

EVENING SITTING

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Solomon: — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this evening to introduce to you, and to members in this Assembly, approximately 27 cubs and their leaders in the Speaker's gallery. They are from the 80th Walsh Acres cubs in my constituency. The cubs are accompanied by Michael Ryan, Bill Muxlow, Kim Senft and Jerry Strecker.

I would like to, on behalf of my colleagues, welcome you here this evening. I hope you enjoy your stay. I look forward, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members, to meet with the cubs after a few moments and answer any questions they may have. I hope you have a safe journey home. Please join with me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members:— Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Toth and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Pringle.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I too on behalf of this side of the House welcome our young guests to the Assembly and hope that they find their visit here enjoyable and informational.

Mr. Speaker, it gave me quite a little bit of a good feeling over the dinner break as I returned many calls that I had from several of my constituents concerning my earlier remarks on the debate on this throne speech to respond. And I should tell you that there were former constituents of mine from Regina North, present constituents from Regina South, and, of course, many on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of the Family. He and I both share a larger constituency in this city, Mr. Speaker, and we have to respond indeed, to the inquiries from all of the people of the city of Regina.

And basically what they say to us is that they like and enjoy hearing the government's plans. They enjoy hearing the new ideas and the new direction and the new consultation process that we enjoy on this side of the House, and how we visit with indeed all of the people from the city of Regina, and that they get rather tired of hearing the rhetoric that they are confronted with on a regular basis.

The member from Regina Centre talks about the Alamo or *Romper Room* and that kind of thing. The member from Regina Rosemont, he's on a rhetoric kick and his only knowledge appears to be that of Rafferty dam and that's about it, whereas my colleagues and I, we have to speak on many topics.

The member from Regina North, he gets up regularly and speaks only about the bus company; he doesn't share any

new ideas. The people . . . My old friends in Regina North ask me, doesn't he have any ideas? I said, I don't know. Does he talk to them or anything? They say, why do I leave? I still live in Regina North. Unfortunately I'm not satisfied with my representation but that's how it works. Regina North East, I don't know his claim. They say that I sought a safe haven in Regina South, but in the meantime it's fine for the member from Regina North East who moved here from Humboldt and nothing was said about that. That quietened them down.

The member from Regina Lakeview, the Health critic . . . I think she's the health critic. She used to ask questions; she doesn't any more. Obviously our Minister of Health is doing a great job because those questions aren't forthcoming any more. The member from Regina North West, he has no particular emphasis or any particular accomplishments in this legislature and they just simply ask what he does and I say, I don't know.

But the Minister of the Family and I share a major responsibility in the city of Regina, and as a result when we enter a debate on something as important as the throne speech — the new direction of the government, the new ideas of the government — it takes a rather lengthy time for us to be indeed able to tell the people of the city of Regina what our government is indeed intending to do.

So when I closed off my remarks just prior to the dinner break, Mr. Speaker, I indicated how pleased I was that in my new portfolio as Minister of Consumer and Commercial Affairs it would keep me in touch with my business community throughout the province . . .

The Speaker: — Excuse me. The member from Regina North West.

Mr. Solomon: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce another group of guests, please.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's once again my pleasure to introduce another group of young people from the constituency of Regina North West. Located in the Speaker's gallery, sir, are some Scouts from the Holy Trinity 65th. I believe there are nine Scouts and a couple of their leaders. The leaders are Gord Zech and Mike McAvoy. I would like to, at this point, extend a warm welcome to each of you, and on behalf of my colleagues in this Assembly, I hope that you enjoy the proceedings this evening. I look forward to meeting with you for questions and refreshments and discussion after a while and after I meet with the other Cubs.

So please join with me this evening to welcome these guests from Regina North West.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that the idea of these young people and their leaders bringing them to the Assembly is excellent, and it gives everybody the opportunity to see how their legislature indeed operates. And welcome to the Assembly — I hope you find it informational and a lot of fun as well.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — But, Mr. Speaker, without being repetitive, I want to say again how pleased I am that I will remain in touch with the business community throughout the province, and I look forward to my new role.

The demand for the services and programs from our department continues to grow, and I think that we can expect that this will continue to be the case as the Saskatchewan market-place and our Canadian society, which I had described as market based, becomes more complex and continues to change, including significant technological changes.

These are indeed difficult economic times. Governments across Canada have been challenged for some years now to do more with less at the national level, provincial level, and without question at the local level, Mr. Speaker. This new department of mine has provided an excellent example of how governments can indeed search the spectrum and do more with less in a number of areas and still continue the same important service that they provide.

And basically it's areas that the NDP could never comprehend, could never get established, and could never seem to accept. The idea of self-administration, totally unheard of by them; the use of volunteers in the delivery of the various programs, totally not acceptable to them; co-operative projects that are cost shared with industry and other agencies, they always only simply believed in big government.

We plan to do more than this in the next few years. In the development of our education print resources, as I mentioned, we are heightening our efforts to attract corporate sponsorship, and all of this always done, Mr. Speaker, through extensive consultative process.

I would like to emphasize a truism about my new department. Every citizen of Saskatchewan is of concern to Saskatchewan Consumer and Commercial Affairs because every citizen in Saskatchewan is indeed a consumer, and a great many of us are also involved in business. And I certainly look forward to my new portfolio.

Earlier in my comments, Mr. Speaker, I briefly touched on my past and why, in my role as an MLA. I've briefly indicated my future and how it would be accomplished in my role as an MLA.

And in conclusion I would touch very briefly on our government's plan and why Consensus Saskatchewan

will take on a very important meaning. We have a strong commitment to rural Saskatchewan and yet at the same time there is no question about the strong commitment that we have to our urban people. And I think that that has been reflected in many programs that our government has offered. We must continue to protect all of our people and provide safety nets that affect everybody.

Recently our Premier spoke to the province about the serious economic situation that our province is currently experiencing, and in my opening remarks I spoke of challenges.

These challenges include, as I mentioned: the high interest rates to protect central Canada's economy; the international grain price wars between the Americans and Europe that is brought up daily in question period that we're dragged into; climatic conditions in our province, Mr. Speaker, more severe than those of the thirties, something well beyond the control of this government; the federal budget, that by necessity passed large costs on to the provinces; a general reduction in provincial government revenues for all sorts of reasons — reasons that the members opposite blow out of proportion; a debt crisis in rural Saskatchewan with a genuine threat to even go as far as the planting of this season's crops; lower international prices, as I mentioned, for our entire commodity array, including potash, uranium and oil — items well beyond the control, Mr. Speaker, of our government — and yet coupled with all of this, increased demands for government spending across all sectors, but particularly in the areas of health care, education, and much needed social programs.

This has put the provincial government under tremendous pressures that necessitated that some programs that have been for the good of the people and have been successful for the province, simply can no longer be afforded. So we had to take responsible measures and make very difficult decisions, Mr. Speaker.

So, as the throne speech mentioned: Consensus Saskatchewan. We know that Saskatchewan people want to become involved with the future of their economy and they want to become active participants in the process of change. And that's why Saskatchewan consensus is here. We must expand and diversify our economy. This has been something that we have been talking about for years now. But we need to do that. No longer can we be so dependent on the agricultural community as the base of our economy, because now that they have their problems we need long-term solutions to the farm crisis.

We just simply, as I mentioned, have to take more advantage of the world trading partnerships that are open and available to us. We simply have to take Saskatchewan's presence out into the market-place of this new global village. And without that, without that diversification, Mr. Speaker, without that expansion of our economy and without that trade, Saskatchewan will not be able to survive and prosper in the manner that we would like it to do.

So that means that in the second pillar, the security and stabilization of our communities is of utmost importance. We must build partnerships with the Saskatchewan

people and their communities to ensure that this growth and that this diversification continues, because it then will ultimately lead to the growth and well-being of our people. We must pursue the opportunities to ensure the growth, the protection of our Saskatchewan people.

And all of this leads to the final item of responsible and efficient management of resources because we must make sound management choices to maximize the effectiveness of our resources, and that will be mandatory.

It's so simple, Mr. Speaker, when you take a good idea like Consensus Saskatchewan and take it out to the people and let them become involved in the good and the welfare of their own future and the future of their children and the future of their children's children, that this simply happens. The government, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, Mr. Speaker, believes in the strengths of this province and in the strength of their people.

This Speech from the Throne highlights and directs a new era. It takes something that we have always done on this side of the House — the consultative process. It takes that consultative process into new dimensions, into new horizons, and it expands it even more. It is the way of the future. Indeed, it is our future.

There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that I strongly support the speech that was so eloquently delivered by Her Honour and moved by my colleague, the member from Moosomin. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

(1915)

Ms. Simard: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that in the period that the member from Regina South was speaking this afternoon and tonight at least four or five more people have left this province as a result of that government's policies. The records indicate that people are leaving the province one every 23 to 26 minutes, and while he spoke there were at least four or five people who have left this province.

It's interesting that the member from Regina South spent the major part of his speech attacking the New Democratic Party and New Democratic MLAs and defending political patronage. This is the government that claims it's going to listen, Mr. Speaker, and it spent the last couple hours defending its patronage appointments of Bob Andrew and Graham Taylor.

And I thought it was very interesting to sit here and watch them justify these blatant, horrendous patronage appointments while there are 64,000 children living in poverty in this province, Mr. Speaker, and there are children lining up at the food banks in unprecedented numbers, while we have a \$4 billion deficit. And the member from Regina South defends the patronage appointments of Bob Andrew and Graham Taylor, Mr. Speaker. And that's what we've listened to while at least four or five more people have left this province during the course of his speech.

Well, we know where he stands. We know where he stands, Mr. Speaker. He stands with one foot on a banana peel and the other foot in his mouth.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And I think it's very interesting that we listened to him for at least an hour and a half today, Mr. Speaker, and not once did he mention the major fiasco in his department for which he's responsible, and that's the Principal Trust matter, Mr. Speaker.

And this is a government that's listening when the Ombudsman directly pointed the finger at the government and their neglect in managing the Principal Trust matter, Mr. Speaker, and urged the government to look at compensating depositors with respect to that matter. And he doesn't mention one single word about that fiasco. Not a word, Mr. Speaker. And yet he said, he had the gall to say, that his department is concerned about every citizen in Saskatchewan. They're not listening to the people, Mr. Speaker. They've never listened to the people. They aren't listening to the people, and they won't listen to the people.

Another very interesting and rather novel comment that was made by the member from Regina South was his remarks that the Lieutenant Governor might be offended by some of our comments on the throne speech, while I just find that totally illogical, Mr. Speaker. Everyone knows that the government writes the throne speech. The Lieutenant Governor delivers it but doesn't write it, and is not responsible for the comments. And I think it's an insult to the Lieutenant Governor to suggest that she would be offended by anybody linking her to the throne speech, because everybody knows she's not responsible for the content of that throne speech. So I think that's a very interesting argument that the member from Regina South made.

Well, Mr. Speaker, on the day that the throne speech was read, we listened to it in the House, and then that evening we adjourned and had a banquet, a multicultural banquet. And as a result of that banquet one of the food items that were there was a fortune cookie. And since I like fortune cookies, I had a couple. And it's very interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the fortune that I pulled out of my fortune cookie read as follows, and I have it here, Mr. Speaker, and this is following the throne speech: "Listen not to vain words of empty tongue."

Well I thought it was rather appropriate, Mr. Speaker, and really summarized the throne speech as ably as any one of us on this side of the House could do. It said, "Listen not to vain words of empty tongue" — to the empty and vain words of the PC government, Mr. Speaker.

Well it is true that the throne speech shows no leadership and no vision. Instead it blames the world, Mr. Speaker. It blames world problems and world forces for all the problems that we see here in Saskatchewan. They say the \$4 billion deficit and the crisis in Saskatchewan is beyond their control. That's what the throne speech says. The problems in Saskatchewan are beyond their control, Mr. Speaker.

Well I ask you, was the GigaText affair beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? Of course not. Was Pioneer Trust beyond their control? Was Principal Trust beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? No. The Ombudsman has clearly indicated that it was within their purview to prevent some of these problems. Was Joytec beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? No, I think not. I understand Joytec has now moved out of this province, and the investment that was originally made by the government has been lost. Was Supercart beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? I ask you, was that beyond their control? I think not. In fact the Premier, I understand, called a big news conference to celebrate the news of Supercart in the original stages and was perfectly prepared to take responsibility at that time, but when it failed, they say it's all beyond their control. And that's the line that we're hearing from the Tories in the throne speech, Mr. Speaker.

Was their attempt to privatize SaskEnergy, in face of growing opposition against privatization, was that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? Was that attempt beyond their control? Were they being forced into that? Was the privatization of some 400 dental workers in this province, in such a ruthless and heartless fashion, was that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker?

What about the Rafferty-Alameda dam and the environmental problems that we are facing with respect to that development and the manner in which they forged ahead with that development, regardless of the fact that the people of the province of Saskatchewan and the New Democratic opposition was telling them that they needed further environmental review and they hadn't taken the necessary steps. Was that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? The fact that they didn't listen to the opposition and the people of the province, was that beyond their control? I think not.

And Cargill, that they're pouring some 370 million into loan guarantees, is that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? What about their Husky Oil investment of some 220 million; is that beyond their control? Their give-away to Peter Pocklington, their sweetheart deal with Weyerhaeuser and Peter Pocklington, 480,000 in the case of Peter Pocklington, some 248 million in the case of Weyerhaeuser; is that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker?

What about their sanction of Mulroney's free trade agreement, Mr. Speaker? The fact that that was supposed to eliminate trade barriers and now we see a situation where the Americans are thumbing their nose at Canadians with high grain subsidies to American farmers; is that beyond their control? The fact that they endorse this free trade agreement, Mr. Speaker; is that beyond their control, even though it's a farce? And the fact that the free trade agreement virtually signs away our right to control our resources; was that beyond their control to approve that aspect of the free trade agreement?

And the GST (goods and services tax) which the Premier was very quick to endorse when it was first brought out, and was actually involved in the consultation with respect to the initial stages before the federal government proposed it; was that beyond the Premier's control and the PC governments' control? No, they were in favour of

this gouge and steal tax, Mr. Speaker. They were in favour of it and they showed support for it, and it was only when it became politically unpopular in the province of Saskatchewan that they decided to do a flip-flop on the gouge and steal tax.

And what about the tax increases that we have seen over the years? What about the things like the flat tax? Was that beyond their control, the flat tax which has caused considerable hardship to Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker, and which has been increased — 1986 it was at 1 per cent; 1987, 1.5; 1988, up to 2 per cent.

What about the gasoline tax increase to 10 cents a litre for unleaded and 12 cents a litre for leaded? Was that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? I should think not.

And what about the neglect that poor people and low income people have suffered in this province in the last seven to eight years? What about the evidence that shows that we have unprecedented numbers of children living in poverty and unprecedented numbers of children lining up at food banks, while this government sits on their hands and has done nothing with respect to the hunger problem, except in an election year they decide to pay lip service to it in the throne speech? Was that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? No, I think not.

And what about all the other programs: the suffering that people went through for such a long period of time as a result of health care cut-backs and long hospital waiting lists; health care cut-backs by this government that created a crisis and a shortage in health care services in the province. So we saw people waiting for a hospital bed, in some cases for up to a year for hip replacements while they lived in suffering and their . . . particularly older people, Mr. Speaker, who are then rendered immobile and it becomes very difficult and painful for them the longer that they are unable to walk around easily. And while they sat in their homes and waited for hip replacements, this government was cutting and slashing the health care budget, Mr. Speaker. Was that beyond their control? Was that beyond their control? I think not, Mr. Speaker.

And we look at the education in the province of Saskatchewan and the fact that education has been so grossly underfunded by this government. And as we see high teacher-student ratios, we see teacher burn-out as a result. We see our young people being unable to obtain entrance into technical schools and universities because this government has not made education a priority. Well was that beyond their control, Mr. Speaker? I think not.

And let's look at the waste and mismanagement that has occurred in this province as a result of many of their policies. The waste and mismanagement which, incidentally, I even heard the Premier speak to on a TV show a few weeks ago, where he said they were going to try and get rid of the waste and mismanagement. So even he acknowledges that there has been some waste and mismanagement, waste and mismanagement that has resulted in a \$4 billion deficit in this province, Mr. Speaker — a \$4 billion deficit. And I think that's atrocious.

And then we have to . . . And what about the patronage that this government has engaged in — the Bob Andrew, Graham Taylor patronage? The Paul Schoenhals, the George Hill, the Paul Rousseau, and so on, Mr. Speaker. Are they listening to the people? I believe that the people would tell them that they are disgusted with the blatant patronage that this government has engaged in.

Are they listening to the people? No. Instead, they went ahead and appointed two more of their own — Bob Andrew and Graham Taylor — to further patronage positions, in the face of public opinion that clearly indicated that this government was perceived as being patronage-ridden.

There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that the throne speech does not acknowledge — does not acknowledge — any PC responsibility for the present crisis. It does not. In fact, they try to blame it on world problems. Well, Mr. Speaker, the litany of Tory-created problems as a result of misguided Tory policies is innumerable. We could stand here for hours and just list one fiasco after the other — one wrong-headed policy decision after the other, Mr. Speaker.

And that is what has contributed in large part to the problems that we are now facing in Saskatchewan, and to the huge deficit that our families are going to have to pay off, to the huge deficit — \$4 billion in this province, Mr. Speaker. That's approximately \$4,000 for every man, woman, and child in this province. For a family of four we're talking \$16,000, \$16,000 of debt as a result of their incompetence, Mr. Speaker — as a result of their incompetence. And they refuse to accept any responsibility for that debt and for the crisis they've created, and the hurt, and the hurt and the harm that they have caused to Saskatchewan families. And they refuse to accept any responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about the need to have a Consensus Saskatchewan, is what they have referred to it — 100 citizens drawn together to tell them what direction this province should be going. And they're doing this in their dying days, Mr. Speaker. They're doing this in their dying days. But we've heard it before. We've heard on innumerable occasions that they're listening to the people, and we know from their record that they don't listen. They go ahead and implement whatever it is their right-wing ideology wishes, tells them to implement, and they're not listening to the people.

(1930)

This Consensus Saskatchewan that the government is attempting to put forward is just another desperate attempt to cling to power by a dying government, Mr. Speaker. They say they are going to the people, but if they had been listening all along, Mr. Speaker, they would realize that there is a consensus in Saskatchewan on a number of different issues. They would realize that the Saskatchewan consensus is to develop our resources for the benefit of all people in this province, not just for the benefit of an élite few, Mr. Speaker.

But instead, they've refused to listen to that consensus, to those wishes of the people. They've gone ahead and

endorsed the free trade agreement that virtually signs away the right to completely control our resources in this province. They wanted to go ahead and privatize SaskEnergy in spite of this general consensus, Mr. Speaker, and there's absolutely no question that they have not been listening to that general wish of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

The people of the province of Saskatchewan also have a consensus that they want universally accessible quality health care. But what did we see this government doing? We saw this government substantially reduce the children's school-based dental — well, eliminate the school-based dental plan and implement it with a privatized dental plan, Mr. Speaker. And as a result, it has reduced access to dental services to people, particularly in rural Saskatchewan, but also to children in urban Saskatchewan whose parents are unable to take time off work and take their children to the dentist, for example. So, in spite of the fact that there's a Saskatchewan consensus that there should be universally accessible health care in this province, this government has ignored that consensus.

It decimated the prescription drug plan and it was such a horrendous example of how they're not listening to the people and how they don't understand what the Saskatchewan consensus is or, in spite of the fact they know there's a consensus, they continue on their right wing ideological bent, Mr. Speaker.

Are the changes . . . the changes they made to the prescription drug plan is evidence of this attitude, Mr. Speaker. We saw people who were unable to obtain prescription drugs as a result of their harmful and hurtful changes and we still, we still see a situation where people cannot afford some of the drugs that they need, Mr. Speaker. That situation is still with us.

And with respect to hospital waiting lists, we've seen in this province hospital waiting lists that are totally unprecedented in the history of this province because this government refused to listen to the Saskatchewan consensus that was that the people of Saskatchewan wanted universally accessible health care and they wanted quality health care.

We see an infant mortality rate in Saskatchewan that is amongst the highest of anywhere in Canada, Mr. Speaker. A disgraceful infant mortality rate, particularly as a result of socio-economic conditions in northern Saskatchewan. And the Saskatchewan consensus, Mr. Speaker, is that this infant mortality rate should be reduced, but what steps has this government taken? It's taken no steps to correct that problem, Mr. Speaker. In fact, there have been cut-backs to health care services in northern Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, they've eliminated the northern food transportation subsidy, which brings me to the question of increased tuberculosis in northern Saskatchewan, which again is as a result of socio-economic conditions and poor nutrition in the North, Mr. Speaker.

And this government has not listened to the Saskatchewan consensus, that all people in Saskatchewan, whether they live in the North or the

South or the East or the West, are entitled to quality, universally accessible health care. They've chosen to ignore the Saskatchewan consensus on that, Mr. Speaker.

Saskatchewan people also, Mr. Speaker, believe that every family and every individual is entitled to adequate housing and adequate nutrition and clothing, Mr. Speaker. But what we've seen in this province as a result of Tory policies are unprecedented numbers of families and children and individuals living in poverty, Mr. Speaker. We've seen food banks. The number one industry in this province is food banks these days, as a result of their policies, Mr. Speaker. And they've chosen to ignore that. All these years they've chosen to ignore this problem and implement policies that created . . . that made this problem, this problem, even more severe, and made it even worse, Mr. Speaker.

They were not listening to the people. They were not listening to the people who were suffering as a result of living in these poor conditions. And they were not listening to the rest of the people who were saying, do something about it; we don't want to see our brothers and sisters living in such degrading circumstances. But they refused to listen to the Saskatchewan consensus, Mr. Speaker. Now they're saying they're going to listen to the people, but we've heard it before. We don't believe them; we know they will not listen, Mr. Speaker.

The Saskatchewan consensus with respect to education is that every child is entitled to a first-class education. And the right to education, Mr. Speaker, depends on what you've got up here, not what you got down here in your pocket. But this government has chosen to ignore that because there's been a move to private vocational schools. And we have repeatedly said in this legislature that they're not regulating these schools — to the detriment of the students, and it is to the detriment of the students that they're not regulating these schools, Mr. Speaker.

We feel the students are being short-changed, but instead this government continues on with its policy of moving to private vocational schools; it continues with its policy of underfunding education generally. So we have a situation in Saskatchewan where we in Saskatchewan have one of the lowest per capita spending with respect to education. We have high teacher-pupil ratios, we have young people that cannot get access to universities and technical schools. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, students and parents and citizens across this province have been telling this government repeatedly over the last few years that the Saskatchewan consensus is that every child and every young adult has a right to an education, Mr. Speaker, has a right to quality education. And this government has not listened to the people of this province.

There's a Saskatchewan consensus, Mr. Speaker, that development, economic development in this province must be consistent, consistent with our environment, and we must not upset the delicate balance in the environment, Mr. Speaker. But what have we seen this government do in spite of that Saskatchewan consensus, in spite of the desire of Saskatchewan people to preserve their environment and to sustain their environment? In

spite of that we've seen totally, in a bald-faced fashion, the adherence to a \$1 billion Rafferty-Alameda project which undoubtedly has environmental consequences, Mr. Speaker. And they refused, they refused to listen to the people, they refused to undertake the necessary studies, and it took a court, Mr. Speaker, it took a court to tell them that they were on the wrong track. The people couldn't tell them that; they weren't listening. The opposition couldn't tell them that; they weren't listening, Mr. Speaker. And now this government has the gall to come forward in their dying days, in one desperate attempt to say that they are going to listen to the people of this province. I doubt it, Mr. Speaker. They won't be listening.

So let's just look at maybe some of the incidences where this Premier and this government have indicated that they were going to consult and they were going to listen to the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

In the fall of 1982, the Premier announced his brand-new economic development board consisting of hand-picked private citizens to advise the government; and he personally chose those members, Mr. Speaker, like Will Klein of Pioneer Trust. We got the announcement, but the consultation, Mr. Speaker, and listening, just didn't happen.

And then in 1982, the Premier announced an advisory commission on youth — another announcement, but still no real consultation or listening to the people of the province. Instead what we have are unprecedented numbers of young people leaving this province today, Mr. Speaker, unprecedented numbers — our future, our young people, leaving this province, Mr. Speaker.

Then in the fall of 1985, after the voters expressed an overwhelming consensus by rejecting the PC government, the Premier announced he would start listening, but that didn't last very long. In fact, the direct quote from the Premier after that particular by-election, Mr. Speaker, was, "It's been a message that's been given to me and given to the party, and I'm going to take it seriously." But he didn't listen, Mr. Speaker, he didn't listen.

And then we saw the same thing again in October of last year. Once again the Premier appeared to recognize the consensus of the province and appeared to acknowledge that it was totally rejecting his policies and his politics, so once again he said he would add more cabinet ministers to listen.

The health care task force is another example. They set up a health care task force that was to go through this province and listen to the people of Saskatchewan. And in face of that, we see this government proposing an integration of hospitals in Saskatoon without even consulting with some of the major players with respect to that integration. They didn't even notify their own health care task force that they were going to proceed with this very major initiative in Saskatoon. But they had set up the task force to listen to what the people said, but it's another example of their hollow promises of listening and adhering to what the people are saying.

And we see hospitals springing up in Moosomin and Broadview, Mr. Speaker, promises of such hospitals. I'm not suggesting those hospitals may not be necessary, but it's being done when the health care task force is saying it's going to be coming out with its report. I understand . . . Well the health care task force was supposed to come out with its report in December; now I understand it's been postponed to March 31. I haven't heard of a further postponement, so therefore I believe this report is going to be coming out very soon.

But we're seeing announcements of hospitals across this province by the PC government. They're not even prepared to wait and see what their task force has to say with respect to these issues, or whether it says anything with respect to these issues. And that's an example of Tory listening and Tory consulting, Mr. Speaker.

And who's responsible? Who's responsible for these arrogant decisions on the part of the PC government, for making decisions in spite of the fact that the Saskatchewan consensus is entirely different? Well I tell you it's every single member sitting over there, and the Premier, Mr. Speaker. And the Premier quite willingly acknowledges his responsibility. For example, in a newspaper clipping, he said — out of the *Star-Phoenix* on November 1985 — the Premier says, with respect to the by-election in Regina North East:

I'm in control of the government and I can make the changes, and believe me, I will be listening and responding.

That's what he said in 1985, Mr. Speaker. "I'm in control," so we know that the Premier's in control, Mr. Speaker, and he's making these decisions.

He says, in October of 1988 in the *Star-Phoenix*:

There are some choices that have to be made that are not always popular in everybody's eyes. The question I always have to ask myself is, 'if you don't make these decisions, what did you get elected for?'

So he realizes he's making the decisions. This is his responsibility, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's responsibility.

He says again, in November 1987, and this is quoted from *The Globe and Mail*:

. . . You're elected to lead. People want to know that you're tough enough and determined enough and courageous enough to do what you believe is right. I'm prepared to stake my role in history (against) anybody else.

So he's taking control. The Premier's responsible for these decisions and these policies that hurt the people.

He says again in the *Star-Phoenix*, January 3, 1989:

I'm going to give it all I've got to make the changes I believe people want to see . . .

So the Premier's in control, Mr. Speaker. And there's no

question he accepts responsibility for these mistakes — those that he acknowledges — although I rarely heard him acknowledge anything.

And another rather interesting thing that sort of jumped out at me when I was going through some of these old newspaper clippings, Mr. Speaker, was the fact that this is a government that says they're listening to the people; they want to listen to the people and they want to reach a Saskatchewan consensus. But the former member from Indian Head-Wolseley, Graham Taylor, had indicated this, Mr. Speaker. This goes back to March 20, 1989, again in *The Globe and Mail*. He says:

"We have to change the thinking of Saskatchewan people," privatization minister Graham Taylor admits.

We have to change the thinking of Saskatchewan people.

(1945)

Well I believe that's the first honest statement made by the members opposite with respect to the question of listening and consensus because I think that is what their policies are all about. They are trying to change the Saskatchewan people. They are trying to force the Saskatchewan people into what they believe Saskatchewan should look like, not what the people of Saskatchewan want Saskatchewan to look like. They are going about this province attempting to destroy the Saskatchewan consensus and create this new world that they envisage, this new right-wing ideological world that gives benefits to big business, Mr. Speaker, and forgets about lower income and poor families and ordinary families in this province.

An Hon. Member: — Old ideas.

Ms. Simard: — Yes, it's a new world, but my colleague from Prince Albert says it's an old idea, and it's old Tory policies once again raising their ugly head, Mr. Speaker, policies that are attempted to destroy the Saskatchewan consensus and destroy what the Saskatchewan people have built up in this province over the decades, Mr. Speaker, that they built up over the decades.

We know what these Tories stand for. We know exactly what they stand for, Mr. Speaker, and that is huge give-aways to big corporations, huge give-aways to large corporations — megabucks for megaprojects. There is absolutely no question that that's what this government stands for. They're going about attempting to destroy the Saskatchewan consensus through policies like privatization, free trade, through their waste and mismanagement and the creation of a huge deficit through their patronage and corruption, Mr. Speaker.

Their privatization policies have meant lost jobs for Saskatchewan people. All we have to do is look at the privatization of the school-based children's dental plan which meant hundreds of lost jobs for Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. And I want to point out once again, as I've done in this Assembly before, many of those people were women, and I believe that's an indication of this government's attitude towards women.

We see the privatization of Saskoil, meaning lay-offs of 25 per cent of its work force, and the privatization of SED meant 70 lost jobs in Saskatoon. And there's absolutely no question that PC privatization means fewer jobs and fewer opportunities for Saskatchewan people, which is one of the reasons why we have such a massive out-migration of young people in this province today. So how has privatization, their privatization, affected public services, for example, Mr. Speaker?

Well we see rapidly deteriorating highways, highways that are becoming impassable in many locations. We see the elimination of the children's dental plan, and we see sharp utility increases as a result of SaskPower assets being privatized. We see privatization of provincial parks, meaning fewer services and higher charges to Saskatchewan families. That's how privatization affects public services, and I believe that all these effects and policies that are being put into place — or the effects of these policies is against the Saskatchewan consensus, Mr. Speaker.

So who gets control? Who gets control under PC privatization? Well ownership and control go into the hands of a few private corporations, and most often, Mr. Speaker, they're from outside our province, from outside our province. And that's who gets control, and I say that that's against Saskatchewan consensus. I believe that the Saskatchewan people want to maintain control of their resources and their utility corporations, Mr. Speaker. They want to maintain control of that. They don't want the control of their corporations and their utility corporations and their resources going to out-of-province investors so that the profits leave this province to companies such as the Ontario and Quebec companies as a result of the privatization of Sask Minerals, Mr. Speaker, as one example.

We see other Tory policies, such as free trade, which is destroying the Saskatchewan consensus, and I've elaborated upon that somewhat, Mr. Speaker, earlier during my remarks. I won't go into that in detail at this point. We see Tory policies such as piling up a huge deficit in this province, Mr. Speaker, and I believe the Saskatchewan consensus would easily be that a PC government has been extravagant and wasteful and that its financial mismanagement has caused real hardship for Saskatchewan people.

And when we take a look at the deficit and the fact that we are going to have to pay this off in the future . . . In fact the Premier himself has indicated in *Grainews* on December 1982 that deficits are just . . . and this is a quote, Mr. Speaker, a quote of the Premier's remarks. "Deficits are just a deferred tax that must be paid by future generations." The Premier is acknowledging that this is a deferred tax on our children, Mr. Speaker — \$4 billion — a deferred tax on our children. That's what that deficit is, Mr. Speaker.

And I believe that the Saskatchewan consensus is that this government is responsible for that deficit, that it has created it through the waste and mismanagement and corruption that has pervaded this government, Mr. Speaker, that it has created it through wrong-headed

policies, through the implementation of a right-wing ideology, Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the people of this province wanted, contrary to what the people of this province wanted. And that's the Saskatchewan consensus, Mr. Speaker.

On the federal scene we see the GST or the gouge and steal tax being implemented, which has the tacit approval of the PC government. There's no question about that. They may speak out against it but they've actually participated in the formulation of it, and that's been documented, Mr. Speaker. And now as a result of the mismanagement, federally and provincially, of governments by Tories, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province and of Canada are having to pay further and ever increasing taxes to pay for their incompetence, Mr. Speaker. And I say that the consensus of the people of Saskatchewan is that this is an unfair tax and that this government should shape up rather than attempt to put the burden on individuals and families in this province.

And in order to promote, in order to promote their right-wing ideology and the fact, they want to change the map of Saskatchewan and change the social programs in Saskatchewan, change our public utilities, change our health care system — the fact that they're trying to force this on Saskatchewan people contrary to what Saskatchewan people believe and want, Mr. Speaker.

And how are they trying to do that? Well one of the ways that they attempt to do that, Mr. Speaker, is the way Graham Taylor had indicated, by trying to change the opinion of people. So we see huge amounts of money being poured into advertising, being poured into advertising with respect to health care. One of the largest increases in the health care budget was under communications, Mr. Speaker. And that is largely for the purposes of self-serving PC advertising, Mr. Speaker.

And we see advertising in all other areas, Mr. Speaker, because, as Graham Taylor said, they are going to change the opinion of the public. That's what they're trying to do. They're not listening to the people; they're not looking for a consensus; they're trying to change the consensus. And they're doing it through advertising, they're doing it through trying to divide people and pit people against one another, pitting urban people against rural people, pitting workers against farmers, pitting people against minorities, Mr. Speaker.

And they're trying to put down people who are less privileged and people who work for the less privileged, like Legal Aid lawyers for example, Mr. Speaker. They attack people who speak out against them, like the Ombudsman and the Legislative Counsel and the Provincial Auditor, people who have an obligation to say it the way it is. And when they do say it the way it is, when they do point their fingers at the Tory government because it should rightfully be pointed at the Tory government, they attack these people, Mr. Speaker.

They've underfunded and cut back to advocacy groups whose very responsibility is to be a watch-dog on government and on the legislative process, Mr. Speaker. They are the watch-dog of the people, but they cut back on the funding because they don't want to know what the

people think. They don't want to listen to what our watch-dogs have to say.

They don't want to listen to the directions that people want us to move, because if they listen to the people it's going to stand in the way of the implementation of their right-wing, extremist ideology, Mr. Speaker.

And now, and now this government has the gall to come forward and say that it's going to develop a Saskatchewan consensus, and they're saying this in their dying days, Mr. Speaker. They're saying this in their dying days. They know that they are the most unpopular thing in this province, and I don't think there's ever been any government in the history of this province that has been as unpopular as this government, Mr. Speaker. They know they're in political trouble and they're trying to save their political hides, Mr. Speaker. And they think they're going to fool Saskatchewan people by promising a Consensus Saskatchewan of a hundred people sitting around the table telling them what to do and then they're going to listen.

Well why should Saskatchewan believe them for one single moment when they haven't listened on numerous occasions, when they say their job is to change the thinking of the people? Is that what they're going to try and do? Are they going to get these hundred people together and try to change their thinking and force them to think along right-wing ideological lines? Is that what they're going to do? Are they going to try and fool these hundred people into thinking the way they want them to think? Because they've said that's what their job is, Mr. Speaker.

Well I tell you, Mr. Speaker, the majority of the people in this province don't believe them. They don't believe they will listen; they don't believe that anything is going to come of Consensus Saskatchewan. What the people of this province believe is that if this government is elected again, it will privatize SaskPower, it will move to more privatized health care, Mr. Speaker, it will privatize more services; it will not reinstitute a school-based children's dental plan.

Mr. Speaker, that's what the people believe. They don't believe for one moment this government is going to listen to the people. They believe that it is headlong bent on its right-wing ideology and that its policies will be developed in a fashion to implement that ideology if it should ever be re-elected.

And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that if there is one overwhelming Saskatchewan consensus at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, that is that the people of this province want an election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And they want it now, Mr. Speaker. They want it now. They don't want it six months from now, they don't want it a year from now, they want an election now.

And I've had at least three or four people — well at least three or four people came up to me immediately after the throne speech, and their question to me was, Louise,

how do we apply to be a part of this consensus, because what we're going to tell the Premier and what we're going to tell the Tory MLAs is that the Premier should resign; the Premier should resign now, and we want an election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And that, Mr. Speaker, is the Saskatchewan consensus today.

And let's just take a look at how the Tories . . . the Tory tactics with respect to implementing their right-wing ideology and, in the process, attempting to destroy the Saskatchewan consensus of universal accessible quality health care, of publicly owned utilities, of adequate housing and employment for all, and an adequate standard of living for all.

Let's just look at the results of the implementation of their policy over the last eight years. What we see is a massive and tragic out-migration of young families leaving this province. We see deep concern within our rural communities as they are losing population and young people and businesses, Mr. Speaker. We see a financial crisis in agriculture and unprecedented stress and hardship on farm families and on working families, Mr. Speaker.

We see a GigaText fiasco. We see Joytec, Supercart, Pioneer Trust, Principal Trust. Principal Trust, Mr. Speaker, which the member from Regina South didn't even mention, even though he's the minister in charge of that department. Didn't even mention as he went on to justify patronage appointments in his government, all after they talked about developing a consensus and listening to the people. He had the audacity to stand in his seat, to stand there, Mr. Speaker . . . to stand and say, Mr. Speaker, that they were developing a Saskatchewan consensus and that they were listening to the people. And he's refused to listen to the people, and even the Ombudsman, with respect to Principal Trust.

(2000)

And the list goes on, the PC record, give-aways and special deals to big business and wealthy investors, and I've named a number of them here tonight, but hardship and financial stress, Mr. Speaker, for ordinary families.

We see health care policies like the decimation of the school-based children's dental plan, massive changes to the prescription drug plan, hospital waiting lists, underfunding, understaffing, burnt-out nurses, Mr. Speaker, people waiting for months and months and months to get needed surgery, Mr. Speaker, and the list goes on.

And in education in a rapidly changing world we see a lack of access for many children to technical schools and universities, high teacher-student ratios, burnt-out teachers, and general underfunding in the education system that is making it very difficult for our teachers, Mr. Speaker.

These are the results. These are just some of the results, but it is a very damning record, I would say, Mr. Speaker.

But these are just some of the results of Tory policies and the Tories bent on implementing their right-wing ideology, and in the process attempting to destroy the Saskatchewan consensus in order for them to implement what they believe Saskatchewan should be.

Well I say, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, that it's too late for this government; it's too late for this government. Nobody believes that they are interested in developing a Saskatchewan consensus; everyone believes that if they are re-elected they will privatize utilities, move to more privatization in health care, move to more privatization in schools. We know that's what they'll do if they're re-elected. Regardless of what these 100 citizens may tell them, they will still implement their ideology, Mr. Speaker.

In short, the throne speech showed absolutely no leadership. And I believe that the fortune, Mr. Speaker, that I found in that fortune cookie I had that night which read, "Listen not to vain words of empty tongue," was a very precise statement. It capsulized the throne speech, and actually I couldn't have said it better. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Swan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege tonight to stand to speak in this throne speech debate on behalf of my constituency of Rosetown-Elrose. It's with great pleasure that I do so.

I listened with interest as the member was speaking opposite tonight, and I started to feel maybe this lady has a bit of problem, or the hon. member had a problem. You know, as she went through her speech, she seemed to repeat everything about three different times during her speech. Now I don't know whether it's a memory problem or what it is, but there's something wrong when you have to go over the same thing three or four times and forget that you've already mentioned it.

Another area that I think the hon. lady had a great deal of difficulty with was with figures. You know, she indicated to the Assembly that the Rafferty-Alameda project cost \$1 billion. Well, Mr. Speaker, I remember very well that the cost of the project, Rafferty-Alameda, was 120 million. Now there's a considerable difference between those two figures. Admittedly, the cost is going to be somewhat higher today because of the delays that have been taken due to the actions of the members of the opposition and a few of their friends. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it will be interesting.

I'd like to see this same member go into Estevan and make her speech about Rafferty-Alameda. It would be interesting to watch the reaction of the public in Estevan, and I would challenge her to do that some day so that the world could see just how she would react. Well maybe she shouldn't go. It may not be safe; she might be actually harmed physically if she were to make those comments there.

She also talked about health-care funding, and the health-care funding in this province has increased very rapidly over the last few years, ever since our government has been in power. She spoke of the dental plan being

taken out of the schools, and yes, we made that change, and I think it's a very important change that we made.

I wonder . . . She is a professional person herself, and if somebody is looking for a lawyer, would they sooner go to her as a qualified lawyer or would they sooner maybe hire the legal secretary? You know, that's about the same comparison that you would have to make to the people who work in the school-based dental plan and the actual dental professional who has been trained and has practised. So I think we need to look at some of these things.

Many of the people in my constituency would not send their children to the school-based dental plan. And they didn't send them for that very reason, that they wanted someone that was fully qualified in the dental profession, someone that could provide very high quality service, and for that reason many of my constituents did not send their children to the school-based plan but rather took them to the dentist in the city.

I think that the program today is working extremely well, and the numbers of students who are having their dental plan carried out by a qualified dentist today is high and I believe will go even higher as the days progress.

The hon. member was also talking about those terrible Tories, and I got a kick out of that, Mr. Speaker. I think that it's important for this lady to just listen to the news and see what's happening in the world today. You know, if she would just listen to the news and watch what's happening in many of the former communist countries of the world, she would begin to have a look at what really is happening to people in the socialist movement.

One after the other, these socialist governments are falling. And who is being elected in those countries? Yes, Tory governments, governments that are going to be able to meet the needs of those people in an entirely different manner than they have been looked after.

So I think the hon. member perhaps should be looking over her shoulder to some extent and beware of what's following behind, because you're going to see many things happening here that may surprise you as well.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased with the throne speech that was presented by our Lieutenant Governor. That throne speech is a document of commitment to this province, and a good document it is, one I believe that is going to give our province an opportunity to grow and to build. The same as it has been building in the past few years, it's going to continue to grow. And with a little turn in the economic conditions here and in the world, I think that the province will grow extremely well.

The Conference Board of Canada has given our province a good rating and indicate that we likely will be one of the fastest growth in the gross domestic product this year of any province in Canada. So as that happens, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing things improve here and improve for the people right across our province.

In the agricultural field we've had some very difficult years because of poor crops and low grain prices. But we

just need a very small turn in that area and you will see a change that will liven up the whole province. And I believe that most of our people are looking for that change with the better moisture conditions that we're facing this spring.

Our government has been providing assistance to many people in our province over the last few years, and they protect them from high interest rates on their homes. I dare say that the hon. member who has just spoken likely does claim some of that interest protection on her home as most of others do. I think it's extremely important that the people of the province realize how much help this government has indeed given.

We have worked very diligently to protect the environment of our province. No, we haven't gone and poured concrete to cover up our mistakes; rather we have tried to improve the environment in a realistic fashion. We've taken apart some of the old concrete vaults full of poisons that the former government had put in place, and have indeed processed those materials, cleaned the sites, and left the environment good for the communities.

We've gone to Cluff Lake and processed all of the tailings that were stored in the concrete vaults that that government had put in place. That was an improvement that that area has needed for some time. I believe anyone that would go and look at Cluff Lake today and see the difference will realize that this government has taken indeed a very good step towards improving the environment.

As we look at the development of the new Clean Air Act, and the effect that that will have on the environment, I think that every industry across our province will now be covered by The Clean Air Act and it will give an opportunity for the department to gradually move to clean up the smoke-stacks of all of the industries so that our environment is indeed protected.

We've moved to build and to improve the health care system in our province. One way that we have moved and have made a significant change is in the number of nursing home beds and combined facilities that have been built since 1982. And it is bordering on 2,500 nursing home beds that have been built since this government came into power.

Now the former government had put on a moratorium, and the Leader of the Opposition was the member who wrote the letter that put the moratorium in place, that they were not going to build any additional nursing homes. And that letter, I think, is damning evidence against that particular member. He had no concern for our seniors and for the needs of those seniors. And at a time when the population of Saskatchewan is ageing rapidly, to put a freeze on the number of nursing home beds that could be built, I think, leaves much to be desired.

We also listened to the hon. member saying that we were not funding education. Well I think if you looked at the facts, education budgets have increased extremely rapidly over the last eight years, and there have been a number of new schools built, a number of increases in salaries for staff. When I go out around my constituency,

Mr. Speaker, I see some of the finest school facilities that you could ever wish to have. And I also see many professional teachers in those class-rooms, doing a first-class job of training the young people as they come into our schools. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the job that the educational system is doing. We always work to improve it and to see that it's going to do better in the future; but I think that we can be justifiably proud of the amount of money that we have put in, and indeed, for the quality of the education that is being offered to our people.

This government has also moved to put in many protections for farmers through these periods when we have suffered international subsidies and drought and many difficulties in the agricultural sector. Our Premier has been very effective in his work in dealing with the federal government and in dealing with our agricultural budgets here.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am a farmer and I think that I can speak with some firsthand information that many of the farmers in this province can go back over the last three years and add up the amount of money that was put in their pocket through federal subsidies and provincial assistance and they will likely find that the amount of money that they received from those programs would equal or exceed the amount of money that they actually received from the sale of grain products. Now that's quite a shock to most people, but I believe if they will go and actually add them up, they will find that to be the case.

(2015)

I think that we are quite safe in saying, Mr. Speaker, that in our province this government has a very deep concern for people, and that's the reason that many of these programs have been put in place. We have a government whose strength and wisdom comes from Saskatchewan citizens and a government that consults and co-operates with those citizens.

We have listened to people in the cities and in rural communities. We've listened to people in hospital administration, in the school administration, in the teaching profession. We've listened to farmers, listened to people in small business. And as we've listened, we have brought in programs that met the needs of many of those people.

Mr. Speaker, when I speak of the health care side, in my constituency there have been new hospitals built, there have been new nursing homes built, and there has been hospitals that have just been upgraded to bring them up to today's standards. The hospitals in rural Saskatchewan and in urban Saskatchewan are now meeting the needs of most of the people who have medical needs. There's always need to continue to improve — to improve equipment, to improve facilities, and to improve the educational opportunities for our medical professionals. But I believe that Saskatchewan doesn't stand behind any other province in Canada, and in many cases is ahead of most provinces in Canada, in the quality of the health care that we offer.

Mr. Speaker, we provide families with long-term

protection against rising interest rates. And this protection has enabled many young Saskatchewan families to keep their homes, and some 97,000 home owners have had assistance through the mortgage protection plan. That's a major help to people in our province and at a cost to the government of something over \$102 million.

The government also took the initiative to develop the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. Now this is the first of its kind in Canada — and I think we may be able to go even beyond Canada — that any government has put in place a pension plan that is available to Saskatchewan citizens, that is the home-maker, people who are working part time, farmers, other self-employed business men, people who formerly had no pension plan. But today they can join the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and indeed are joining in large numbers.

We want all Saskatchewan people to have the protection of a pension plan. And as this plan was put into place, we have watched the fund growing. We today have a pension plan of something in excess of \$73 million and 49,000 participants. Of that, 40 per cent or more are home-makers.

The first time, and as I go through my constituency and talk to home-makers and small business, I hear time and again how much they appreciate the opportunity to belong to a pension plan so that they know when retirement comes for them that they have a secure future — very valuable and one that all of my citizens appreciate and are taking advantage of.

We now also have a Seniors' Secretariat and a minister who is responsible for families and seniors. This has been a move, Mr. Speaker, that is extremely important to many of the families and many of the seniors, to have a minister at the cabinet table who will speak out for families and who will speak out for seniors and will pay attention to the issues. Now this minister has the opportunity to access funds from other departments that had formerly delivered some of these services. But as he works with seniors and with families, the departments are funding the changes in program and the needs that this minister is now bringing forward.

I believe that the seniors' heritage program that was implemented a few years ago has also provided a considerable amount of financial assistance to many of the seniors in our province. Some 151 million has been provided to seniors since 1986 under this program. More than 70,000 households take advantage of the grant each year. It administers programs like the Saskatchewan income plan which provides a monthly income supplement of up to \$80 to low level income seniors.

Mr. Speaker, that's almost 16 million a year in the hands of seniors who need it most in this one program alone. The Seniors' Secretariat supports activity centres and services across the province by providing operating capital to almost 450 such organizations, centres which provide a focal point for retired persons to enjoy activity and satisfying life-styles. And, Mr. Speaker, as I go into a number of these senior centres, I see a group of people having perhaps the most fun they have had for many, many years. And the good fellowship and the games and

the activities that they undertake in these senior centres are likely as good as any medicine that most of them could take, and maybe even better in most cases, because they have companionship, and at the end of the day they go home happy and have had an opportunity to converse with their friends and family within the community. It's a program that I believe is serving our seniors extremely well.

Also there's a toll free number that the secretariat operates that is accessible to seniors who want information about other programs and services. And, Mr. Speaker, these types of initiatives have made it possible for seniors to remain in their communities and to maintain their independence. This is what our elder population has been telling us and this is the prime objective of my colleague, the Minister responsible for Seniors.

Mr. Speaker, we are living in a time of very rapid change. Our way of life is placing new stresses on the family. We recognize that the needs of today's families are much different than those families of three decades ago. Today both spouses often work outside the home. The average family size is smaller. Single parent families are more prevalent and our seniors are living longer.

Mr. Speaker, this government has consistently responded to the many and diverse needs of the family because we believe that although the structure and needs of the family have changed, the family still remains the foundation of our society. That is why this government is now spending more on education and health than any other government before it.

Just last year, we allocated in excess of 30 per cent of the provincial budget to the Saskatchewan health care — 30 per cent, Mr. Speaker, or the equivalent of \$162,000, spent every hour of every day on health care. Now that's a considerable amount of money, and one, I believe, that we need to recognize as a fund that is providing the needs of many of our people.

Just to give you an example in my own constituency, in the past year we spent \$12.9 million on various building projects in the health care field within my constituency. These are in Rosetown, Mildred, Kyle, and Dinsmore. And those same facilities had an operating budget of 5.78 million. So, Mr. Speaker, I think that speaks well for the Department of Health and the government for its concern for the health of our people. We've opened public health offices, chiropody clinics, community therapy clinics, special care facilities, and the list can go on and on.

And we've increased the Education budget by 80 per cent since 1982. Now in eight years, to have a budget increase by 80 per cent is exceeding considerably the inflation rate for that same period. And, Mr. Speaker, we don't have larger numbers of students. We actually have less students in most of the education system than we had in 1980. So we're providing more funding for less people and I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we're doing a better job than has ever been done before.

In my own constituency, there has been 43.8 million in educational operating grants, and over 4.8 million in the form of educational capital expenditures in the last year.

— Mr. Speaker, a very sizeable chunk of money, and one that I'm sure is being wisely spent to provide the needs of our younger generation as they move through the educational process.

We have significantly enhanced and restructured the Saskatchewan tax reduction program to provide tax relief to almost 350,000 individuals and families including a special provision for single parents in recognition of the difficulties that they face.

In addition, we have implemented sales tax exemptions on electricity for homes and farms, exemptions which total over \$49.7 million.

We implemented sales tax exemptions on clothing and yard goods under \$300, totalling some \$139.8 million in just this one area. And, Mr. Speaker, we implemented sales tax exemption on children's clothing, which has saved Saskatchewan families over \$34 million.

To address the need for quality child care, this government introduced the child care development plan. When this plan is complete in 1995, almost 12,000 child care spaces will be available; 12,000, Mr. Speaker — a tripling of the number of child care spaces since 1980.

Last year a total of 16.5 million was provided for Saskatchewan child care to assist lower income working families who are in need of child care facilities. And, Mr. Speaker, we are also looking to extend affordable day care to rural families and to families who have children with special needs.

Under this government, many new programs and initiatives were designed and introduced to help victims of family violence, including safe shelters, outreach teams, support services, and family treatment and counselling.

In the past, many people who were legally obliged to make child support payments failed to fulfil that responsibility. This left many single parent families in a very difficult situation. We addressed this issue in 1986 with the introduction of the automatic enforcement of maintenance orders program.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have done much in the area of welfare reform. Prior to 1982, no programs were in place to enable people to move from social assistance to self assistance. But we changed that too, Mr. Speaker. The New Careers Corporation has taken almost 700 people off the welfare rolls over the last three years, and given them training and education. Only 14 per cent of these have returned to welfare. The rest of them, Mr. Speaker, have gone on to careers in earning a reasonable wage and providing for their own families.

Mr. Speaker, as you meet and talk to people who have had this experience, to see the joy in their eyes and the happiness in the family to think that today their family is not on the welfare roll but rather that the head of their family is able to go out and earn a living and provide for them — very valuable, I think, in any life, and it takes away much of the stress that the family had lived under.

Today we are facing the harsh reality that many Saskatchewan farmers are caught with heavy debt loads and with no production options to fall back on. Our government recognizes this, Mr. Speaker, and we have installed a safety net of special programs and policies targeted to agriculture. We have paid millions of dollars to Saskatchewan farmers to help them through these very difficult times.

(2030)

In 1984 we created the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan, and since that time this program has saved farm families over 327 million in interest alone. Since its creation we have expanded the ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan) mandate so that more people can apply, and so that more farms are protected. We have also made it easier for young farm families to get started by providing financing for the home quarter, first year, start-up costs.

To help farmers better manage their debt problems, we created the counselling and assistance for farmers program. Mr. Speaker, this particular program has been invaluable in many operations across our province. We haven't been able to save all the farms — I guess that will never be possible — but, Mr. Speaker, we have saved many farms, and many others are still in the process of being assisted through counselling assistance and the other programs.

We are also calling on the federal government for an immediate cash injection of \$900 million, with the first 400 million to be paid out to farmers prior to spring seeding. And we are also calling on the federal government to establish a \$1 billion contingency fund to counteract the disaster effects of the Euro-American subsidies.

Mr. Speaker, this government is demanding that banks and lending institutions take some responsibility to solve the farm cash flow and debt crisis. We're expanding the mandate of the ACS to extend debt refinancing. We are implementing loan guarantees for refinancing of existing debt. We are expanding the guaranteed vendor mortgage program to include land held by lenders and currently leased to farmers, and we are considering legislative changes to reduce farm debt.

Mr. Speaker, the government's farm programs give farm families the security of their home, the security of their home quarter, further understanding of their rights and obligations, and puts farmers and their families in a stronger position to negotiate for their future.

We have many other highly successful and important programs for families that have already been put in place, programs which provide security and stability. However, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that one of the most innovative and forward-looking steps this government has taken in recent months was to establish the Saskatchewan Family Foundation and to appoint a Minister of the Family to address the concerns of all of Saskatchewan families.

This is the first time that government, in the history of

Canada, has had a Minister of the Family, a minister whose prime responsibility is to work on behalf of the family. And, Mr. Speaker, for the first time we have a minister at the cabinet table who is an advocate for both the family and for seniors. For the first time we have a minister whose prime responsibility is to develop policies and programs that are specifically aimed to help strengthen family relationships.

His goal and the goal of the Family Foundation is to help to empower families to be more stable and secure, more self-reliant and more productive. His method of achieving this goal is to consult families across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and since October the minister has been very active. He has met with hundreds of individuals and community leaders across this province gathering their ideas and advice, building a consensus about the strengths and weaknesses of Saskatchewan families and the policy areas the foundation should be examining.

Then based on what he hears, it is up to the Minister of the Family and the Family Foundation to look across all government departments to analyse the existing programs and policies and to develop new programs that will help the families of Saskatchewan reach their full potential.

The other vital aspect of the Family Foundation is the role it plays in helping communities stage their family forums. These forums are community efforts. The only input that the Family Foundation has is helping with funding and assistance, finding appropriate speakers and workshop leaders.

These forums are seminars and workshops that address the issues and concerns that the community itself identifies. They are designed and planned and staged by community organizations themselves. Often these organizations are made up of individuals in the community who have come together for the sole purpose of planning a forum, and then after the event is over the committee stays together to continue to work on behalf of the families in their home community.

This is the goal of the forums. They are for education, information, community organization, and self-help. And it's working. More than 23 forums have been held to date and there will be 150 before this year is over. That is an overwhelming response to a community identified need. And by helping to strengthen and build family life in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, we are helping to build and strengthen Saskatchewan communities.

In my view, the formation of the Family Foundation is one of the most innovative and important announcements in this Speech from the Throne. This new foundation will have very positive and lasting implications for families in Saskatchewan, for communities in Saskatchewan, and for the province as a whole.

We are taking leadership in a vital area of social policy and the rest of the country is watching. The Minister of the Family had inquiries from governments and opposition parties across Canada, as well as the media. They are asking about the structure and the mandate of the

foundation and are unanimously applauding the Saskatchewan initiative as both timely and necessary.

This government recognizes the challenges of building a stronger province. Mr. Speaker, this government's economic and social policies are working for Saskatchewan people. These programs have made Saskatchewan a good place to live and work and to raise a family.

And I believe that with the help of the newly created Consensus Saskatchewan, we will continue to build on these programs and develop new strategies that will encourage and assist families to find solutions to today's challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to end my remarks by saying that, although the process of Consensus Saskatchewan as it was announced in the Speech from the Throne is new, the concept of consulting with Saskatchewan people has always guided this government.

For example, the Minister of the Family has been consulting and building consensus on family issues and concerns since early last fall. The Minister of Finance has been consulting on the budget for months seeking public input and feedback, and building a budget which responds to the wishes of Saskatchewan people.

Consensus Saskatchewan gives the consultation process a consistent framework through which our policies and programs can be built and vetted. I congratulate our government for the vision and sensitivity that will make this process work. And I congratulate this government for putting together such a positive and relevant throne speech, one that touches every family in this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I support the throne speech submitted by Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to rise tonight to speak in this throne speech debate. And I must say it's with a bit of sadness that I rise following the member that's just spoke. As my colleague from Quill Lakes quoted, it's probably the swan song for that member, given that . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. One cannot do indirectly what you cannot do directly. I would ask the member not to use other members' names.

Mr. Lyons: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'll change that phrase from that particular type of bird to a trumpeter song then, of the member from Rosetown, a song anyway. As the people of Saskatchewan know, that member will not be contesting the next provincial election, and with the speculation of a coming election some time within the next 12 to 15 months one can expect that the member will have risen in this House.

So I think that we can appreciate all the work that that member has done for his constituents. Even though we

have disagreed and disagreed mightily on a great many issues, I'm quite sure that the member has built some respect and has built some confidence in the people of his constituency, despite his own political affiliation but due to his own personal integrity, and I feel honoured to be able to honour that particular member.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, I want to speak tonight about the throne speech in a method . . . in a manner which attempts to analyse what the political nature of this particular speech is, this Speech from the Throne. Because like all speeches from the throne, this speech is a political document. And I want to characterize the nature of this political document as this. It is not a blueprint for the future which this government has put forward, rather it is an indictment of the past — the past eight years of their policies, of their political decisions, of the thrust of their economic and social policy. It is an indictment which will be judged by the people of Saskatchewan whenever this government gets the courage to put their record before the voters of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, the people in my constituency of Regina Rosemont, on a daily basis, by the 2's and the 5's and the 10's, ask me one question over and over again, and that question is this: when is the next election?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — When is the next election? We can't wait any more, so when is the next election? Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately this throne speech, I believe, gives an indication that the anticipations of the member of my constituency, of the people who live in Regina Rosemont — in fact of the people who live across Saskatchewan — their expectations will not be met.

Because the essential core of this throne speech does one thing and one thing only, and that is to provide a breathing space, to provide a breathing space for this Tory government between their actions of the past, which have been rejected in their entirety by the people of Saskatchewan, and a phoney attempt to try to put together some kind of rigged-up vision for tomorrow, something which does not spring from political conviction, something which does not spring from political leadership, but something which springs only from a cynical, manipulative attempt to buy the voters of Saskatchewan whenever they get up the nerve to call the next election.

So this throne speech which talks about, we need time to build a consensus, is nothing more than a political ploy to try to put some temporality, to try to put some time between the time of the next election and the time of the dark days of Saskatchewan ruled over by that Tory cabinet and that Tory caucus, Mr. Speaker.

That's what this throne speech is about — pure and simple politics — and any attempt by any of the members opposite to try to play this throne speech up as some kind

of non-partisan, non-political event, has not the credibility of any of the geese which wander through Wascana Centre here in Regina, Mr. Speaker.

(2045)

Because I want to speak for a minute about the record of this government, the record of this government and their credibility to put the new face on the old gorilla, to put the new face on the old gorilla, a face which nobody believes, Mr. Speaker, a face which nobody believes because they have seen in the past the true face of that kind of gorilla which has ravaged the lives of the people of Saskatchewan for eight long and dark and dreary years, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and what does that new face say? That new face says, well we're going to listen to people, we're going to try to build a consensus, and we're creating this Consensus Saskatchewan, some kind of phoney boloney Consensus Saskatchewan that will somehow solve the problems that the people of this province have been plunged into by their political decisions, some kind of consensus which is nothing more than a cynical political trick. Because the record, Mr. Speaker, the record of this government speaks for itself. Let's look at some of the issues which this government supposedly dealt with and ask yourself whether or not they attempted to reach a consensus with the majority of the people of Saskatchewan.

Let's look at the question of free trade, Mr. Speaker. Let's look at the question of free trade. Did this government attempt to reach a consensus, a consensus opinion with the people of this province around the question of free trade? Well now, some people say no, some people say no. I say no, but if we look at the record, what do we see?

Well, this government sent up a little travelling road show with one of the top civil servants in the province, Mr. Wakabayashi, sent them out around the province, listening to certain groups in this province — not the people but certain selected groups which were invited to put forward their opinions. The government took that input into its own little cabinet and its own little committee and said, well it looks like free trade is a good thing — despite the fact, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of people in Saskatchewan opposed the free trade agreement then, oppose the free trade agreement now, and more importantly registered their consensus against the free trade agreement by electing 10 New Democratic Party members of Parliament to Ottawa to stand up and fight Brian Mulroney around the question of the free trade agreement. That was the consensus of the people of Saskatchewan on the issue of free trade.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — And let's look, Mr. Speaker, at one of the most serious political problems facing our country, Canada, and that's the question of the Meech Lake agreement. In New Brunswick, Mr. Speaker, before the legislature ratified the Meech Lake agreement — which they still haven't done, which is still not in the cards — but before they took a step into the future with all the

unknown gravity that that particular constitutional document has, they went out to the people of New Brunswick and said, tell us what you think about Meech Lake. Tell us what you think about a new constitutional arrangement for Canada. Tell us what you think about the items that are listed, and how they impact on you and your family and the daily life of your community.

Mr. Speaker, we know that New Brunswick is different, historically and culturally, from Saskatchewan with a large, large minority francophone population, as well as an anglophone majority. And Meech Lake had a particular importance in that context. But did this government here in Saskatchewan, given the gravity of that constitutional accord, go and seek consensus of the people of Saskatchewan? The answer to that is no.

Were they like the province of Manitoba, in which the Conservative government in Manitoba said, wait a minute, this Meech Lake thing has all kinds of implications for the future; it's got all kinds of implications for the way that people are going to live in the year 2000 and beyond; we're not going to go and jump holus-bolus into this constitutional accord without consulting with the people of the province.

And so they held public hearings. And so they went out and they solicited input from people across Manitoba. And as a result of that input, you find the government of Manitoba taking a position on Meech Lake which doesn't jeopardize the very unity of this country, which doesn't throw into question the very cultural and historical background of this country, but takes a position that says, wait a minute, just wait a minute here. This Meech Lake has so much import for the future of our country that we're not going to jump into Brian Mulroney's back pocket the way that the Premier of this province jumped into Brian Mulroney's back province — the first province in Canada, outside Quebec, to ratify the accord.

Did the Premier of Saskatchewan consult with Saskatchewan people on the question of Meech Lake? The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is no, he did not. That's the record of consultation on this, perhaps the greatest constitutional crisis in the history of our country. The Premier did not even go to the people on that question. That's how much this government really wants to consult. That's how much this government really wants to trust the opinions of the people of Saskatchewan. So much for consensus, Mr. Speaker.

Now on the question of privatization, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the record of this government on the record of privatization. Did this government go out and try to reach consultation, try to build a consensus around the question of economic development and the privatization of our assets, of things which belong to all the people of Saskatchewan? Did they try to develop that kind of consensus, Mr. Speaker? What is the answer to that question? The answer to that is no.

When the government last year attempted to ram through the privatization of SaskPower, did the Premier go out and ask the opinion of people in this province before they introduced into the legislature that Bill which would turn over, turn over SaskPower to the bond dealers and the

stock market speculators, not only of Saskatchewan but across North America? Did he do that? Did he reach that kind of consultation, that kind of consensus? No, he did not.

In fact what he did, Mr. Speaker — and the record is very clear on this subject — not only did he not consult with the people of Saskatchewan on the privatization of SaskPower. He broke his word; he broke his word on the question of privatizing any utilities. Prior to the last election, Conservative cabinet minister after Conservative cabinet minister went around this province saying, no we won't do it; no we're not going to sell off any of those utilities; that's just an NDP scare tactic. That's what they said. That's what they said, including the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, so much for NDP scare tactics. Perhaps the Premier does not understand that the people of Saskatchewan know and trust and respect the New Democratic Party's political judgement when it comes to analysing the character of this Conservative government.

Because what happened, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, that when they tried to force the privatization of SaskPower through this legislature, we went to the people. We went out and consulted. For 17 days we said, hang on here — you don't have the right to do it; you don't have the moral authority to do it or the political mandate to do it; and you don't have the consensus to do it. We went out and we consulted with the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

And what was the consensus which was reached after that consultation? We all know. We all know it was loud and it was clear. The people of Saskatchewan opposed the moves of that Tory government on the question of the privatization of SaskPower.

Let's look at a few more of these issues. Did this government consult with the people of Saskatchewan when they did away with the school-based dental program? Did they go out and ask the dental workers? Did they go out and ask the parents whose children were receiving the best preventative dental care treatment in North America? Did they? No, they didn't. No, they didn't go, Mr. Speaker.

But who did they consult? They consulted with the dentists in a back room in a hotel, and ended up in court, like the Minister of Health has just had to go through, a court experience, conspiring behind the backs of Saskatchewan people as they demolished the school-based dental program.

That's the difference between this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and that side of the House. Whereas they conspire to pull the wool over the eyes of Saskatchewan people, we went and consulted with Saskatchewan people, and the consensus is this: they, the people of Saskatchewan, want the reintroduction of the school-based dental plan. That's the real consensus on dental care.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, there is a long, long list. And I'm not going to take much time on each of the items, but just to remind, just to remind you, sir, of the kind of lack of consensus building around major economic moves that this government didn't do, that this government didn't do — in fact, not only didn't do it, but it attempted to, in the last election, shield their real intentions from the people of Saskatchewan.

They didn't consult over the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — not one bit of consultation — throwing away the assets of the major potash producer on a world scale. Not one mention of consensus, not one mention of consultation — a bare year ago, less than one year ago, Mr. Speaker. No talk of consensus, just privatize off the potash corporation.

Sask Minerals. Did they seek consensus on Sask Minerals when they gave away a company which showed a profit each and every year of its existence — profit which helped to pay for roads and hospitals and schools, for the kind of social programs that we're all proud of here in Saskatchewan? Did they try to reach consensus? Did they consult on selling off Sask Minerals? No, they didn't.

Mr. Speaker, they wouldn't even share the details of that sale here in the legislature. They wouldn't even put the nature of that sale open to public scrutiny. That's how much, less than a year ago, they believed in consensus. That's how much they believed in consultation.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. Despite the stated aims of the government that they weren't going to privatize anything more, after they got their political toes and fingers burnt over the SaskEnergy, SaskPower fiasco, they pulled back. The Premier himself went on television and said whoa, we're ahead of the people on this; we're way ahead of the people; we're not going to do it any more; we're not going to privatize anything more.

But what do we read in the paper barely a month ago? Here's the government out privatizing a Crown corporation called Agdevco, the agricultural development corporation.

And what's interesting about this, Mr. Speaker, is that the agricultural development corporation represents one of the international, publicly owned trading lifelines which can supply outlets for commodities, services, and goods produced here in Saskatchewan by Saskatchewan farmers and by Saskatchewan manufacturers to develop a trading strategy around the world.

This in a time when the Premier talks about the economic trade wars which are breaking out around us, this government goes ahead and turns and throws away one of the mechanisms by which at least we would have a modicum of control in terms of economic development in this province in the agricultural sector. This despite the fact that they're saying, we're not going to privatize any more; we're learned our lesson; we're not privatizing nothing here any more. Right?

No wonder, Mr. Speaker, no wonder this government has got no credibility on the question of

its honesty and on the question of its consensus building or on the question of anything else for that matter.

Did this government seek consensus and consultation when they privatized the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation, Mr. Speaker? No, no, not that one. Now, Mr. Speaker, leaving aside the question of uranium and its development for a moment, the Sask Mining Development Corporation also had control over \$1 billion of gold reserves in this province — \$1 billion of gold here in Saskatchewan; gold which was owned by the people of Saskatchewan; gold reserves that were scattered throughout the mineral belt north of La Ronge; gold which private companies are now in the process of developing; gold — \$1 billion worth of gold, Mr. Speaker — which could have gone a long way to paying the debt down in this province.

(2100)

And what did they do? They turned it over, they turned it over to the private sector, they turned it over to the private sector without asking the permission or the consultation or the consensus of people here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And Weyerhaeuser, we can use the example of Weyerhaeuser. Did the government go to the people in northern Saskatchewan and seek a consensus when they gave to Weyerhaeuser, one of the major and richest American multinational corporations in the pulp and paper industry, access and control over Saskatchewan forests? Did they ask the people in northern Saskatchewan if it was okay if they gave it away? Did they try to get a consensus? Did they try to get some consultation? Not a bit. Once again, Mr. Speaker, behind the backs of the people of Saskatchewan, they gave away our natural resources without any consultation and without any attempt to build a consensus around that issue.

Mr. Speaker, the record of this government on consensus building, on consultation, speaks for itself, and the people of Saskatchewan will not be taken in by any kind of phoney boloney Consensus Saskatchewan, ConSask, as it's come to be known, any kind of those political manoeuvres. The people of this province are cynical enough as it comes to politicians, Mr. Speaker. When you take a government which has no credibility on any issues and you try to build a cynical political manoeuvre on that lack of credibility, I tell you it is a recipe for disaster for the Conservative Party and it won't even buy them the political breathing space that they hope to buy between now and the next election.

Mr. Speaker, there's another issue that requires examining in terms of consultation and consensus, and that's the goods and services tax. I want to again pose the question to you, Mr. Speaker, to your government. Did this government go and try to build consensus around the goods and services tax issue that faces all Saskatchewan consumers and all Saskatchewan farmers and all Saskatchewan small-business people, all Saskatchewan working people? Did they try to build that kind of consensus? No, they didn't.

For 18 months they negotiated behind closed doors to

work the deal out with Michael Wilson. The former minister of Finance was in Ottawa, his officials were in Ottawa, working behind those closed doors with Michael Wilson, in its usual secretive manner, to try to reach a consensus — not with the people of this province, but with their political friends in Ottawa.

No wonder nobody believes their sudden flip-flop on the GST — one day we're for it; whoops, nobody else is; hey, I guess we're agin' it.

An Hon. Member: — Then they're for it again.

Mr. Lyons: — Then they're for it again. And now they may be agin' it, but they don't know for sure, because they want to see all the details.

And that may be somewhat of a sarcastic method of putting what I am sure were long and involved and detailed and complex negotiations, but on the political level I think it reflects fairly accurately what the polls are saying. Because they looked at their pollsters and the pollsters told them, get off this pro-GST thing and you'd better come out with a position against it or you're going to be stuck at 17 or 19 per cent, the same way the federal Conservatives are stuck at 17 and 19 per cent because of their attempt to ram this unfair grab-and-smash tax down the throats of the people of this province.

And you know, right now, Mr. Speaker, they say, you can't say that any more. The NDP can't say we're not against it because we're against it. So I say to the government, if that's true, where are you? Where are you in terms of negotiating with the federal government? Where's the Minister of Finance?

If they were truly opposed to the goods and services tax, Mr. Speaker, this Conservative government would get up on its hind legs and say to Brian Mulroney, we're not going to collect the tax in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is going to be a GST-free zone. We're going to stand up for the people of this province and say, this is an unfair tax; don't you try to impose it on us because we're not going to go along with it.

That's what a government with guts, that's what a government that was concerned about the economic future of this province, that wasn't in the hip pocket of Brian Mulroney would do. They would stand up and declare Saskatchewan a GST-free zone.

Mr. Speaker, that's political leadership, and I tell you something right now. That would have the full support and compliance and consensus of all people in Saskatchewan because that's political leadership and that's what those people were elected for to exercise.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, there's a long list of items that this government has not reached consensus with the people of Saskatchewan on. And that's reflected in the polls that this government takes on an almost weekly basis to try to dig themselves out of the pit that they found themselves in, this morass, this mud hole that keeps climbing higher and higher and higher on their political

figures. They know, this government knows that it's in deep political trouble.

But there's one thing that I want to say that I agree with the Premier of this province on, just as I agree with the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale on, who coined the phrase first in the political lexicon of this province. And that is that Saskatchewan stands at a crossroads. We stand at a historical juncture which will have implications as to the decisions we take far beyond our political futures, far beyond the political futures of the opposition or the government, but will have repercussions on our children and our children's children and their children, far in the future. Because that decision, that decision fundamentally revolves around this question: which road are we going to take into the future?

And I ask the people here in the legislature and out there, who may be watching on television, to visualize it like this. There's a signpost at the crossroads. One road leads off to the right; the other road leads off to the left.

And on that signpost pointing off to the right are written these signs: off to the right, more of the same; off to the right, more patronage; off to the right, more Bob Andrew appointments; off to the right, more Graham Taylor greed, grabbing the unjustified severance package which he put in his pocket as he went off to Hong Kong. Off to the right more repression of democratic rights, like Mr. Valiaho who, involved in the hearing impaired school, was suspended because he opposed the policies of this government, along with many, many other fine civil servants in this province who have suffered at the hands of that kind of politics of fear. That's what you find off to the right. Off to the right, more privatization; off to the right, more poverty.

Off to the right goes that road; off to the right goes that road which leads down to more food banks, and more child hunger, more people on less social service, fewer jobs. Off to the right goes the road to a greater out-migration as our young people leave this province. That's what the road and the future that goes off to the right, because at the end of that road off to the right, even though it may be dark and gloomy, even though it may be filled with the kind of political fog which this throne speech represents, you can hear, you can hear the cynical phrases of the Conservative Party and its cabinet and its back-benchers trying to lure people down that. And they're going to try to lure them with an agricultural strip-tease which I'll talk about in a minute.

But off to the right the fundamental signposts that the people of Saskatchewan will have to decide, off to the right — do you want more of the same? Do you want eight more or four more years like the last eight years? If you do, people of Saskatchewan, you just follow that road with the Premier of this province and the Conservatives of this province and take that road off to the right, because you will have at some point in the future, and whether it's short or whether it's long time in the future, you will get that chance.

Now what's the other signpost say on that crossroads that we all face, Mr. Speaker? Off to the right, more of the same. Off to the left, off to the left down that road where

the birds are singing; off to the left where the new day is coming; off to the left where there's a bright light of social justice; off to the left where there's a new day of economic prosperity; off to the left where the bright torch of Saskatchewan's pioneering spirit puts forward the beacon of economic justice for all North America; off to the left the voters of this province will have a chance to go down to that road. Because down that road, Mr. Speaker, down that road are my colleagues of the New Democratic Party, the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Riversdale, and all those New Democrats who will be occupying the seats on that side of the legislature after the next election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Because, Mr. Speaker, the signposts that point down that road to the left, this is what's on them: there's honesty in government; we won't lie to you. We won't lie to you. We'll tell you the truth about what's going on when you take that road down to the left.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — There's going to be a signpost on that road, a signpost that says prosperity for all, prosperity for all. There's going to be jobs for young people. There's going to be kind of economic development that fits in with the traditions and history of this province. There is going to be the kind of unleashing of creative spirit of all the people of Saskatchewan, of the working people, of the farmers, of the small-business people who will come together in a grand alliance, marching down that road to the left, because the people of this province have a consensus that they want to build a prosperous Saskatchewan, and they know the last eight years have done exactly the opposite.

So off to the left, says the signpost, comes the road to prosperity. No more dishonestly in government. No more STC's (Saskatchewan Transportation Company), no more Joytects, no more Supercarts, Mr. Speaker, going down that road to the left. There's going to be honesty in government. No more GigaText down that road to the left.

And on another signpost pointing out there, there will be, Mr. Speaker, there will be a reflection. There will be the sounds of the winds of change which are sweeping across the world, those winds of change which the people of eastern Europe, which the people of El Salvador, which the people of Chile are expressing with their feet and with their actions, tearing down on the one hands in eastern Europe, the Stalinist bureaucracy which has strangled the ideals of socialism, and in Latin America and other repressive right-wing conservative dictatorships who have strangled the right of freedom and democracy and the right for social justice.

Because that wind that's blowing is going to blow through Saskatchewan. And as my colleague, the member for Saskatoon Eastview, has recently put forward in a paper for democratic reform, that's just the opening, that's just the beginning of the new day. That's just the first guide-post on an open and democratic and popular and participatory government in which the people of Saskatchewan will have their say in how we build a

consensus which brings prosperity, which brings honesty, and which brings that new day to this province.

Because that wind is blowing down the road to the left, Mr. Speaker. And on the signposts it says economic planning — economic planning. Now that is a very strange notion, I know, for members of the government opposite, because the members of the government opposite fundamentally don't believe in economic planning.

(2115)

The core of Conservative economic philosophy is this: let the market rule, *laissez-faire*, let the market rule; we can't do anything anyway because we believe in letting the market rule. And for eight years in this province they've let the market rule. They've let the market rule. We've seen what's happened economically in this province. We've seen what's happened with free trade and with jobs and with prosperity. We're finding out now what's happening with hog plants shut down in Saskatoon.

Yesterday I got a phone call from the Wynyard area, from a worker who works in the Plains Poultry plant up there. And the rumour in that plant is they're going to shut down the Plains Poultry plant because they're going to get inundated with poultry products from the United States and that the 250 workers in the Wynyard Plains Poultry plant are going to be thrown out of their jobs.

But according to the government that sits opposite, Mr. Speaker, that's okay because it's just letting the market rule. That's what's on the signposts leading to the right down that road.

On the other hand, we've got one that says economic planning, because we believe in economic planning. We believe that you can put public capital and private capital together in the appropriate mixes to develop a plan for economic diversification, to develop a plan for economic development, to develop a plan for that kind of dynamic economic progress that we all need so desperately here in Saskatchewan.

But it doesn't come by leaving it to the market-place. It doesn't come by opening up the doors of the province to be raped and pillaged by the transnational corporation. It doesn't come through that kind of economic philosophy. It comes through the same kind of thing which built economic prosperity to Saskatchewan in the past, and that is a simple little sign that says, economic planning.

Because that's what we believe in, and that's what separates us from that side of the House. They believe in letting the market rule; we believe in letting the people rule for the production of goods and services, for the betterment of people, not just to fill the bottom line of the transnational corporations.

So there'll be a new day coming down that road to the left, Mr. Speaker. And there's a new day dawning, and on that signpost it's going to have economic planning, because the people of Saskatchewan expect their governments to show the kind of political leadership which will build that kind of prosperity in this province which requires

economic planning.

And we're going to have an education for the future down that road, down that crossroad that the Premier and the Leader of Opposition have both talked about. There's going to be education for the future that's going to involve teachers, that's going to involve parents, that will involve the students, particularly at the higher levels.

We're going to expand the good programs that we built in the past, and we're going to develop new and innovative programs — new and innovative programs which are going to fit not only the needs for development here in Saskatchewan but for the development of Saskatchewan children as citizens of the global village. Because that's the kind of vision that we have for education, not people to be trained as robots to serve in the assembly lines, whether it's a video screen assembly line, or whether it's just an ordinary old-fashioned assembly line of the transnational corporations. We want to develop citizens of the world so that graduates from Saskatchewan high schools and technical schools and university are respected once again in the global community because they know how to unleash their own human potential, because they'll know how to channel their creativity to solve the problems either here in the province, or wherever they may be in the world, to try to build the kind of better world.

Because that's going to be the goal of education when the people of this province march down that road to the left, that road that leads to the new day coming. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I tell you there's going to be a great day coming for education here in Saskatchewan, here in Saskatchewan, as soon as this government calls the election.

I can say the same thing regarding health care, and the kind of innovations, and the kind of future of health care — the kind of new health care model — outlined in, I must admit, general form, basic form by my colleague, the member from Regina Lakeview, the opposition critic for health.

And as she has begun to develop the outline to the people of Saskatchewan, we find there is an incredible response to the development of the new model of health care in Saskatchewan which involves communities, which involves patients, which involves families in determining the kind of health care needs; not an imposed structure put down through a health care bureaucracy which does not respond to the needs of people in Saskatchewan, but a community-based model of health care in which the patients are important, in which preventive medicine is important, in which the kind of structures that the citizens have control over in terms of determining the direction of their own health care becomes important. And that's another part of our vision. That's another part of the new day that's coming for this province. That's another part. That's another part for the kind of health care which meets the needs of the 21st century and beyond.

And, Mr. Speaker, I could go into all other areas which the provincial government has a responsibility for, and talk about our vision and the new day that's coming.

I could talk about the new day that's coming for the environment. I could talk about the new day that's coming for the protection of the very land, the very soil, the very air that we breathe and the very water that we drink, and having it safe and passed on generation unto generation — passed on safe so that mothers in this province won't worry about the health care of their children, so that consumers won't have to worry every time they open a package and wonder whether what they're eating is poison or is hurting them. Or whether farmers who are out there on the land, forced to put pesticides, forced to put herbicides, insecticides in order to maintain a falling level of productive capabilities, that they won't have to worry every time every spring comes, every seeding time comes, every spraying time comes, whether or not next year they're going to develop a cancer because of the unsafe use of those kind of chemicals. That's the kind of new day we're talking about — a new day for the people of this province and environmental protection.

Like I say, I could go on and on and on in terms of hunger, in terms of racism. One of the major problems that we are going to face as a government, Mr. Speaker, after the next election will be, how do we build tolerance back in this society. How are we going to put together the kind of reconciliation to develop the kind of broad societal consensus that Saskatchewan is a place for all people, regardless of their religion, regardless of their ethnic origin, regardless of their mode of dress, regardless of their sexual orientation, regardless of their differences.

We want to build a society of diversity and tolerance that builds on the strength of the individual person in this province no matter what ethnocultural group, no matter what particular orientation these people have culturally, economically, terms of history. We know that the strength of any culture and any people is the respect, the ultimate respect for the individual for their human rights.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — And, Mr. Speaker, we are going to build that as part of our new day. That's the kind of society that I got into politics to try to work towards.

And we're not going to fool around with that question, because when you're confronted with a cancer in a society — and racism is the kind of cancer which led to the barbarism of 1933 and 1934 and 1935 in Nazi Germany and in Austria and where it grew around the world to make one people a master race and the other less than human — we're not going to allow that kind of cancer to grow.

And we're going to lead a political fight in educating people of the need to respect each other as human beings and to love one another, Mr. Speaker, because that's what it's all about. If we're going to build the kind of society that we want to build, ultimately it comes down to respect and to love each of us as we love ourselves.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's political leadership, and that hasn't been shown and that hasn't been the way and that hasn't been the guiding light provided by the government opposite. In fact, Mr. Speaker, just the opposite. But I'm

not going to speak about that. I don't want to speak about their divide and rule tactics — not on that issue.

But I want to speak about their divide and rule tactics when it comes to agriculture. I want to speak about the agricultural strip-tease act that the Premier of the province is presently engaging in. What I mean by that, Mr. Speaker, is: there's 500 million out there and now you see it and now you don't. And maybe Mr. Mazankowski's going to give it if I'm real tough about him, and maybe Mr. Mazankowski won't. Oh my, I'd better go to Ottawa, or I'd better go and make another 4 o'clock in the morning phone call, or I'd better get a couple of guys from Manitoba and Alberta in here and we're going to act tough and try to wrest that \$500 million out.

That's cynical manipulation of the political process. You know, Mr. Speaker, there's not a farm family in Saskatchewan that believes that kind of rough-tough, big Mr. Premier guy act. Because they know the money's there; they know there's \$500 million there for farm families. They're worried about saving their farms. They're worried about getting the seeding in this year. They're not worried about Grant Devine's political, — excuse me, Mr. Speaker, — the Premier's, the Premier's political manipulation and political game playing with the future of farm families in this province, they don't want their futures tampered with in this cynical way, Mr. Speaker. They don't want it.

So why doesn't the Premier and the government come clean and put forward their program for agriculture, hopefully in the budget, but hopefully they can trigger the payment because we know Mr. Mazankowski in Ottawa has given the Premier the timing to trigger the payments. That's common knowledge around Saskatchewan. We know that Mr. Mazankowski, in order to try and buy the next election for this floundering government has said, okay, Mr. Premier, whenever you're set to trigger those payments, and whatever little scenario you want to work out before you trigger those payments, that's okay with me. You just go ahead because you got the 500 million here. Right? We know you got the 500 million. He said it; he's talked about it being in reserve. So why doesn't he come clean and stop playing politics. If they were interested in not playing politics as they claim to be in the throne speech, they'd make the announcement tomorrow that yes, there's \$500 million there from the federal government and that's great.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, that's great. We say that's great. We know farm families need that cash injection from the federal government. But I can tell you what the farm people around Swift Current were telling me the other day when I was down there, Mr. Speaker. The farm people around the Swift Current area were saying to me, the cash is fine, but let's get rid of Mr. Premier. Right, Mr. Premier. You can imagine, Mr. Speaker, what word rhymes with fine and how the last name of the Premier fits into that. Okay. That's what those farm people were saying. They know the cash is coming. They want the cash. The cash is fine. Let's get rid of the PC government so we get an honest government back in Regina that won't play political games with our future. That's what the farm people across this province are saying, Mr.

Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, another aspect of the political manipulation that the government is involved in. They talk about, well we're going to go out with Consensus Saskatchewan and develop an economic strategy for this province. Well how many members of the back bench of the Tories know, Mr. Speaker, that two months ago the cabinet commissioned Peat Marwick and company, commissioned Peat Marwick and company to go out and devise an economic development strategy for Saskatchewan? How many members of the back bench happen to know that little piece?

Now does that sound like building consensus? Does that sound like building consensus? No — another little bit of political manipulation. Here they already have hired, at no doubt great expense to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, Peat Marwick to develop an economic development strategy on the one hand, yet they send up this thing called Consensus Saskatchewan to do exactly the same thing. Because the government knows perfectly well that Consensus Saskatchewan is nothing more than a con game, but they're so bereft of ideas, and their own Tory philosophy of let the market rule has gone so badly down the tubes that now they hire a firm of chartered accountants to try to figure out they are going to get out of the mess in terms of economic development. Nothing more, Mr. Speaker, nothing more than political manipulation and cynicism.

(2130)

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe it will work. I don't believe it will work because I think that there has been an event that comes with every government during whatever political reign, and that event is the breaking of trust, and that took place last year around the question of SaskEnergy. And it's like this, Mr. Speaker, it's like this. You know you can suffer a sprain in your back and you'll recover. And you can suffer pulled ligaments in your back and you'll recover. And you may even suffer a herniated disc or a squished lumbar section and you'll recover. But when you break your back, when you break the spinal cord, when you sever that relationship, when you sever that relationship you're not going to recover. And that's what's happened with this Government of Saskatchewan. They've severed the relationship of trust that all governments need in order to survive politically in order to maintain their own political credibility and their own trust with the people that they are elected to govern. They've severed that relationship, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan don't believe them any more. They don't believe them any more, and why should they? I've just outlined the reasons I think why they shouldn't trust this government and why they should take the Speech from the Throne for exactly what it is — a political document meant to buy time.

But I say this, Mr. Speaker, the day of reckoning is coming, and whether it's short or whether it's long, it's coming. And the people of Saskatchewan know it's coming. So to the people of Saskatchewan I say, hold on. Hold on to the faith. Don't let despair, don't let cynicism, don't let a total lack of hope overcome you and your family; don't worry. Not a question of don't worry, be

happy, because we know these aren't happy times. But don't worry, because you know there's going to be a new day coming.

There's going to be a new day coming for Saskatchewan. There's going to be a new government in this province. There's going to be a new vision; there's going to be a new plan. There's going to be a whole new century opening up and it's going to be led by the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, and my colleagues from New Democratic Party caucus.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, I'm voting against the throne speech. I'm voting for the future. And I want an election, and my constituents want an election, and we on this side of the House say to you, build that consensus. Call the election, and let's get on with building the new Saskatchewan.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to rise this evening and speak in this legislature on Her Honour's throne speech. I believe that we forget many times the freedom we have in this province and in this country — in the great country we have and the great province that we have. Many times we just take for granted many of these freedoms that people in eastern Europe are now trying to achieve. To these countries and to those who try to make their area, themselves, a very select majority in free elections, in free governments, it's a very giant step forward. And it shows all of us that in the 1990s, changes can and will happen.

I was listening a moment ago to the member from Rosemont who I believe made a real honest statement. He said, when you look into the future, Mr. Speaker, which road will you take? Will you take the left road or will you take the right road? And he went on to say some of the things that he believed to the right and some of the things he believed to the left. Well in many countries in Europe, particularly in Europe, they're taking the right road now because the left road has not been successful.

And when he says, the right road, and he says, more of the same, and that's true. When you stay with any political party, you usually have more of the same. You have development, you have industry, you have diversification, you have building our communities, you have value adding to our products, and on those kind of strengths such as the Cargill fertilizer plant, where you take a raw product as natural gas, turn into a fertilizer that our farmers can use.

Mr. Speaker, the upgrader — we take our heavy oils and build on that, building value added, building jobs, building opportunities. We take the Weyerhaeusers where they put a pulp and paper mill in, extended the line — many, many jobs; value adding jobs to our area. The upgrader that's coming, Husky at Lloydminster, the same thing. And the Millar Western mill at Meadow Lake — jobs, opportunity, environmentally safe. That's building;

that's to the right, Mr. Speaker.

And you can go to the left, and we had the left. And there's lots of good things about the left, I'm sure. But it does give you more government; it does give you more Crown corporations. They don't believe in trade with United States, and certainly 85 per cent of our trade goes to there. In fact, they believe, Mr. Speaker, in everything that eastern Europeans are now trying to rid themselves of. And, Mr. Speaker, that is to the left. And that's why I am to the right, because I believe in opportunities for people in this province and for building.

I want to talk on a few things, but I want to mention a few things about agriculture and this province's commitment over the last — since 1985 to 1990, or 1989 inclusive — the money that has been spent by this province behind our farmers to help them get through some very, very difficult times.

And I'm just going to list a few of them off: the Canadian crop drought assistance program, Saskatchewan share \$115 million; Saskatchewan Water Corporation supply program, \$34 million; the farm purchase program, the rebates, \$95 million; the counselling assistance for farmers, \$30 million; the farmers' oil royalty rebate, \$80 million; Livestock Investment Tax Credit, \$36 million; the ACS capital loans interest subsidy, Mr. Speaker, \$16 million; the production loan intra-subsidy, \$73 million; the Livestock Cash Advance intra-subsidy, \$74 million; the irrigation assistance, \$22 million; the provincial stabilization, \$122 million; the livestock facility tax credit, \$11 million. There's others, there are many things like the well drilling assistance, total up to \$86 million; the green feed program under the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance, \$10 million, and the Livestock Drought Program which was cost-shared by the federal government of \$18 million.

As well, Mr. Speaker, through Canada-Saskatchewan Crop Insurance since 1985 to 1989 inclusive, one billion two hundred and forty-four million dollars has been paid out to Saskatchewan producers, Mr. Speaker, that is putting a lot of money to help our farmers in very difficult times.

I want to speak a little bit about two or three other things I believe are very, very important. And I want to talk first about the changes that are happening, and I want to talk about the environment, and I want to talk about Saskatchewan crop insurance and rural development, and a little bit about Kelsey-Tisdale constituency which I've had the pleasure to represent for over nine years now.

Changes, Mr. Speaker, come in many ways. Changes are going to come in the way we farm, in the way we grow our farm products, and the way we market them. Changes to our community structures . . . and we've all seen that out there where rebuilding of our communities, the structure there that's going to be needed to do that. Changes in how our communities, both rural and urban, and how they must work together because today I believe, Mr. Speaker, that there's no longer a rural community or an urban community out there in Saskatchewan, other than the major cities. They're all just rural communities because everybody in every town that

I lived, the farmers . . . everybody goes to the same . . . in many cases the same church, the same curling rink, same skating rink. They take part in the same type of activities because they are a community. And that's been growing more and more. I'll speak as I go through about some of the things that I see happening there.

Changes in how we address the environment, and I think that's been mentioned certainly before, and I heard the member from Rosemont talk about the environment. Changes to what the government role will be as we see the world as it is. The government, not owners, but they've got to be facilitators bringing industry and jobs to their part of the world.

I want to just talk a moment or two about the environment and some of the things that I . . . certainly as I'm concerned as a conservationist I make . . . In my area I'm very much involved with the wildlife federation. This winter we were feeding deer all winter. I give much towards that because I believe in those things that are natural out there and you should build on them.

But I want to talk a little bit about our water system, particularly about the Millar Western pulp mill that's going at Meadow Lake and the value that will do to our province.

About 20 years ago — you can go back as many as you want — and I can remember not that many years ago when they allowed sewage lagoons to be just dumped into our river systems. Pulp mills were built and the effluent was just dumped into the nearest waterways they had. Today I believe, Mr. Speaker, that has changed. That's not acceptable any more.

When we look at the Millar Western pulp mill at Meadow Lake creating hundreds of jobs during construction and after many hundreds of jobs, and here in Saskatchewan I believe that we have become a first in protecting our environment, a first in Canada, in fact a first in all the world when you look at the pulp mill industry. This new pulp mill will have no discharge. Just think of that, Mr. Speaker, the first pulp mill in the world that will not discharge into our water systems. And I believe we all know why, because we do not want to see our water systems polluted. The Saskatchewan River certainly has had a lot of problems in it over the years, and if we'd have dumped into that it would have created some more. We cannot add to this now or in the future.

This new technology is the way of the future and again Saskatchewan is first. And to my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, who must approve all of these types of industries, I believe a job very well done. Mr. Speaker, we've had two large new industries approved in this province in the last three months, both discharge free. I believe that is protecting our environment and creating jobs for Saskatchewan people. And that, Mr. Speaker, is building for our future.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to spend a few minutes on three other areas that I mentioned just a moment ago. One of them is Saskatchewan crop insurance, one is rural development, and the other is Kelsey, my constituency of Kelsey-Tisdale. First I wanted to spend a few moments on

Saskatchewan crop insurance, the largest crop insurance in Canada and probably one of the largest ones in the world. Mr. Speaker, it serves the needs of some 60,000-odd farmers; 50,000 farmers used it last year. Fifty thousand farmers last year along with the federal government paid about \$260 million in premiums and collected back, because of some droughts, over 400 millions of dollars. But it is there as a protection against loss and not as a guarantee of income.

Saskatchewan grain producers face significant production losses in 1989 in many regions. Large areas in the south-east, central and west-central areas had yields significantly below average. In addition, 1989 represented the second and third or more years of drought for those same farmers.

On average, Saskatchewan produced a near normal crop of 18.7 million tonnes in 1989 in terms of total production. However, this production was achieved by near record seeded areas. All of these major grains, oil seeds and special crop yielded below average, while provincially canola and sunflower yielded below 1988's average. The only areas which yielded near above average in 1989 were in the north-west, north-east and south-east. Crops yielded less than half of average in the south . . . I'm sorry — south-west before, and south-east.

In areas of central Saskatchewan and along the Alberta border in the west-central Saskatchewan, two-thirds of the 299 municipalities had two consecutive years below average yields, and 15 per cent had three consecutive years below average yield. Many producers are being provided with only reduced crop insurance coverage due to continued drought. Although changes were made to crop insurance to limit downward adjustments coverage due to claims, many producers are still facing reduced coverage.

Over 80 per cent of Saskatchewan producers had crop insurance coverage totalling \$1.9 billion in 1989. Indemnities, including multi-year disaster benefits, are estimated to total almost \$450 million for 1989 crop loss. The multi-year disaster benefits expected to make payments to 30 per cent of the municipalities. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, I think that in itself says the size and the structure of the Saskatchewan crop insurance.

(2145)

Last fall, about a year ago almost, we went out and covered . . . went around the province and had 13 meetings with producer groups and producers around the province at open forum meetings where we asked them what they felt needed . . . changes needed to be made to crop insurance. Some of the areas they addressed was the livestock feed insurance plan. They wanted to be able to have farm gate service, and they wanted some other changes made to crop insurance.

I'm just going to mention some of the ones that we have done so far for 1990, with the rest coming in 1991.

Under the livestock feed insurance program, last year we just had an area base. In other words, you were in four municipalities and if you qualified you got the same all

the way across. Fair to some, too good to others, and not right to some. This year we've changed it. They're using the area base for calculation and individual claims. So if you have a claim, you'll file for it individually, so you'll have individual coverage under forage insurance livestock feed.

We used the agrologist under rural development and the records of the producers this year to set a better level for crop insurance coverage for livestock feed programs. We are working towards individual coverages for all our all-risk crop and all our grain crops. Eighty per cent of the farmers to date that have taken out their grain or livestock feed have went under individual coverage, so more than 80 per cent will be under individual coverage this year.

We brought in an agent system, Mr. Speaker — called it farm gate service. We have many, many changes to crop insurance. There's many things the farmers didn't know, like how much it was going to cost them, what was available to me, how would it work in my overall system, and that's what the agent is there to do, to work with that farmer to see if he or she . . . what they need and how much they need and how it would protect them and how it would best serve their interests.

We also wanted to make sure that we had an estimate of what the crops would be. In other words, we called a field estimate. That gives us better management control of what's out there. We'll know what to expect; we'll know when to expect if there is a problem coming; the farmer will know if he's in a crop loss position; we'll know if he's in it. It can be adjusted. Many things can be done either to salvage his feed or to work it down or to leave it, which will be the decision of the farmer. So it gives the farmer better — certainly gives us, as crop insurance — better management position.

He'll do a report on production, which means they will go out and talk to the farmer, how much yield there was. That'll all go on computer. It'll be available to the farmer, a good sales item if some day down the road he or she wants to sell their farm. Certainly for us it gives us a total record of production, and it will be advantageous for us if they have a claim the following year, and for them. We will have the claims this year.

Last year we started paying the claims for hail loss, 75 per cent less your premiums, directly with the claims office, 32 of them around the province. This year you'll be able to get your entire claim paid, less your premiums, directly at the claims centre. They no longer have to come out of Melville. So that will be a new service. We kept in place the three price options for all grains, which allows the farmer to select whatever is best for their needs.

We allowed this year for the first time, and I believe that it's been recognized, to allow organic crop production to be insured. I believe it has some opportunities for the future. Many people are concerned about the food they eat, and there are some farmers now who are looking seriously at organic farming. In fact we had a seminar held in Hudson Bay about two weeks ago, and I was surprised. About 40 farmers came out to look at organic farming to see how it would fit into their farming practices and what would be the value to them. And it was of

interest to note that the organic foods brought about one and a half times what the natural farmer . . . way we've normally farmed in the past. In fact canola last year, if it's organic canola, sold for about \$11 a bushel.

We also will allow new crops in very quickly. Before, it took three or four years to get a new crop registered, and now if it's registered it can be accepted under crop insurance. We estimate this year that there will be about 50,000 producers who will take crop insurance and that will exceed almost \$2.5 billion in coverage. Mr. Speaker, that is coverage and insurance for our farmers, protection for our farmers when they're certainly going to need it.

Second, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about rural development. We spent a great deal of time certainly on many areas of rural development since 1985. Rural development, I believe, has a role to play in working with Saskatchewan rural people — that means towns, villages, hamlets, and RMs — to diversify and restructure their communities, at the same maintaining the roads and services that we as rural folks have always known and needed. Working with these people has always been a pleasure for me. As a former reeve, I've always enjoyed to be able to work with people in rural Saskatchewan. Even in tough times, rural people are builders. The pioneer spirit that brought their forefathers to this province and this country remains, and a challenge to them is nothing new.

And I am just going to speak a little about what we've done in rural development, in structuring the opportunity to build out there in rural Saskatchewan. We've been at it for about four years now, setting a structure in place that can do a lot to build and restructure rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there's about 10 steps that I am just going to go through.

In 1985, we commissioned, or the government commissioned, the gentleman from the university of Saskatoon, called Mr. Jake Brown. He did a report on rural strategy, and certainly if anybody has attended any strat meetings, you've seen Mr. Brown at many of them, very, very much concerned about rural Saskatchewan, what was happening out there, and identified for everybody what needs to be done as he saw it. So we had a rural strategy that he brought and initiated for us to take a look at.

We started about four years ago working with the RMs, saying, to have a rural strategy, you have to redo your road systems. How do you redo your road systems to fit into the needs of what's going to be there in the future?

So we met with the wheat pools and the UGGs (United Grain Growers) and the co-ops, and any of the major service sector people who may use and would be servicing rural Saskatchewan. And we said to them, what's your future plans? What kind of roads are you going to need? Then we worked with both SARM and then with each individual rural municipality and with municipalities joining each other to say, how shall we restructure the road system to meet the needs of the future? What was done in the past was good, but we had to rebuild for the future.

That was done. Its been all put into place, and certainly changes will be made as we go along, but the basic structure is there now. The heavy-haul roads, the primary grids, the primary, all-surface, resorts service roads, the grid roads, the main farm access.

About the same time we started looking at saying, how can we get municipalities working together, urban and rural? We had what we call the economic development committees working in urban centres but mostly on retail, bringing retail business to their communities. So we decided at that time that maybe that we could put together what we called the rural development corporation concept. That's four municipalities, four or more working together to create and implement, develop and diversification for their particular area, one of which must be, at least one must be a rural municipality, but it could be all rural municipalities or all but one in the urban.

Then a little later we decided that we should have something for those boards to work with, so we put together, through the Saskatchewan Research Council, had put together over the last two years, we called CORA. It's a catalogue of opportunities for rural areas. It's 1,400 opportunities in manufacturing and processing, job related, value added, giving an individual idea of what sort of a market, expenses, feasibility, and what particular business, how they might go about it.

It takes it all the way down. It's a basic outline of 1,400 different opportunities as Saskatchewan Research Council saw might fit out there some place in rural Saskatchewan. And we put them together. They're on our computer service in all our rural service centres now. And you can get them there and you can take a look at them. There's many things that might fit out there into rural Saskatchewan. If they don't, something close to it may well do that.

Then we decided, Mr. Speaker, that we should have a network to deliver all this system and the people who are out there. We had four branches of government all over, four or five sometimes in one town or one small city, but none of them really working together. So we brought them all under what we call the rural service network, some four branches of government coming together with extension services, lands branch, rural development, and Saskatchewan Crop Insurance, all serving the same farmer, all serving the same communities, all serving the same needs, working together under one branch or one building, really working well, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I have a lot of requests from many, many communities for a rural service centre.

Then at the same time we decided, there used to be the ag boards out there and we decided we should have . . . if they're going to be boards, they should look at development diversification. So they were changed to what they call the ADD (agricultural development and diversification) boards — same district, but different kind of profile on them. We asked them to put on people who would look at development and diversification. We looked at people who would look at the farming industry, so a combination of them. That's been put into place.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, some other things were going on in other departments. The individual line service — the only province, and only state, I believe, in the North American continent, that will have individual line service to every farmer and every resident in this province by the end of 1991. That, Mr. Speaker, is very, very important if we're looking at the computer network that's needed to deliver the programs out there and to make it available, the information that's needed.

The rural natural gas network that we've been putting into our farms and into our small towns and villages. You cannot have, Mr. Speaker, in a country like ours, in a province like ours where it's very, very cool, and sort of cold, I guess you could always say, we need heat, we need cheap fuel for heat. And you certainly need cheap fuel for energy to bring manufacturing and processing there. So our rural natural gas distribution systems, our individual line service — two major components of what's needed to bring industry and development to rural Saskatchewan.

Along with that, Mr. Speaker, we have now the SCAN (Saskatchewan Communications Advanced Network) network. It's televised university education right into your community. In other words, you'll be able to get university, and can get now university classes right in your own town. Important, Mr. Speaker. A lot of students would like to take their first year at home and to see where they'd like to go, whether it's Arts and Science. And it gives them those opportunities that never was available to many, many of us here, in fact never was available to any of us here except in the major centres.

Mr. Speaker, we have . . . also put in place was many ways to finance this development diversification. Under SEDCO they had the small business loans association for small business, up to \$5,000 administered by a rural development corporation or a local committee of a town, or like an EDC (Export Development Corporation), but mainly under the rural development corporation where most of them were being administered. They can give up to \$5,000 at whatever interest rate they wish because they get it interest-free from SEDCO. And it's to build their community, to get the small industry in their community, build their town, maintain the viability of their community.

SEDCO also have what they call a participating loan, up to \$300,000 available to those for industries, interest-free for the first five years, into your community. Put an industry in your community.

The Western Diversification Fund, available to every community out there now, and certainly we're getting good co-operation from the federal government in getting funding to help bring industry and development to the areas.

Through the rural capital grant program under the Department of Rural Development, I announced three industries that were going into the province, the first three, because it just come in place at the first of the year, at the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention. Since then there's seven

more have been approved and we have about 60 applications submitted for industries into small town rural Saskatchewan driven and decided by the local people. Mr. Speaker, that is building rural Saskatchewan.

In fact just yesterday, a couple of days ago we approved a grant to the rural development corporation to a plant that's going into Kelvington — you've heard a lot of talk about it — a pea chip plant. They're building the first pilot project there and they're starting on it right now, using the rural development grant money as initial start-up money to get it going.

When it is going it takes peas from the local area, canola from the local area and if anybody's tasted them — many of you have — it just makes a very, very fine chip, a real opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to build on what we have out there that's naturally ours and to diversify, creating jobs to keep our young people at home.

I want to just mention a few other areas that we're looking at in diversification under the Department of Rural Development. We're looking at Crown land diversification. There's land out there that's owned by the provincial government that isn't really farm land, it isn't really protected under the wildlife habitat, but it can have some opportunities for tourism, for development that would lead to jobs related to the area.

And we're looking at that — working with the RMs (rural municipalities), working with the towns, working with the wildlife federation. We're doing it very carefully, very slowly so it fits all those needs, at the same time protecting our environment.

We're looking at further decentralization of rural development. As you know, we have 52 offices we'll have around the province when we're done with rural service network. And certainly some more can be through different ways created out there where they're needed. And there's been about eight communities come to me who feel that they're left out because they're too far to drive, and those certainly we'll be looking at.

We're identifying industries that could fit into a community, and we're doing that, Mr. Speaker, with many communities out there. Another area we're looking at, expanded tourism, I mentioned a minute ago. And one other area I think is really interesting, we're looking at the shelter belt expansion. There's many, many opportunities to look under save our soils program. And we've lost a lot of soils to wind erosions, and we're looking at the shelter-belt program, how we can fit that into protecting our environment, creating opportunities — and certainly shelter-belts are very, very important there.

The Speaker: — Order. It being 10 o'clock the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 10 p.m.