition taking a stand on an issue that is substantially very different from the position that we have just heard the member from The

Battlefords iterate. Now I feel that is very important that those members opposite come clean on this issue and tell the House just exactly where they stand. And if I may be allowed to continue with my remarks, I would like to bring to the attention of the Assembly to another point.

During a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee held on April 4 of this year, the president of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, Mr. Otto Cutts, was persistently badgered by one of the members opposite.

And I'd like to read to those members present here today some passages of the minutes of that meeting. Now because I can't refer to the member by name I guess we could call him the Mr. Blank from The Battlefords. But Mr. Blank said:

Mr. Cutts, how many people that received early retirement were hired back on contract by the Department of Supply and Services in the year under review?

I'm quoting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Cutts answered:

I would think that there would be none, (Mr. Chairman) but I can . . .

And then Mr. Blank asked again:

I think you should reconsider that (answer) matter.

A rude interruption in a threatening state of voice, tone of voice, and the words can speak for themselves. We were there, we know what was meant: "I think you should reconsider this answer."

Another example, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Blank:

I would think that you'd want to check the record before you said that.

Mr. Cutts said:

Like I said, I would check the record but I can . . . It's our practice not to do that. Like I said, I said already three times that I'll check the record.

And another quote, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Blank again:

So are you going to make a profit every year.

Mr. Cutts: — That isn't what I said (Mr. Chairman).

Mr. Blank:

You're projecting to make a profit every year.

Mr. Cutts: The question was, did we project to make a loss, and I said no.

The point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am making is that this kind of badgering is not necessary, this kind of twisting the truth for our own political ends is not necessary. And if the member from The Battlefords were to take his job seriously and refrain, refrain from using Mr.

Cutts as a political sounding board, then perhaps that member would get something accomplished for a change.

And I feel that I must bring to attention the fact that Mr. Cutts did bring forth some very detailed information, and that's what the motion is talking about — detailed information — the lack of thereof.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I simply say to you, to the members of this House, and to everyone listening, that is as false an impression as you can get because when we talk about detailed information, information was freely given on the SPMC by Mr. Cutts in the most professional manner I think that this committee has seen in a long, long time.

Four, when Mr. Cutts was asked how much office space was vacant, he provided that information, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When he was asked about his ministerial staff, he provided that information. Likewise, when Mr. Cutts was questioned on rental charges and the use of computers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Cutts provided that information. Mr. Cutts provided the information on who swept floors and how many floors were being swept.

When he was asked about individual buildings all over the province, he provided that information. And when Mr. Cutts was asked how SPMC invested surplus funds, what did Mr. Cutts do? He provided that information on the spot, instantaneously, fully, completely, freely. And they say we do not give detailed information. Just how much more accountable can you be, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Just how much more accountable can anyone expect this government to be?

And never mind the fact that the NDP have raised these very questions, not only in Public Accounts. They have the opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to ask the questions, and as they do sometimes, in question period, or they can ask these questions in the Committee of Finance. During the Committee of Finance estimates, this government is accountable; this government will answer the questions; this government is doing exactly that.

However, those members opposite should keep in mind that this has led, this process has led to a doubling and even a tripling of the costs of the time involved in this process. And I think that's important to consider as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There is a certain amount of efficiency that is expected by the public to come out of this Assembly, not efficiency at the expense of curtailing the democratic process; that's not what I am suggesting at all.

But when you have three avenues, three avenues of approach and you're getting through — motions for returns, as well, is another avenue — when you have all these avenues and you have members opposite pursuing all three avenues, it becomes burdensome and it becomes costly, and we have to become suspect of the motives that drives members opposite to try to achieve their ends in any and every avenue that is accessible to them.

(1545)

An Hon. Member: — At any cost, is what you wanted to say.

Mr. Neudorf: — At any cost, as the member from Regina Elphinstone says, and I'm glad that he's willing to admit that, really willing to admit that. And what for, Mr. Deputy Speaker? What are their motives?

Well I've been sitting in public accounts now since 1986, since October 21, 1986, I guess, whenever we met for the first time — I suppose it must have been in '87 when we met for the first time. But during that period of time, one thing in public accounts and public accountability that this government is subject to and willing to co-operate with, one thing has become very, very apparent to me as a member of the Public Accounts Committee, and to other members of the committee as well, and that is the motivation driving members opposite in the seeking of the eliciting of information to hold us accountable, and rightfully so. We must be accountable, we should be accountable, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I believe sincerely that we are accountable.

Now the reason I say that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the opposition makes a big deal every time the *Public Accounts* are tabled in this Assembly. Prior to the tabling of those public account documents, we hear a big hullabaloo; we hear a big forecast of gloom and doom; we hear a big forecast of cover-up; we hear, what are you trying to hide; we hear all these horror stories of the information that is included in those *Public Accounts* that are not being tabled.

And then when they are being tabled, and when they have been tabled, what happens after the Public Accounts Committee carefully, excruciatingly slowly at times, details the *Public Accounts* and goes through them? Let me just refer hon. members to the 1986-98 *Public Accounts* review. What happened during that time?

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, once in February we finally had this confrontation between members opposite and the government members as to which direction this Public Accounts Committee was heading, whether it was going to become a political forum, or in the words of the Leader of the Opposition whom I have just quoted, that we are supposed to take a hard look at the cold facts of the situation and that it should not be a political forum. Well we had that ironed out.

When we came to a tentative agreement that we would try to keep politics to a minimum during the questioning of the witnesses of the various departments, when we came to that agreement we got work done, and literally we zipped through department after department after department. But where were those gory details? Where were all those awful hidden numbers? Where was this lack of accountability of this government? It didn't exist; it didn't exist.

And I challenge you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I challenge anyone to go to some of the records. There are verbatims, there are verbatims of the public accounts, just like in *Hansard*, and my words are being recorded now for posterity. Well so are all the words in the Public Accounts

Committee. And I challenge members to go back and to go through those, to go through those public accounts and find out where members of this side of the government try to be obstructionists, where we were not willing to co-operate, and indeed where the department officials were not willing to co-operate in a willing fashion. It was so.

But then what happened; then what happened? I believe in June of this year — and I stand to be corrected as to the exact time — but when the '87-88 *Public Accounts* documents were tabled by the Provincial Auditor, what happened? Immediately, immediately members opposite, and I chastise them for this — immediately members opposite abrogated their responsibilities as hard-working, dedicated, sincere members of the Public Accounts Committee to finish the '86-87 public accounts because we literally had \$2 billion, \$2 billion of unaccounted for spending in 1986-87.

What did members opposite on that Public Accounts Committee insist that we do? They said, this is no good; we can't find any juicy morsels here; we want to go into '87-88 because the plum looks juicier.

Well I chastise members opposite for that. It was only the members on this side of the House that said we cannot do that. We cannot allow \$2 billion worth of money to be covered up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — And I asked the members opposite at that time, I asked them, what are you trying to hide; what are you trying to cover up; what good stories are there in the spending of this government side that you are trying to prevent the public from knowing? And we stood firm on our rights, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we said, it shall not be, and we went through those accounts.

The Department of Health, for example, which I'm always keenly interested in, had not even been touched.

An Hon. Member: — What about the environment?

Mr. Neudorf: — The Department of Environment, yes. My friend from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg says the Environment had not been touched. We insisted that there be no cover-up, that we'd take a look at the entire spending of '86 and '87. And we did that, we did that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the satisfaction of members opposite and to the satisfaction of members on this side. And we're proud that we have done that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So for members opposite to say that the government wants to hide, that we are not accountable, I think the fallacy, the fallaciousness of that kind of motion should be becoming abundantly clear.

And we have been, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have been now dealing with public accounts; we have been dealing with accountability, as this motion indicates. We have been dealing with accountability for the '87-88 year.

Where are all those horror stories? Where are all those prognostications of evil, of cover-up? We have yet to find

any. We have finished already consumer and corporate affairs. Did you know that I asked the member from Saskatoon Eastview, did you know that we had finished corporate affairs; did you know that we finished the Department of Environment today in one day; were you aware of that? Of course not, of course you were not aware of that. Nobody is aware of that, because the media isn't aware of that.

The whole media ploy of public accounts that we discussed in February of '88 — or '89, pardon me — has been successful. We defused, the members on this House defused the politicization of the Public Accounts Committee so we could get in there, get to work, and hold the government accountable. That is the desire of members of this side, as it is of members of the other side.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

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

The Deputy Speaker: — State your point of order.

Mr. Pringle: — Mr. Speaker, the member is suggesting that the member from Saskatoon Eastview, meaning myself, missed a meeting when the public accounts for the Environment were done, as if I was somehow negligent in my responsibilities. I'm not on the Public Accounts Committee, and I would ask that he clarify and withdraw that comment, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I've listened to the member's point of order, and I've also listened to the debate. And I'm not . . . In my opinion to the member didn't refer to whether a member was present or not at a meeting today.

And I would ask . . . The member from Saskatoon Eastview, if he wants to be particular, did engage in conversation with the member when he was into the debate, and so I would suggest that all members allow the member to continue his debate. There'll be ample opportunity for other members to enter the debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I would also bring to the attention of the member from Rosthern that in his debate he continue to focus his attention on the motion and not vary and get into bringing other members into it. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for your ruling. And certainly I say to the member opposite that I had absolutely no intention to impinge any unworthy motives on your ability. I just assumed that you, like I and other members of this House, have so much going on and so much on our plate that there are things that we're not directly associated with that sometimes we are not totally aware what's going on. So I extend my apology to you for that.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the motion, and I reiterate, the motion deals with accountability. Accountability is the key, openness, and during the brief moments that I have been on my feet, this has been my ulterior motive. My only motive has been to show the public, to show members opposite, to give them a different perspective on their outlook on this government. And I believe that I have been doing my . . . I know that I have been doing my best to lay out for the members in this House the process, the process that we as a government see it and the process that we as a government are following.

So the government realizes that accountability does not just mean numbers in a book. If it was so, it would be a very ineffective accountability to people who are not accountants or lawyers. It just wouldn't mean anything to the majority of the people out there. As a result, there are other areas that this government takes to bring out this openness within our government, other avenues of communications that we follow.

And this government, whether it deals with SPMC or whether it deals with any other Crown corporations or any other facet of the government operation, this government is prepared to stand on street corners to talk to people. We are prepared to go out on talk shows. My regret is that I have not had very many opportunities to do that, but certainly any member of this government would be willing to do that, and wherever it takes us, Mr. Speaker, so that we can answer questions that the public and the citizens of Saskatchewan may have so that we can answer them directly.

To the NDP, I suggest and I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, accountability means meeting with the big union bosses, labour leaders, the Bob Whites, the Barb Byers of the world, and the average working person is left out, left out of the accountability process.

This government utilizes its concept of public participation by involving the general public in a round of bear pit sessions that this government has instigated. Mr. Speaker, this means that ministers of the Crown stand before several hundred people at various kinds of conventions or meetings arranged with by local people so that we can come into contact with as many people as possible.

I had the good fortune just the other day, last week, to accompany the minister for Rural Development to Saskatoon for a breakfast meeting with folks there, with mayors and the rural municipality, mayor of Saskatoon, and so on. Different kinds of meetings like this, where we come into contact with all kinds of people — and there's good liaison — question, answer, frankness, forwardness. And you say there's not an accountability process here. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the frankness and the openness of this government guarantees that the accountability process is in as good a shape, if not better than it ever has been in the many years that this province has been a province.

Now the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, that's one organization, Nurses' organizations are just two other examples of meetings that this government has had. And I must stress that these

sessions are not — and I'm sure that some of my colleagues in the front benches would agree with me — I must stress that these sessions are not always pleasant experiences for ministers. But that does not deter us from accepting our responsibility of accountability and meeting with people and answering to the questions and our actions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — We are responsible to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, and we account to all.

Now more often than not in these sessions we encounter support rather than anger, but this government has not allowed itself to be carried away by its success. Rather we are continuously trying to come up with new ways, new methods to improve our record of accountability, Mr. Speaker. The *status quo* is not good enough for us. We realize that we can always make improvements because this Progressive Conservative government is committed to ensuring an attitude of openness and accountability as one rule by which we live by.

(1600)

I want to close, Mr. Speaker, by indicating our process of accountability by making a few quotations dealing with accountability process, the part of the accountability process that's nearest and dearest to my heart simply because my closeness to it and my involvement in the Public Accounts Committee, as I have been indicating to you during the course of my brief comments.

And I want to quote from . . . this is from the *Leader-Post*, Wednesday, June 14. And quite frankly the headline says, "Devine tells Crowns to co-operate with Lutz." And I want to just quote a few paragraphs:

In his latest annual report, Provincial Auditor Willard Lutz complained that five Crown corporations denied him access to financial information, which he was entitled to by law.

And if by law he was entitled to them, he should get them. I don't think you'd have any quarrel from any member on this side of the House.

In his June 6th memo, Devine said it's critical the auditor is given the co-operation of Crown and government officials for him to complete his audit in a timely fashion.

"I insist that all departments and agencies provide the Provincial Auditor with all necessary co-operation," Devine wrote (in a letter to the auditor).

Just to show that I am not biased to my own paper in the area of the *Star-Phoenix* in Saskatoon, I'll just read the one headline that is here, and it simply states: "Lutz wins government co-operation."

Now that is a headline that Mr. Lutz, as a Provincial Auditor, has made where he accedes to the fact that the Premier of this province has taken charge, has taken leadership. And if there is something that is not exactly the way it should be, he is prepared to call a spade a spade and get to work and see to it that it's properly done.

Well the focus of all the attention from June till now, Mr. Lutz, the Provincial Auditor, what is his response to that? What is his response? And I would like to quote to you from a memo handed to us as members of the Public Accounts Committee on June 13 by Mr. Willard Lutz, the Provincial Auditor, in response to the letters sent to him by the Premier. And the opposition members obviously have a copy of this as well. And I would like to quote from this statement by Mr. Lutz:

On June 8, 1989 I received a copy of a memorandum from the Premier to all cabinet ministers, directing that all departments and agencies provide the Provincial Auditor with all necessary co-operation to permit him to fulfil his duties, and to advise their appointed auditors of the directive. In this memorandum he also provided for a process for me to obtain information if (if) I am refused information in the future.

And he concludes, Mr. Lutz concludes his memorandum to the members of the Public Accounts Committee by stating:

I am confident that this memorandum will correct matters included in (paragraphs) 2.08 to 2.57 as they pertain to access to information and co-operation.

This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I submit to you, I submit to the members of the public, is an example of the openness, the frankness of the Premier of this province and the government of this province to the process of accountability to the people of this province.

And it is with that in mind that I must indicate to you that I am unable to support the motion as brought forward by the hon. member from The Battlefords, and that therefore I would like to make an amendment to that motion, and that is why I move, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley:

That all the words after the word "That" in the motion be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

This Assembly commend the Government of Saskatchewan for its commitment to the democratic principle of accountability.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I rise as the chairman of the board of SPMC and the minister responsible to take a few moments, and I say a few moments, Mr. Speaker, to

set the record straight, because I've seen in this House over the past few days what I say is an abuse of the privilege in here. We've seen people speak for eight or 10 hours at end on topics in here, and I think that if you look at the cost for running this pace, is a waste of the taxpayers' money.

So, Mr. Speaker, I plan to be very brief and to set the record straight as to . . . and to refute the claim that the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation has refused to provide detailed accounting of its spending.

As a provincial Crown corporation, SPMC reports the same level of detail as other Crown corporations. That is, SPMC's financial statements are produced and tabled annually. These statements clearly show the assets, the liabilities, and the results of the operation; reports the loan advances in the same manner as all other Crowns . . .

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

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

Mr. Solomon: — Mr. Speaker, my point of order is this. The minister, the senior minister of the government is reading his speech verbatim, and I thought there was a rule that you couldn't read your speech verbatim.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Well I've listened to the hon. member's point of order, and yes, that rule does in fact exist. However, having said that, over many years of tradition and practice, I think we all know that that rule not in any way has been rigidly enforced in this House, and therefore the point of order is not well taken.

Order, order. Now I'm going to once more . . . Order. Minister of Finance. I'm going to once more draw to the attention of the member for Regina Elphinstone that he not challenge the chairman's ruling or he will have to pay the price. I don't intend to continually warn hon. members about this and they will simply have to realize that they will not for ever receive warnings in this regard.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, I think it's in the interest of the public of Saskatchewan for members not only on this side of the House but on the other side to be far more succinct and to the point with their comments. And that's what I intend to be in refuting the misconceptions put forward by the members opposite.

As I said previously, Mr. Speaker, the province reports the loan advances in the same manner as all other Crowns. Crown corporations have never under this administration or, I empathize, under previous administrations reported details of payment in their annual reports. Earlier this year the Provincial Auditor noted in his report that officials from SPMC weren't co-operative with his staff in releasing financial details.

However, in all cases all available information was provided to the provincial audit staff as quickly and readily as possible. During the course of the audit no

member of the senior management team was informed of any lack of co-operation. The auditor gave no verbal or written notice that information was not being provided in a timely or co-operative way. In fact, Mr. Speaker, as late as April 28, 1988, SPMC management received a draft management letter from the Provincial Auditor with a covering memo thanking the officials for their co-operation. To that point the SPMC management team was not aware of any problem whatsoever.

The Provincial Auditor's report to the Legislative Assembly is dated April 30, 1988. It appears the report was printed without apprising SPMC officials or providing them an opportunity to discuss the issue.

To confirm that the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation has nothing to hide, my officials have now made arrangements with the Provincial Auditor's office to begin next week the audit process for 1988-89 fiscal year. My officials are working in complete co-operation with the Provincial Auditor to fully account for the spending of public money.

Of course, this has been done for the past several years with a private sector auditing firm. SPMC has appointed a reputable national firm of auditors, and the financial statements of the corporation have been approved by these auditors in the past years. The appointed auditor has given SPMC a clear opinion on the statements indicating that all assets were accounted for and that all proper accounting had been done.

Actually, the members opposite should realize that the formation of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation has resulted in more accountability than the province has seen in the past. And I should point out at this time, Mr. Speaker, that this is not unique to Saskatchewan. And I'm sure on your travels and meeting with other governments and other speakers, you are well aware that many of the other provinces of Canada have also property management corporations, that the dominion government acts in much the same manner, and that those who take a dim view of property management corporation are the same bunch who have their head in the sand looking backwards and marching into the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Let me give you a few examples of the value that the property management corporation has brought to Saskatchewan, of the way that things are accounted for today that were not done in the past. In the past, users were not directly aware of the cost of all the central services provided by SPMC. Now each program is fully costed; for the first time the province is disclosing the full cost of programs. And I think that's accountability, and I think that's what my friend from Neudorf, the minister from Rosthern, was talking about, that that's the type of thing that we have brought to this province, that the Devine government has brought to the province of Saskatchewan.

Government members now pay for their space and their service. Payments were not seen in the past. The managers are making more informed decisions

establishing priorities and needs. This has contributed to more rational and effective use of public money. All capital expenditures of government are now housed in SPMC, enabling government to make a more rationalized approach to capital construction processes.

Mr. Speaker, I think you know as well as anyone else in this province that the initiatives that have been taken by this government in capital construction in the field of health and in the field of education, in schools, and in universities, in nursing homes, and in hospitals has been one of the best records, as I said earlier in question period today, of any government in Canada during the last eight years, and we stand proud of that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — And those things are handled through the property management corporation. Those arrangements, the budgeting, the financing, the planning, and all those things are co-ordinated through the property management corporation of Saskatchewan.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that certainly those are the kinds of initiatives, those are the way that people in Saskatchewan want to see their moneys handled so that the moneys that are here, the taxation moneys that are here can be best utilized in the best fashion to build the best institutions and the best facilities for our people. That's what the people in my constituency are telling me; that's what the people in my colleagues' constituencies are telling them. And I think the formation of the property management corporation has been like one gigantic step in achieving that kind of an objective.

(1615)

I want to say that the property management corporation is now recognizing real estate of more than \$500 million. These were previously not accounted for. And for the first time, there is an inventory of these assets. They are valued and fully reported on. The income statements of SPMC fully disclose the financial productivity and managements of these assets.

All of this information, Mr. Speaker, is available, not only to the members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan but also the people of Saskatchewan. And I think these are significant gains in accountability. The gains that have been brought in by this government, they are gains that I believe are helping the taxpayers. We have some accountability as to the expenditures. We have a clearing house for construction of facilities. We have an area in which all the purchasing of the government is focused in one place. It's the property management corporation. I believe any of the problems that were raised by the Provincial Auditor, and I think he concurs, have been rectified, and certainly there was no intent to not have complete accountability.

I can tell the people of Saskatchewan and the members opposite that the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, in my mind, has been a very progressive step forward. It is a way of getting hold of government expenditures.

Do you realize, Mr. Speaker, when they ran the government there was no accountability for space. If someone in the public service wanted more space, they just put in a request for it. There was not accountability; they didn't have to pay any money for extra space, extra furniture in their offices, things of this nature. That, today, is being controlled by the property management corporation, and that is efficiency in government operation, and that is safeguarding the taxpayers' dollars in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I said at the beginning I was going to give a few brief comments to rectify the situation that was being . . . the misleading situation, I should say, of the opposition that the accountability in the property management corporation was not there. I can tell you it's there, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you it's there strong. And I can tell you it will continue to be there. And I believe that the property management corporation has gone a long way to bring accountability to the expenditures of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I'll be proud to second the amendment of my colleague from Rosthern. I believe there will be other members on this side of the House who would want to speak towards this motion, so I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Speaker: — Well it's a moot point, but to satisfy the hon. members, we'll go through the process again.

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

The Speaker: — What is your point of order?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — My point of order is, Mr. Speaker, that it's been the long-time tradition in this House that when a motion was moved in private members' day, or an amendment, that the opposition side would have an opportunity to speak and then adjourn the debate.

I wonder, are we changing the long-standing traditions of the House in making this decision to now allow . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. The hon. member has right to move adjournment of a debate at any point, according to the rules of the Assembly, and that's what he has done. And to clarify the matter, I'm going to put the question again just to satisfy all members. All those in favour of the motion to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Resolution No. 20 — Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Mr. Gardner: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me some pleasure this afternoon to get onto a little bit of a different topic from what we've been discussing for the last few days and to talk about some of the things that we in this government have been doing in the province to deal with drug and alcohol abuse, and especially amongst young people that have been receiving more and more attention over the past few years.

Whether there are more people now who have become dependent on drugs or alcohol or whether society has simply started to realize the seriousness of this illness, I'm not quite sure, but I suspect the latter is true. But the important thing is that the issue is finally being addressed.

Drug and alcohol abuse is tragic at the best of times, but especially tragic in young people.

Mr. Speaker, what must be going through the minds of our young people if they feel they have to resort to substance abuse? Nobody really knows what causes people to become dependent on drugs. Every case is different, more than likely because every person is an individual and his or her circumstances are therefore also different.

What we do know, however, is that drug and alcohol abuse is in fact a disease. Major progress has been made with regard to drug and alcohol abuse since people have started to view the problem as an illness rather than a rebellion against society.

This fact, Mr. Speaker, is made more evident by the fact that we see the issue addressed in many areas of our lives. There are radio and TV commercials, magazine and newspaper articles, and advertisements, movies, workshops, and awareness weeks as well as others.

People really are starting to understand the terrible tragedy of drug and alcohol abuse. And, Mr. Speaker, we are beginning to realize that not only is it a treatable, but in most cases a preventable disease.

Chemical dependency is being addressed by this government, Mr. Speaker. We realize that it is very sad, but also very real that this problem faces society today. We also realize that we are in a position to be able to address this problem and hopefully make a difference to it.

Mr. Speaker, to this end we helped to establish Whitespruce, the first drug and alcohol abuse treatment centre of its kind in all of Canada. Whitespruce is an innovative treatment centre for young people who have had the misfortune of becoming dependent on chemicals. The problem has been recognized and now we must attempt to provide some solutions.

At Whitespruce, youth receive support and guidance to help them overcome their addictions. The treatment program at Whitespruce has been designed to incorporate a number of components. These include group therapy, individual therapy, spiritual therapy, lectures, Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous sessions, physical exercise, educational programming, family therapy, and re-entry or after-care.

Although each client is treated according to his or her individual needs, the average stay is expected to be about eight weeks. And, Mr. Speaker, one of our best indications of the success of this centre is the success of the Heartview Foundation in Mandan, North Dakota, which offers a reputable treatment program as well. The reason that the success of Whitespruce can be projected from the success of Heartview is because Whitespruce

was developed in consultation with Heartview.

Since October of 1987, the staff at Whitespruce has grown by 37 positions. These positions include nine addiction counsellors, five registered nurses, five residential counsellors, two residential counselling aides, a recreational therapist, two teachers; 11 administrative, kitchen and housekeeping maintenance-type staff; and a co-ordinator of administrative services and also a co-ordinator of residential services.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the program is the fact that family members of the victims are also included in their therapy process. The treatment program at Whitespruce views chemical dependency as a family illness and it is treated as such, Mr. Speaker.

Just as this government believes in the strength and importance of the family, so do the staff and administrators at Whitespruce. Working with the family as a unit facilitates positive change and family unity. The logic behind this kind of treatment, the philosophy is really not very difficult to understand, Mr. Speaker.

The family is the basic most fundamental unit of security that each of us have. The aim at Whitespruce is to reinforce that unity and security. Working with the whole family rather than just with the client facilitates a change in the entire family process, and that produces results.

Mr. Speaker, the family can be linked I think, in a way, to a business. All of the different departments interact to produce a desired result. Similarly, the family also operates on the interactions of its members. Sometimes we forget just how influential the family really is. Many disturbed adolescents say they don't care what their family thinks or what their family does, but it is usually this feeling of abandonment by the family that is at the root of the problem anyway.

Mr. Speaker, even though we may deny it, all of us need approval. We need to be told that we're doing a good job or that someone is proud of us — just once every now and again. And when one or more members of the family becomes disjointed, the entire family can no longer function the way it used to.

Just as the removal or the dysfunction of a department within a given business would disrupt the entire operation of the business, so too does the dysfunction of a family member disrupt the entire family.

Mr. Speaker, chemical dependency affects the entire family and not just the individual who actually has the affliction. It is for this reason that Whitespruce treats the disease as a family disease. The family plays a fundamental role in the treatment process. Family members need to know that the family play an important role in this healing process.

They play the role of support, not unlike the role played by the physiotherapist in situations where a person has suffered some sort of an injury that requires rehabilitation. The members of the family are encouraged to come to Whitespruce to learn just how important the role of support that they play really is.

As I said a few moments ago, we all need to be accepted and we all need to feel approval, Mr. Speaker. At Whitespruce family members learn how to effectively carry out that role of support.

Mr. Speaker, although I can't recall anyone ever coming right out and criticizing this government for its dedication to the family, I can't help but think that anyone who says that this government doesn't care, really hasn't taken a look at the initiatives that we have gone through, such as Whitespruce.

We've recognized that chemical dependency is not a disease that affects only the person with the addiction — the entire family is affected. We have recognized this and we are acting on this.

Whitespruce would more accurately be called a family drug and alcohol centre, rather than a youth drug and alcohol centre. Without family support, rehabilitation is very difficult, if not impossible. Having the support of one's family gives the person a reason to stay motivated, a reason to beat the odds and overcome their dependency and carry on with their lives.

Before I close, Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention just one more topic that I feel is related to this subject. That's the Everyone Wins program which has been heavily criticized by members of the opposition. Mr. Speaker, I shouldn't have to say this but the members of the opposition should know it, but apparently they haven't bothered to do their homework — either that or maybe they just don't care.

The Everyone Wins program is aimed at improving life-styles — yes, Mr. Speaker, improving them. It promotes healthy living. I simply can't find one good reason to condemn that program. What would the members of the opposition have us do? Perhaps they'd like to see us promote unhealthy living.

Mr. Speaker, sickness and disease are not a pleasant topic of conversation, but then again neither is having the disease. Go and ask the people that are at this very minute suffering from hundreds of debilitating or fatal diseases if they condemn us for the Everyone Wins program.

(1630)

These people who are suffering at this very moment are the biggest supporters of our Everyone Wins program. As we speak, there are hundreds of people who wish that the members of the opposition would have seen fit to initiate a program like this when they were in office. Perhaps if they had, much pain and suffering might have been prevented.

Perhaps the best example of this is given to us by the late Yul Brynner. In case some of you are unfamiliar with Mr. Brynner, *The King and I*. At any rate, a few years ago Mr. Brynner died of lung cancer, but before he died he took it upon himself to make a television commercial pleading with people to stop smoking.

And perhaps the reason that this particular commercial has had such an impact on people is because the commercial wasn't aired until after Mr. Brynner died. The commercial, Mr. Speaker, was a plea from the grave, and in fact it was intended to be so. I truly admire this man who was suffering so much himself, yet put his own suffering aside in order to try to spare others the same fate.

Maybe the Everyone Wins program is not quite as dramatic, but it certainly aims to achieve the same thing. The goal is to prevent suffering. Combating drug and alcohol abuse is just one component of the program. I'm proud of this government's achievements in combating drug and alcohol abuse. Initiatives like the Everyone Wins program and Whitespruce, along with many more that are too many to name, have proven that this government's dedication to the people of Saskatchewan truly exists.

I'm proud to be able to associate myself, not only with this government's members, but with the initiatives that they have embarked upon — initiatives that will go down in history as some of the best things to have ever happened to and for the people of Saskatchewan.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I hereby move, seconded by the member from Yorkton:

That this Assembly expresses its support for the government's programs to deal with drug and alcohol abuse and commends the Government of Saskatchewan for carrying out its commitment to build the Whitespruce youth treatment centre which is the first youth treatment centre of its kind in all of Canada.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLaren: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and it is a pleasure for me today to be able to second the motion of the member from Pelly. The motion that reads:

That this Assembly expresses its support for the government's programs to deal with drug and alcohol abuse and commends the Government of Saskatchewan for carrying out its commitment to build the Whitespruce youth treatment centre which is the first youth treatment centre of its kind in all of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud indeed when I have the opportunity to go to Whitespruce and deal firsthand with the operation of that youth treatment centre for alcohol and drug abuse.

Just to give you a little bit of history, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity back in our first term of office, to work with the people of Yorkton when we heard that the radar base was going to be closed down in Yorkton in August of, I believe it was 1985.

We spent a lot of time . . . and I want to congratulate the people of Yorkton that came onto the committee for us to investigate the possibilities of using that radar base for

some useful purpose and not just to see it bulldozed to the ground. And we had a very large committee, two sub-committees in fact — one committee to look at the industrial side that the possibilities that that base could be used for, and the other was the social side. And many, many hours were spent following up different tips and different ideas of what we could maybe use the base for.

I took it on myself to go to Ottawa, and I met with members of the Hon. Eric Neilsen's office, where he was in charge of national defence at that time, to see what the process was in the dismantling of bases such as that. We spent a lot of time with the Public Works Canada department to follow through that same process, and we came back to Regina and Yorkton with a plan and an idea of how the process works on obtaining a facility such as that.

And here again I want to thank my colleagues, the Premier and the cabinet minister, for backing us in any idea that we might come up with to preserve that base and turn it into something that would be useful for our community, to create jobs, and to cover off the 300 airmen that were going to leave that facility because of the closure.

We finally zeroed in on the idea of a drug and alcohol abuse centre. And we knew from past history that we were spending, as a government, up to a million dollars a year to send clients down to the United States for treatment at Mandan and Heartview, a million dollars a year going out of our province to pay for this treatment for our people of Saskatchewan.

And with that in mind, Mr. Speaker, the plan began to develop. And with a lot of negotiating between the federal government and our provincial government and the city of Yorkton, a plan was finally arrived at and agreed to that we would take over the radar base.

Since that time, a lot of renovating has been going on. And I called there about three weeks ago at an open house that they had at that facility and, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't believe what has taken place on that site in the few short months or a year. Brand-new housing units or dorms, if you want to call them that, for the clients that were coming in to spend their three weeks or a month or whatever was required. They're beautiful, suites that are just like a home almost, built so that the parents could spend time there with their sons and daughters to help them through their trial period. And I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, it is a trial period.

I can remember last October the Premier and I happened to have the opportunity to go and meet with the staff at the centre. They have 37 people working there now, professional people that are able to take these clients in, to try and make them feel at home, to try and make them understand what rules are, discipline. If they smoked before, they couldn't smoke at the facility. We found out that the staff are very high on what's going on there. The results are starting to show up. We have people coming back, they have to come back to the centre 30 days after they leave, have been given the clearance to go back home, go back into society. And when you sit and listen to the stories that these people tell, 13-year-olds, 14 up to

17, 18-year-olds, never having any discipline before, leaving home, and hear the story. It brings tears to your eyes, Mr. Speaker.

We're not saving them all, but when we save a percentage of them, and you hear their stories of thanking the staff, thanking the governments putting money into an institution like that where they can come back into society and have meaningful lives again, it's unbelievable.

And it's just a . . . I want to congratulate the staff there, too. It's tough work. People, when they first go in, they're trying to escape and these sorts of things. But we, the Premier and I, sat down with the clients that particular night to ask them what they thought of the facility and so on, and we couldn't get any conversation going for a little while. They'd be staring at the floor and not wanting to speak, not wanting to express themselves, but suddenly one of the clients spoke up and he told his life story. That brought tears to my eyes, and I'm sure the Premier's as well, just to hear what these kids are going through.

And after that, with him breaking the ice, we had many stories starting to come from the clients that were there, and everyone's different, every different circumstance that you can think about. Some of them, 13-year-old girls that were pregnant, and here they are in an institution trying to get their lives back again.

And the drug and alcohol abuse, substance abuse, or chemical dependency, whatever you want to call it, has been receiving an increasing attention over the past few years. And we're proud of the PRIDE (Parents Resources Institute for Drug Education Inc.) organization that has been established in Saskatchewan, and we've met a number of times with them even before Whitespruce came on stream. But they are backing what we are doing in the establishment of Whitespruce and starting that particular centre, and we're getting correspondence and requests from all over Canada now to come in and see if there's opportunities for students . . . not students, but clients to come in from across Canada.

We are looking after the Saskatchewan youth first. They have 16 to 20 clients now, and as we build these new modular units onto the facility, we will soon be able to be looking after 60 clients at a time.

The average time of stay at the unit is approximately three weeks, and of course all the follow-up has to take place and there are times when the students break away and they get the opportunity to come back and take extra . . . the treatment again.

But in particular, the substance abuse among young people seems to be the major problem, and that seemed to be the particular problem of the group that we talked to that evening. No one really knows whether there really are more young people who have become dependent on drugs and alcohol or not, but we find out as the facility becomes used more and the results are starting to show up, we're getting people contacting us to see if they can bring their son or daughter into the facility.

And it's something that isn't really broadcast. People

don't talk about it openly. But I had the opportunity during the election campaign back in 1986 to be door-knocking, and I had many, many instances where people just more or less whispered in your ear to thank us for doing what we had done in Yorkton and to bring that facility to that area.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLaren: — It is quite possible that society has simply accepted the fact that it is a problem and a fairly common one at that. And the important thing, however, is that the issue is finally being addressed, Mr. Speaker.

(1645)

Drug and alcohol abuse is a tragedy, and as I said earlier, when you see those young people sitting in a room in a circle, staring at the floor, you know perfectly well that they are embarrassed to be there in the first place. They know that they've got a problem; they don't know really how to solve it. And as the course goes along they find out that people do care.

They couldn't believe that the Premier would come and talk to them that particular evening that we were there. It was a very emotional hour and I don't think I have put in that kind of an emotional hour in my life before.

I can't even imagine what could cause our young people, those who have their whole lives ahead of them and a world of opportunity out there for them, to resort to substance abuse. What it is that makes people turn to drugs or alcohol or sometimes both and to become dependent on them, we don't really know. Every case is different, as I mentioned before. Every case is different because every person is a unique individual as his or her circumstances that are different.

And they all are coming from homes that are wealthy homes, poor homes, middle class homes. That doesn't seem to have any bearing on what creates the problem for these young people.

What may have made one person to turn to drugs or to alcohol is not necessarily the reason that another person would turn to them. The only thing that we do know is that drug and alcohol abuse is a disease.

Overall general awareness of the serious problem of drug and alcohol abuse has resulted in progress in the area of trying to understand the disease. Rather than looking at people with addictions with disdain and contempt, the general public now tends to view these people with sympathy. We are confronted with the issue of drug and alcohol abuse in many areas of our lives. Everywhere we look we see some reference to the problem. The problem is being addressed on radio and television commercials, in magazine and newspaper articles and advertisements, numerous movies have been made, workshops and awareness weeks have been held, and many others.

And the course itself, Mr. Speaker, that has been developed at Whitespruce, goes through many facets. There's education. There's gymnastics and sports and getting back into shape, and responsibility of doing odd

jobs around the facility. And when these people find out that maybe they are needed or have some useful purpose, that all of a sudden the mind-set starts to change and . . .

An Hon. Member: — They want to be a part of life.

Mr. McLaren: — Exactly. My colleague from Cut Knife-Lloydminster said that they want to be a part of life in society, and that's exactly true.

Talking to the clients that particular night, they were very disgusted that they had to refrain from smoking. That seemed to be one of the major problems. But those that had been there after two or three weeks took it as a matter of fact that it was one of the rules of the facility and were living up to it, even though they practically rebelled at the very beginning.

People are starting to realize that the drug and alcohol abuse affects people from all walks of life. It affects young and old and rich and poor alike. What we have also begun to realize is that not only is substance abuse treatable in most cases, it is preventable.

I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that this government is committing to fight drug and alcohol abuse. Not only are we committed to fighting it, we are also committed to rehabilitating its victims.

Another part of the course is that the students are not brought in and left alone without the tie to family over their stay. The fathers and mothers and sons and daughters of the client are available, or have the opportunity to come to the facility. There's accommodations for them to spend the weekend with their loved ones, and to encourage them and to show that they are backing them all the way.

Mr. Speaker, it's just as I said earlier, it's unbelievable what is starting to happen at that facility in Yorkton, the Whitespruce youth treatment centre, and it's beginning to be recognized across Canada. Being the first of its kind we had a lot of work, a lot of problems, to get organized and to get started because we were using the facilities that were there at the time that the radar base was left to us.

The dorms, the areas where the clients had to sleep and eat were not conducive to what the facility was intended for. But with the facilities that have been built, and the renovations and so on, it's gradually fitting in to a perfect centre, and as I said, people from all across Canada are watching this very, very closely.

Another happy day, Mr. Speaker, was the official opening. The Deputy Premier and the Premier and the Minister of Health and myself had the opportunity to be at the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the official opening. And the clients were more or less given the day off to observe. And I forget the numbers — I think it was in the range of 2,000 people showed up at that official opening — 2,000 from that particular area around Yorkton, which proves to me that the people of Saskatchewan have a concern about our young people and the problems that they're having with the drug and alcohol abuse.

Our only regret, and my only regret, is that there is a need

to address such a problem at all. However sad, the problem does exist and we are committed to fighting it and to helping it. Hopefully our efforts in co-operation with various different agencies and people will bring new hope for the victims and their families.

Mr. Speaker, we helped to establish Whitespruce, and Whitespruce is the first drug and alcohol abuse centre of its kind in Canada, and it is already receiving considerable attention and excellent progress reports.

Mr. Speaker, Whitespruce is a drug and alcohol treatment centre, and its aim is to help young people who have had the misfortune of becoming dependent on chemicals and to overcome . . . (inaudible) . . . that Whitespruce young people receive support and guidance to help them overcome their addictions.

The treatment program at Whitespruce was designed in consultation with the Heartview foundation in Mandan, North Dakota. We have sent the professional staff that was hired to set up the program and to oversee it in the facility. These people have spent many, many hours down at Heartview to follow the example that was set by that particular foundation there, and of course we have heard many, many glowing reports of the importance of that facility in North Dakota.

I'm sure that the centre was designed after an American facility, and I probably think that is a real sore point with the members of the opposition. But quite frankly, that was not the reason that Heartview was chosen as a model. As I said earlier, it was because it was a very, very tremendously successful operation there.

At Whitespruce several components are incorporated into the treatment program, and they include group therapy, individual therapy, spiritual therapy, lectures, narcotic abuse, alcohol anonymous, physical exercise, educational program, family therapy, and a re-entry, which is called the after-care. This is the area that the students and the clients come back and spend a weekend to report to their former teachers and that at the Whitespruce Centre, to tell their story what has happened to them after leaving the centre after their three-week course.

And I believe the CBC or the CTV group put on a documentary of the return of clients after a month away from the centre, and every one of them mentioned the fact that they were so thankful for the understanding and the efforts that were provided them during their stay, and that they have followed the rules after leaving the centre and have become a part of their home communities again and looking for work. And some of them had jobs.

And this touches, I'm sure, everyone's heart strings, Mr. Speaker, to see that a few lives have been saved and brought back into our society from this terrible disease.

The average stay at Whitespruce is expected to be anywhere from three to eight weeks depending on the seriousness of the problems, and keep in mind that each client is treated according to his or her individual needs. They are not put into a class-room as a group of 16 to 20 people and all given the same educational courses or

treatment, whatever is on that particular course. Each individual is assessed and the course is made up to cover those needs.

I mentioned earlier that we presently have 37 employees, Mr. Speaker, and this of course will increase substantially up to a staff to look after at least 60 clients within the near future.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt you realize that I believe that the entire operation is very, very impressive. Our government is proud of Whitespruce, and I'm especially proud of it also, Mr. Speaker, having worked with our Yorkton committee to get the radar base changed over to a drug and alcohol abuse centre, and to see it in real life what is happening there. And I guess the other thing that I'm proud of is that it is in my constituency, the constituency of Yorkton.

Not only is Whitespruce proving to be very successful in helping young people who are trying to overcome addictions to drugs and alcohol, it is also providing the jobs, a unique opportunity for people to have a rewarding career helping others who have somehow slipped through the cracks of society.

I might say that Whitespruce, Mr. Speaker, is situated on a half-section of land about eight miles west of Yorkton. And the potential of that site, I do not believe we realize what could be there in the next 10 to 15 years.

Chemical dependency affects the entire family, and it is for this reason that the entire family is included in the treatment process, and by working with the family as a unit, positive change and family unity is facilitated. A lot of these clients came from broken homes, but the fact that they can get back together in an institution such as that centre seems to bring the closer ties to the clients and the homes, and the family unit is brought back to life again.

Mr. Speaker, I have much more I could speak on as far as Whitespruce is concerned, and I would like to now adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

Change in Assembly Agenda

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the Assembly under . . . as per *Beauchesne's*, page 51, rule 417:

That at 7 p.m. today the House proceed to government orders, adjourned debates, Bill 72, 67, 63, 82, 80, 68, 79, 71, in that sequence.

And I would move that, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: — It being past 5 o'clock, the House stands

recessed until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.