

## EVENING SITTING

## SPECIAL ORDER

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE  
(BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hepworth that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was saying, before we adjourned for the supper break, that this government appears . . . and has dealt with people in a very harsh manner. I talked about how the Premier seemed to be acquiring land while many other farmers are losing their land.

I want to just touch on a few more points, Mr. Speaker, on the GRIP (gross revenue insurance plan) program. There are some very serious flaws in this program as we all know.

First of all there is no cost-to-production formula. The government will argue that there is a cost-of-production formula because they say they have an indexing formula, and we think the formula should be straight cost-of-production formula and not an indexed formula. And I use the example . . . I have a list in front of me. The items used in the indexing formula are machinery fuel, machinery maintenance, seed grain, fertilizer, pesticides, small tools, electricity, telephone, custom work, labour, property tax, and operating interest.

Mr. Speaker, let's take fuel as an example. Fuel consists of 18 per cent of the total index. And if the price of fuel were to go up by 10 per cent, Mr. Speaker, the index would go up 1.8 per cent. I just don't see how that's going to reflect my cash costs as a farmer or any other farmer's cash costs when in a true cost-to-production formula we know that that would be covered off.

There are many other components of this index that are missing. And unless all the inputs are taken into account, Mr. Speaker, then of course the indexing formula will not reflect cost of production. So that's just one small . . . one item that . . . where we disagree with this government when they say there's a cost-of-production formula, we disagree. There's no cap on the program. We believe that the program should be capped at a reasonable level, the average size farm varying . . . using the variance of soil classifications to incorporate a lighter or heavier soils, but in order that the dollars that are available go right across the board to keep as many farmers in this province farming, as possible.

The confusion that's been created by this government — and as I was saying earlier, they have meeting after meeting around the province where farmers came out of those GRIP and NISA (net income stabilization account) meetings totally confused, asking the ministers questions and not knowing what the program was. And that continues, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll just give you one example. Example, in a situation where the farmers of this province are being forced by the government to go into a program — a program where they don't know the details, they haven't been given all the details because the government keeps changing the program. But now it's coming down to the crunch time. In a couple of weeks the farmers will have to have signed up for the program if they want in.

And I have before me, Mr. Speaker, the application form for the GRIP program. On the first page it goes through the crops and the different yields, and on the back of the form, I want to just read what it says. It says:

Important notice, (this is on the back of all the forms) the following is only a summary of items and conditions contained in the revenue insurance contract. (And this is the quote, Mr. Speaker.) It is the insured's responsibility to be familiar with all terms and conditions of the revenue insurance contract.

So it's up to the farmer to be familiar with the terms and conditions. They list eight terms and conditions which are . . . is only a summary of the terms and conditions. And the agents have a policy manual which is being updated all the time and it's simply a verbal explanation of the program. But no where, no where, Mr. Speaker, is there a document that the farmers can get a hold of to know exactly what the program is.

I mean how can they ask farmers to go into the program when they haven't got it finalized yet. And this is why we on this side of the House are saying, why not make the first year an open year? Why not have the first year a one-year contract? Because we know there's going to be many changes as the changes are continuing. But the government hasn't got its act together to ensure that the farmers knew the program well in advance; haven't got their act together because they don't know themselves what the program is. All they're concerned about is a short-term program to try to get them re-elected.

But you have to sign up saying that you're familiar with the terms and conditions when they don't have a document telling you what the terms and conditions are. Now I think that's totally unfair and I think the Associate Minister of Agriculture knows that's unfair as does the Minister of Agriculture. And that is why this program is falling short in rural Saskatchewan.

And yes, there will be some dollars this fall, assuming the price of grain continues to drop as it's projected to be. But that's not the point. The point is in two, or three, or four, or five, or ten years time what kind of program will this be? If it stays the way it is now we know there won't be a pay-out after three or four years, or very little if any. Maybe not even enough to get your premium back.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I just point out this government could make the first year a one-year contract. And in fact speaking of contracts, in my consultations with many of the crop insurance agents they don't even know if the contract exists. This is simply a renewal form. When you

ask them where the contract is, one agent will say, well I think there's a contract; the other one will say, well I'm not sure there's a contract. I mean they're not even telling the agents all the information. They're putting these people in a position where they have to go sell this program to the farmers and they're not giving them all the information.

So this is the type of mismanagement that we have constantly seen in this government — whether it be in agriculture, or health care, or education, or the social services, or jobs for people — the type of mismanagement, not to mention the waste, not to mention to pay-offs and the give-aways to their Tory friends.

So, Mr. Speaker, this program needs tremendous adjustment. And I just ask the minister, the Premier of this province who claims to be the Minister of Agriculture: give the farmers that one years grace. Make the necessary changes at the end of the crop year and then ask the farmers, once all the details are in, to sign a three-year contract. I mean that's just logical, it's common sense. But no, common sense certainly doesn't prevail with this outfit.

Mr. Speaker, the whole GRIP and NISA program; I just want to give you one more example. The green paper — the **Growing Together** paper — set out four principles and the direction of agriculture that this government was going. One was that agriculture should be market responsive; one that farmers should be more self-reliant — or two; three, it should recognize regional diversity; and four, it should be environmentally sound.

This program violates every one of their principles — violates them. Again, no management, no co-ordination because being market responsive . . . No, the actual price of production, supplies of the product has nothing to do with what's going to be planted. And self-reliant? Absolutely not. Farmers have to farm the program. I mean, this is another position they're putting the farmers in; I'll just describe that to you.

Mr. Speaker, a farmer knows that the only way to get — especially if you're financially strapped — to get money out of the program is to cut back on your inputs. So they're forcing people to change their method of farming in order to capitalize on a program — forcing them to farm the program. And these are the people who are saying self-reliance and market responsive. These are the people who are saying, you know, the farmers . . . it's incumbent upon the farmer to have good management practices. And what do they do? They bring out a program that forces farmers — and that's a tremendous decision for a farmer to make — forces farmers almost into abusing his land in order to reap the program.

And they say, well the 19 farm groups have designed this program. Give me a break, Mr. Speaker. These farm groups know exactly what the program should have been, told the government, and these guys didn't implement it.

Recognizing regional diversity — western Canada, Saskatchewan in particular, paying \$168 per capita for

the program; Ontario paying 30 and on to Quebec paying 22. That's recognizing regional diversity all right, except this is off-loading the federal responsibility on the backs of Saskatchewan taxpayers. Grant Devine, in an election year, signs a blank cheque that says anything goes.

**The Speaker:** — Sometimes the hon. members just use another name, member's name unintentionally. I think you have, but I must draw it to your attention.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to use the Premier's name. But the Minister of Agriculture put farmers in this situation, put taxpayers in this situation. Again, is that good management on behalf of the Saskatchewan taxpayers? Is that being responsible to farmers of this province? Absolutely not. It's signing a blank cheque for Brian Mulroney, saying I'll do whatever you say, Brian, just get me elected again.

Well it's not going to work, Mr. Speaker. It's not going to work because people have simply had enough of mismanagement, of devious plots to try to buy elections. I'll tell you, it just won't work.

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

**Mr. Upshall:** — And, Mr. Speaker, I was going to wind up by talking about the third line of defence. Again, the third line of defence, I say, is not there. This government promised cash; it didn't deliver. This government promised a long-term safety net program; we have a short-term safety net program. We have seen the beginnings of a cynical political plot which possibly could bring more money out at election time. Well I'll tell you, farmers will take it, and they'll be glad of it. But they'll see right through the deviousness.

Mr. Speaker, there is a line in a poem, and I don't even know who wrote it, but I remember. And the line goes like this. It says: this is a land a passionate man must walk.

I guess in today's term it would be a passion a person must walk. But, Mr. Speaker, that tells you a lot about what Saskatchewan is all about, what Canada is all about, but Saskatchewan in particular. A government in power has to have passion and be compassionate to the people. You have to understand that what happens when a community is thriving and when a community is dying. When a community is thriving you have the economic activity around, whether it be in southern Saskatchewan or northern Saskatchewan, whether it be in the towns, in the farms, or in the cities.

You have economic activity. You have people working hard, making a living, bringing up their children in an environment of happiness and healthiness, and that's what compassion does.

We've had just about nine years of this Tory government. And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion there is not one ounce of compassion in this government — not one ounce of compassion. Because if there were, would they be laying off people left and right, at the same time paying Chuck Childers \$700,000 a year? Would they be pumping money into the Cargills of the world, the same time seeing the services to people crumble? Would they

be making deals with Weyerhaeuser where they don't get a nickel over the last few years or since they made the deal on the principal as return, the same time seeing children in schools, in some occasions, sharing books? Is there any compassion there at all, I ask, Mr. Speaker? And I think . . . and I know the answer is no.

If they could just see, if they for one minute would open their eyes to the hurt that's going on in Saskatchewan — in rural Saskatchewan and in the cities — they would change their policies because there are choices to change their policies. And the Minister of Justice talked about those choices. But the choices that he talks about hurt people. The choices that we talk about provide taxpayers' dollars to provide services and jobs for people in order that they can live a normal and happy and healthy life-style. That simply is not the situation right now.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, while these people are sleep-walking around this province, they're creating a tremendous nightmare for every man, woman, and child that they affect in this province. It is a living nightmare for many people in rural Saskatchewan who have to leave their farms, or business people in rural Saskatchewan who have to shut down their businesses — or in the city — because of the economic slow-down, businesses closing, more people on social services — it's a nightmare out there. And the Premier just stands in his place and just says, well everything's fine; look what all we've done.

Mr. Speaker, if he would open his eyes and see what they've done, they would simply change the policies. Not one of these people over here have talked about the policies or this budget. They talk about opposition. They talk about the Leader of the Opposition in a personal slander. They talk about Ontario and Manitoba. But do they describe to the people what they're going to do? Did the Minister of Agriculture, who hasn't spoken and I doubt will speak, stand in his place and tell us why he didn't have a debt restructuring program?

(1915)

Will he tell us why there are so many people forced onto social services? Why there are no jobs? Why there are lay-offs in rural Saskatchewan? At the same time saying he's going to have a Fair Share Saskatchewan and put city people out in the rurals? Will he stand in this place and explain those policies? They don't speak for one minute about those policies.

They're acting like an opposition, Mr. Speaker, and I will end by saying I will not support this notion. And I guarantee they will be opposition, if there's any of them left in this province.

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

**Mr. Britton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate you on being elected Speaker. Before I get into a few remarks on the budget, I would like to say to you, sir, that it was a pleasure for me to support you in being elected Speaker for two very good reasons.

One is, Mr. Speaker, never again in Saskatchewan as we

know it will there be the first Speaker elected. And you, sir, are going down in history. And while you were being recognized, Mr. Speaker, I think that I feel that I was part of an historic event myself, as well of all the members here who unanimously voted for you — I assume that because there was no dissenting votes. And I want to say to you that it was a pleasure for me to support you in this very historic part of Saskatchewan's history.

It's always an honour to stand in my place in support of the budget, and also to represent the people of Wilkie, who I think it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, is one of the finest areas in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Britton:** — Mr. Speaker, I was listening quite closely to the member and he made a couple of remarks that I think I would like to respond to before I get into the body of my . . . He talked about mismanagement, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to draw to his attention, some of the mismanagement that we find when we go back through the years of the NDP (New Democratic Party) government.

Mr. Speaker, we find if we look, we find that they over-paid when they bought PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company), \$20 million. That industry was losing \$91,000 a day when we took it over and sold it.

Mr. Speaker, there is another industry called Agra Industries. The NDP purchased shares in that industry for \$5.945 million. By 1983, those shares were worth only \$4,686,360 — a loss to Saskatchewan taxpayers over \$1.6 million, Mr. Speaker. Now, if you're talking about waste and mismanagement, I think probably the members on the other side should look to their own back yard.

Cameco Corporation (Canadian Mining & Energy Corporation), from 1979 to 1982 the NDP government invested \$530,000 in this company. The investment is now worthless — totally worthless. The losses, the losses was \$2.9 million to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. Now these are documented facts.

Intercontinental Packers; the NDP government bought shares in this company in 1973 for \$10,237,500. The loss to the taxpayers in that transaction, Mr. Speaker, was 7.2 million. Now I'm not totalling this up because I just got into it after listening to the member. But if you mentally figure it up, you'll find that when they talk about the \$5 million GigaText that they like to wail away on, it's peanuts compared to their losses.

Changing, changing a name, just changing a name, SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) . . . Mr. Speaker, the NDP spent \$100 million a year on the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. When we came into power, Mr. Speaker, I happened to have the pleasure of sitting on the Northern Resource Committee and if there was ever a mess in Saskatchewan it was in northern Saskatchewan. And I lived there, and they destroyed that area. And it cost \$100 million a year to do it.

And, Mr. Speaker, they spent \$14.2 million a year in 1991

to advertise their family of Crown corporations — 14 million over.

Well they spent hundreds of million dollars to buy 1.2 million acres of farm land. That's \$54.4 million in 1991 dollars, Mr. Speaker. Waste and mismanagement on our side of the House, hey?

And I could go on and on but as I wanted to . . . I have Shane Industries, total losses \$245,000; Mossbank food and noodle plant, the NDP lost \$1.3 million, Mr. Speaker. That's a lot of noodles. Pro-Star Mills, NDP lost \$5.6 million in this failed company, Mr. Speaker. Prairie Malt — they talk about loan guarantees. They talk about Saferco, which I'll also get into. Here is a loan guarantee of \$5 million. They say you shouldn't have loan guarantees. That's \$39 million in 1991 dollars, Mr. Speaker.

Golden Acres Motel. Did you know we owned a motel at one time, Mr. Speaker? Oh yes — \$610,000. And when we sold it, we lost half of it — half of that amount, Mr. Speaker. And I could go on and on with waste and mismanagement, Mr. Speaker.

We'll pick up on the Saferco remark that the member made. Let me just run past you, Mr. Speaker, what happens with our \$64 million investment in Saferco, which is a new company. We joined with Cargill to form a new company. We put \$64 million into that company. And incidentally, Mr. Speaker, it's for sale. Our share is for sale at any time.

What it creates, Mr. Speaker, is 2 million man-hours of employment during the construction period. And during the construction phase it will pay directly to the province a total of 12 to \$16 million in E&H (education and health) tax, Mr. Speaker, just in E&H tax. And over the two-year construction, 3.7 million in corporate capital tax, Mr. Speaker, and 3.5 million in loan guarantee fees. We get them bellyaching over there, Mr. Speaker, about the loan guarantee. We make \$1.5 million in loan guarantees. We not only don't put any money; we get paid a guarantee from that company. The estimated impact on the provincial economy is \$600 million during construction, Mr. Speaker. Not a bad return for \$64 million.

Mr. Speaker, throughout the first 20 years of the project, an average of some \$100 million a year is estimated to be spent by the fertilizer plant in Saskatchewan on goods and services — a hundred million a year.

And that is broke down in this manner, Mr. Speaker: 3.9 million a year on natural gas, our own natural gas — we don't buy it from Alberta any more, we have it, we sell it; 1.5 million on water . . . we sell 1 point million dollars in water, Mr. Speaker — water — 1.5 million; 6.2 million on electrical power, our electrical power; 4.2 million on chemicals; 20 million in payrolls — 20 million in payrolls; 7.9 million on maintenance and materials; 21.6 million on freight and logistics.

Now in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the fertilizer plant is estimated to pay 24.8 million a year, or 497 million over 20 years, directly to the province in the form of . . . and I'll . . . 11.5 million in corporate income tax; 1.6 million in

loan guarantee fees; 2.1 million in capital taxes; 7.6 billion in natural gas royalties; and \$2 million in personal income tax.

Now tell me, where is the bad deal? Where's the bad deal? Mr. Speaker, if you figured out \$21 million in construction plus 25 million a year . . . times 25 million a year is \$71 million in the first two years of operation. What other business do you know where you get your money back three and four times in two years? Tell me about that. I'd like somebody to tell me about that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to address those two points because it upset me a little bit. Now I will make a few comments on the budget.

Mr. Speaker, the budget that we are debating here today is one more important step that must be taken. It must be taken, Mr. Speaker, to secure the future of Saskatchewan. We are all, Mr. Speaker, aware of the many challenges, many challenges that we have, and the province . . . we continue to have to face in this province. The greatest of these, Mr. Speaker, of course is the crisis in agriculture. And it was brought about by international grain prices and drought and things like that. We all know about that. We have to address it.

But in addition to the difficulties in agriculture, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has also been battered by low prices in potash, uranium, and oil, and by high interest rates, and declining transfer payments from Ottawa.

All of these factors have together put a great strain on our resources. In response to the past five years, government has continued to implement cost-saving measures, and the strongest of these are contained in the current budget, Mr. Speaker. They were not easy. They were not easy choices to make but they had to be made to safeguard the future of Saskatchewan. They had to be made so we could continue to provide quality health care and education and at the same time protect, protect rural Saskatchewan and promote growth and diversification of our economy.

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

**Mr. Britton:** — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is still very much a rural province and nowhere more so than in my constituency of Wilkie. And we understand the pain and suffering that happens in a rural community under these conditions.

Mr. Speaker, in order to provide an opportunity throughout the entire economy, we must protect and stabilize rural Saskatchewan. Without viable farms, villages, and towns there cannot be any future for cities like Regina and Saskatoon, and indeed Moose Jaw. Recognizing this, Mr. Speaker, the government has introduced a number of programs aimed at protecting agriculture and stabilizing rural Saskatchewan.

First of all, of course, the government has provided billions of dollars to protect Saskatchewan from low grain prices, high interest rates, and drought. In addition to this money we have now the first long-term safety net, and this net will help farmers fight the international grain subsidy war carried out by Europe and the United States.

Those safety nets had to be put in place, Mr. Speaker, for long-term stability in the farm economy.

Agriculture is Saskatchewan's life-blood, and the government has put the treasury on the line for the province of Saskatchewan. It protects this sector which is the very foundation of our way of life and our hope for the future, Mr. Speaker. But we've not stopped there. To further stabilize rural Saskatchewan we have begun to decentralize government. We're taking government offices, Mr. Speaker, and to move them out of Regina into the rural communities across the province. The moves already made, such as the Crop Insurance Corporation, Sask Water, and others, have been a great success and, Mr. Speaker, the proof is in the pudding.

(1930)

We have here, Mr. Speaker . . . We have a page I will get into a little later to show you the genuine benefits of decentralization. Fair Share Saskatchewan makes good sense, Mr. Speaker, and all the people, all the people of Saskatchewan, pay taxes. Those taxes fund the government offices and salaries. Is there any . . . It's only fair, it's only fair that as many Saskatchewan people as possible benefit directly from the services of their tax dollars.

In the past we simply did not have the technology to make decentralization work. But times have changed. The sophisticated communications technology present throughout Saskatchewan now makes Fair Share Saskatchewan not only workable but in many cases more efficient.

In addition to protecting agriculture and in introducing Fair Share Saskatchewan the government has already created numbers of programs that promote diversification and economic growth throughout the province. Community bonds, Mr. Speaker, participating loans and small business loans through SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation), Buy Saskatchewan, another innovation, and many other programs have all combined to generate what is likely the greatest increase in our manufacturing and service sectors that we've ever seen.

Mr. Speaker, in just nine years manufacturing and investment has increased in Saskatchewan by 700 per cent — 700 per cent under this government, Mr. Speaker — and the results of that can be seen everywhere. It certainly makes me feel good to get all the encouragement from those on the other side. I'm glad that they're here to cheer me on, Mr. Speaker. I know they agree with everything I'm saying and it's nice to have some unanimity in the House tonight.

Now that we are producing, Mr. Speaker, our own paper, recreation vehicles, cable, gasoline, bacon, and many other products never before manufactured in Saskatchewan — never — Saskatchewan people are getting out there using many resources that the province has. And they have building many new and exciting industries. High technology service industries are being developed. People are turning cottage industries into full-time businesses.

People are finding profitable ways to process food we grow here, and we could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. By working with business instead of against them, and by helping Saskatchewan people get their operations going we are building Saskatchewan's industries at a pace never seen before, never before in this province, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to protecting and stabilizing rural Saskatchewan so that the entire economy is protected, and promoting diversification and growth of our industries, the government has also introduced a number of reforms that I believe will bring government closer to the Saskatchewan people — reforms like allowing referendums and plebiscites, introducing a freedom of information Act, giving increased powers to the Provincial Auditor, and indeed, electing a Speaker, Mr. Speaker.

People of this province have called for all of these reforms and this government has responded. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that is as it should be. In our democratic rules and structures we should, of course, be protected, but we should also be open to the demands by the people. Only by keeping the process of change alive can we keep a democratic system that truly serves the needs and wants of the voters.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on about the government's plan for Saskatchewan and about how the budget we are debating makes this plan possible. We are protecting agriculture and the Saskatchewan way of life. We are stabilizing our rural communities and so, by doing, all of Saskatchewan. We are promoting diversification and economic growth in every area. And we are building a strong, competitive industrial base that will secure our future, Mr. Speaker.

That is something the NDP never could achieve, is to spread the base. There was two reasons for that, Mr. Speaker. One, of course, was that somebody might make a profit, a word they choke on. And the other was, Mr. Speaker, they were afraid to fail. They want to crawl back into a hole in the ground and stay there; don't take any chances. Well, Mr. Speaker, we are introducing democratic reforms which will bring our system of government in line with the way Saskatchewan people expect that system to operate.

As I said, I could spend a lot more time on this, but I will instead leave that to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker. And I want to turn to something else that I think is very important. And I'm going to talk about the lack of a plan, the lack of the NDP's plan, their lack of any alternatives, and about the cruel myths that they continue to spread throughout Saskatchewan in attempt to hide the fact that they have no ideas, no workable alternatives, no idea of how to deal with the challenge of Saskatchewan people — no ideas at all, Mr. Speaker. You may recall, Mr. Speaker, that about a year ago during the budget debate I presented my estimate of the NDP budget. Well I based that estimate on a few of the many expensive promises the members opposite have and continue to make in an effort to buy their way into government.

You may also recall, Mr. Speaker, that after adding all the numbers up, I concluded that just to keep a few of their promises the NDP would have to more than double all provincial taxes — more than double all the taxes in order to cover a yearly deficit of \$2 billion, Mr. Speaker.

Now obviously, Mr. Speaker, this is not possible. The members opposite cannot deliver on the promises they made to Saskatchewan people — impossible to deliver — which means that in reality the NDP are offering the people of the province absolutely nothing. No plan, just empty, meaningless promises used to buy votes.

And as my hon. colleague, the member from Rosthern, so clearly explained here on Wednesday, this is cruel and it's unfair. It's unfair to the people who have taken the members opposite at their word. With this in mind, Mr. Speaker, I decided to do a bit of an update on the NDP budget that I presented last year.

And while I was to think about this, Mr. Speaker, I wondered how it should be done; I remembered the reaction. I remembered the reaction last year when I presented this budget.

The response to that speech, Mr. Speaker . . . the members did not address it. They did not address the issues. All they did was attack me, Mr. Speaker. Not one of them addressed the issues that I presented to them. They did not explain to the people how they would fund these promises; instead they just restricted themselves to attacking me and my estimates.

The member for Saskatoon South got up in the House shortly after my speech and he did not address what I said. Do you know what he did? He talked about who said it. And the member for Saskatoon Riversdale did the same thing in Yorkton just a few weeks later. They offered no explanations, no plan, and to show . . . no plan to show how they meant to keep their promises, Mr. Speaker. And they did not withdraw any of their promises that are obviously impossible to keep.

To this day, Mr. Speaker, the NDP continue to call for more funding in almost every area of government. So because of this, Mr. Speaker, I decided I'd have to include all of their promises from last year's budget in my new estimates. I have of course updated these promises and some have turned out to be even more expensive, Mr. Speaker. And I have also added several more of their new promises to the new NDP budget — cruel, empty promises that increase their deficit, Mr. Speaker, from \$2 billion to over \$3 billion.

Throughout this exercise, Mr. Speaker, I used the same 1990 budget forecast figures wherever possible, and I did this for the sake of accuracy, Mr. Speaker, and also because it is in reference to the 1991 budget that the members opposite have directed most of their criticisms. They of course could not attack the 1992 budget until last Monday, but I've noticed they have wasted no time getting into it.

So, Mr. Speaker, to start my update, I kept last year's figures of almost \$1.2 billion a year needed to eliminate the deficit in 15 years as promised by the member from

Riversdale. Now of course, I was a little confused about this, Mr. Speaker, because the member for Saskatoon Riversdale has changed this promise almost as often as he has changed his position on harmonizing. He's just . . . little hard to get a handle on this guy.

But I finally decided to stick with his original promise — the first promise he made — and that was to eliminate the debt in 15 years that he said was \$12 billion. The next promise I came to was the one made by both the member for Saskatoon Riversdale and the member from Saskatoon University to eliminate poverty. I went to a lot of work to cost this out, this same promise, last year. I used StatsCanada figures to determine how much would be needed to bring everyone in Saskatchewan up to the poverty line. And I come up with a figure of over four point . . . \$481 million, \$481 million. I would happy be to show my calculations to anyone who is interested.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I turn to health-care promises made by the NDP. In this area there is no shortage of promises, complaints, or commitments. First of course, they are still harping on bringing back the school-based dental plan. I think that they believe this will make it rain maybe in Saskatchewan, they think so much of this plan. Bringing back that one plan, Mr. Speaker, will cost \$16.4 million, first year.

The members opposite also want to bring back the old prescription drug plan, Mr. Speaker. In fact the member from Regina Centre was calling for that last Friday, right here in the House. That's another \$70.6 million a year, 70.6 a year. Also the member from Saskatoon Riversdale continually talks about operating with a wellness model for health care, stressing prevention. Well, isn't that something. The government of course already does this with a preventative health program like Everyone Wins, community health prevention services, and breast cancer research program. They're doing it, but apparently the hon. member feels we're not spending enough. So I had to decide how much to add to these prevention measures. I had to read some minds a little bit, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure the member from Saskatoon Riversdale will correct me if he feels I'm wrong. We'll accept that.

**An Hon. Member:** — It's all fairly scientific there . . .

**Mr. Britton:** — It sounds scientific to most people, but if . . . for anyone with a reasonable handle on figures would have no trouble with it, Mr. Speaker. We already spent over \$18 million on these programs, so I increased it by only 5 per cent — 5 per cent. I think 5 per cent's reasonable. That adds \$900,000 to the NDP budget.

I also find comments by the member from Regina Lakeview calling on the government to make Saskatchewan's ratio of residents to physiotherapists equal to Alberta's. To do this we would require 150 more physiotherapists, which would cost another \$4.5 million, Mr. Speaker. And please note, Mr. Speaker, that I'm again being very fair, very fair with these estimates, just as I was last year. The figure of 4.5 million only accounts for the extra salaries involved. No money has been included for the extra equipment, facilities, training, and whatever else would be needed to add 150 physiotherapists.

And finally with the health care, the members opposite are continually calling for more department funding in general, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite say health care is in a crisis. They continually promise to remedy what they call health-care spending cuts. Where they see cuts, Mr. Speaker, is beyond me.

Once again this year, we have raised the health care funding. It is now almost \$1.6 billion. Now through some very tough years this government has made sure that Saskatchewan has the best health-care system in Canada, but the members opposite continuously insist there have been cuts and promise to increase funding.

(1945)

Now again I'm not so sure how much they would increase funding and I have to guess a little bit here. In the last budget I added 12 per cent, based on the fact that the members opposite felt 11 per cent was not enough. Now since they continue to call for more funding, I will simply assume that 12 per cent is a close guess and that that maybe would do. So adding 12 per cent to the 1990-91 Health budget would cost another \$183.9 million.

And moving to education, Mr. Speaker, I found that the NDP's promise to reduce student/teachers ratios in the province . . . Oh well, they groan over there. Well just a few days ago, just a few days ago the member from Saskatoon South was calling on the government to fire legislative secretaries and hire more teachers. Now I assume that that commitment still stands. The student/teacher ratio in Saskatchewan now stands at 16.5. Now so I predicted the NDP would reduce that to, say 16, which would cost \$14 million, Mr. Speaker, 14 million.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, it's important to recognize that I'm trying to be fair. I just moved it up point five, and I have not predicted that the NDP would reduce the ratio to 10; we took it at 16. I simply moved, Mr. Speaker, from 16.5 to 16, and I think that's very fair.

And then I moved on to the university operating grants. Last year I increased these grants by 5.3 per cent in response to promises to do just that by the member from Saskatoon South and the member from Saskatoon Nutana. But this year I have no specific number and only repeated calls to increase from the members opposite. So to be fair, I simply added \$5.38 million which is the same increase allocated in the government's budget, same thing. Mr. Speaker, after hearing them call over and over again for more university funding, I'm sure that they would at least do that much.

And while we're on the subject of university funding, I once again included in the NDP's promise to pay university and technical school tuition fees. This commitment, Mr. Speaker, can be found in the NDP's 1989 *Policy Commission Reports*. There they state that, and I quote: "The people of Saskatchewan support the full, public funded . . . education system . . ." The only things not funded now are private vocational schools and post-secondary tuition. That's all that's left out there.

So we will assume then that the members opposite realize

we cannot afford to take over all of the private schools in the province, so I'll stick to the funding to pay just SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) and university tuition fees which adds another \$35.3 million to their budget. And I don't take it all in. And that's 35.3 more million.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we move along and find a commitment made by the members opposite to increase the provincial share of school operating grants to 60 per cent — 60 per cent. Well that just cost another \$110 million — another 110. So finally, Mr. Speaker, I had to settle on an amount to raise the education budget as a whole. So in the last budget we raised education spending over \$50 million. And the NDP are not satisfied; they're not happy with that, Mr. Speaker.

So from the remarks made by the member from Saskatoon South and others here during the last few days, I know they're not satisfied with this year's increase. So to be fair, I kept their education budget increase to only \$50 million. The NDP have complained that we need more than that. So I feel confident that they would at least add 50 million to their budget.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite do not agree with that, if they think it's not enough, then I would happily change it. I'll raise it for you. In last year's speech I included money needed to create universal school breakfast and lunch program. This has been promised by the member from Saskatoon several times — Saskatoon University. That adds another \$67.6 million to their budget.

So we move on to highways. And I found that the member from Saskatoon Westmount has called for an additional \$60 million for highways. So I add this to the total, Mr. Speaker.

And of course we had to allow the members opposite some money for agriculture. They don't understand it but we do put some money in for them. They opposed GRIP and NISA. And although the way they flip-flop on issues, it's hard to say just what they're doing there. But the government is investing \$125 million and in return we're getting back 1.3 billion for the farmers through GRIP and NISA. This don't make them rich but it'll only help them survive, Mr. Speaker. But since the NDP oppose GRIP and NISA, I wondered what they would do to protect farmers. They would have to do something. Put on a short moratorium — it don't work, but we'll do it anyway. Anyway, after all, by opting out of GRIP and NISA the NDP would lose a billion dollars. They'd lose that. So I finally settled on a figure of \$500 million, which is less than half of what the government will be getting for farmers by joining the farm safety net program. Cut it in half. They would have to come up with at least that much, Mr. Speaker.

So once again I concluded that the NDP's call for . . . and I quote: "the creation of an environmental industry by establishing an Institute of the Environment . . ." That was called for in the NDP *Policy Commission Reports*. Cost estimates for this range from 20 million to 100 million, Mr. Speaker. Last year I split the difference and used 60 million. But this year I thought I would be even more fair

and use 40 million instead.

And also because the members opposite continue to condemn the Rafferty-Alameda dam project, I had to include the member from Regina Rosemont's promise to de-commission that project. So last year I estimated that would cost only \$20 million to take that out of production.

But now, Mr. Speaker, Rafferty is almost finished. The Alameda dam is under construction. This figure will have to go up substantially, tearing down both sites during their landscaping, handling, and taking on law suits that could easily cost well over \$100 million. But again, as fair as I could be, I set the figure at only \$50 million, Mr. Speaker. Now to all these promises I still have to add the huge list given by the Minister of Social Services. Most of these empty, cynical promises were made by the member from Saskatoon University.

I did not include all of these promises, Mr. Speaker, only the ones that I have not covered through other commitments I have listed. But the promises I have included come to a total, a huge total, of \$438.7 million — \$438.7 million. The Minister of Social Services has already described these promises in detail on Wednesday. So I'll just list the ones that I used. I won't take his in.

Counselling and support service for Indian and Metis foster children; new programs to provide local authority over Indian and Metis children and family services; funding to allow Indian and Metis groups to establish their own child-care agencies; funding to provide equality, affordable housing; funding to improve family counselling and therapy services; assistance for underprivileged youth; increased domestic violence funding; improvement of child care; increased funding for physical and sexual child abuse; funding to provide child counsellors at all shelters; creation of children's guardian in the province; funding to subsidize day care for middle income earners; funding to reinstitute the northern food transportation subsidy; funding to increase the disabled monthly allowance by \$150 a month; stop deducting Canada Pension Plan's benefits from social assistance cheques; an addition of \$5 million to social assistance payments for the disabled; stop deducting disability benefits under the Canada Pension Plan from Social Services cheques; reinstate the transportation allowance; lift the cap on utility rates for social assistance recipients; stop deducting family allowance from social assistance payments; and finally, funding to provide in-care givers for the disabled.

Well I have a total, Mr. Speaker. As I said, I have only some of the many . . .

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

**The Speaker:** — Order, Order. The hon. member has a point of order he wishes to raise.

**Mr. Solomon:** — I'm not sure if it's a point of order, Mr. Speaker, or not, but I was just wondering if the member opposite, who's commenting on the budget, could share with this House some comments on the budget. He hasn't

made any reference that I've heard in the last little while and I was wondering if that's in order or not.

**The Speaker:** — Well the hon. member . . . It is a point of order in the sense that you're complaining that he's not addressing the budget but I believe that he is addressing the budget and he's trying to cover all bases. And in the budget debate there's a quite wide range and I believe he's on the topic.

**Mr. Britton:** — Well I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I agree with your ruling. Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said I have only used some of the many promises made by the member from Saskatoon University, and they total \$438.7 million.

**An Hon. Member:** — Extra, eh?

**Mr. Britton:** — Extra, yes. In total, Mr. Speaker, if you total all these promises forecast for 1991, Mr. Speaker, the NDP budget comes to a ridiculous figure of over \$8.3 billion. How ridiculous can they get? \$8.3 billion.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the province could never afford . . . and obviously the members opposite have been playing a very cruel game with the people of Saskatchewan. They can never hope to honour those promises. Never. They know that. And they're playing a cruel and inhuman myth on the people of Saskatchewan. It's terrible.

The people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, demand sensible solutions to the problems, Mr. Speaker, and the members opposite give them nothing but worthless promises. Last year, in order to be fair, I allowed the members opposite \$334 million in spending cuts. I allowed them to take that.

This included items like cancelling advertising, cancelling the \$64 million investment in Saferco fertilizer plant, even though I showed you where it was a good business deal; sound. And eliminating salaries for ministers and legislative secretaries; took that all out.

And although the government has already saved millions through cost-saving measures of our own, I am still allowing the NDP over \$334 million in cuts. And I have supplied suggestions, Mr. Speaker, to show how they would try to do this, based on their own comments — their own comments.

But no matter how it is achieved, I'm allowing 334 million, cuts, which is about 200 million more that they themselves have said they could cut — that's more than they say they can cut. We're giving them 200 million more. And so that should make up for any promises that I've listed here, Mr. Speaker, that they don't agree with.

(2000)

And of course, Mr. Speaker, once again I'm going to allow the members an additional 250 million a year in oil royalties, just as I did last year. This should silence any talk of solving their problems by chasing the oil patch jobs out of the province, okay. After that is all done, Mr. Speaker, after the NDP have allowed 334 million in spending cuts and an extra 250 million in oil royalties,



their deficit still stands at over \$3 billion, over 3 billion, over \$3 billion to be paid by the Saskatchewan taxpayers, Mr. Speaker.

Now, instead of doubling taxes, the members opposite will now have to triple taxes. All the taxes will have to be tripled just in order to pay for their ridiculous promises. Now of course the members, they don't agree with these. Well that's very fine. I'll give them the figures that they need. I think I've been fair. I think I've been fair.

So, let's do another little thing. Let's let them subtract a full billion, a full billion from the promises that I have listed that they have made. The NDP would still have a \$2 billion deficit, 2 billion, and they would still have to double the provincial tax rate, Mr. Speaker.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is that no matter how lenient you are with the numbers, the NDP's promises are impossible to honour. They do not offer any solutions. They just offer fairy-tales, Mr. Speaker. They have no plan for Saskatchewan, no sensible policies to face the challenges that we're faced with. All they can do is offer cruel and empty promises and hopes of buying their way into government. And I say that's not fair.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are seeing through this smoke and mirrors game, and they realize that the NDP offer them nothing — absolutely nothing. And they realize that the NDP have no understanding of Saskatchewan. This lack of understanding was brought home to me by remarks made by the member from Regina North just last week in the House, just last week in the House. The member was scorning the fact that the government has increased oil activity in Saskatchewan by an oil royalty structure that stimulates exploration. He asked, what good does that do the province? He seemed to feel that increased activity in the oil patch has done no good for all of Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Speaker, the member should know better. He should have a better understanding of the province.

Think of the thousands of people employed on the rigs, in the supply stores, oil field construction and many of the other companies directly related to the industry. I invite the member out to Unity, west of Unity, 140 oil wells being built there. Now the impact on those little communities is tremendous and it's cash, money. And I think of all the indirect benefits — salesmen who sell trucks, restaurants that feed the crews, dry cleaners, laundromats, all of those things, Mr. Speaker, are spin-offs from that activity, money brought into the community.

Mr. Speaker, when the members opposite threaten to chase the oil companies out of Saskatchewan, they are not threatening Esso or Shell. They are threatening the thousands of Saskatchewan people that depend on the oil field for their livelihood. That's who they're threatening, Mr. Speaker. The oil companies proved that a few years ago when they chased them out. They said, we don't have to stay here, we'll go where we're welcome. And they did and they'll do it again under an NDP government.

This is the failure to understand the basic facts of life in Saskatchewan and that has left the NDP without a plan for

the province's future. They do not understand that by protecting farmers we protect the whole, entire economy. The member from Regina Centre calls that protection criminal, criminal. Well, Mr. Speaker, he's wrong. It is the only choice that can be made to protect our future.

Neither do the members opposite understand that we must stabilize rural Saskatchewan through programs like Fair Share Saskatchewan and that we must promote economic diversification in villages and towns throughout the province with programs like community bonds, SEDCO and Buy Saskatchewan. All the members opposite can offer Saskatchewan are irresponsible promises that simply cannot be kept. No way can they keep these promises, promises that would triple our taxes, Mr. Speaker, and, I submit to you, would ruin the province — promises that really offer nothing at all, no solutions for the challenges facing us. And not surprisingly, Mr. Speaker, we find that members opposite have trouble taking a stand on any issue. They have a problem with that.

In a news release in October 1990, the member for Saskatoon Riversdale came out in support of harmonizing provincial tax with the GST (goods and services tax). Now of course he says he opposes it. He says they're going to defeat the Bill. But will he take it away? I don't know. At the same time the member from Riversdale, same member, he will not promise to repeal that legislation if he was to become Premier of this province. I would tell you, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't take a chance on it. If I was a voter and I didn't like that piece of legislation, I wouldn't take a chance on the member from Riversdale of repealing that.

When I talk . . . I'm talking about his plans for the deficit. This is the same member from Saskatoon Riversdale. He says he will eliminate it in 15 years. Then he changes it to 20 years, and then he says he would only reduce it, and then he denies he ever said it at all. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, he is the first person that I have ever heard suggest that he could save from 60 million to a 100 million by eliminating legislative secretaries' salaries. That would take 7,500 years to do that, Mr. Speaker, 7,500 years. And he's attacked me; he attacked my credibility. Whose credibility are we talking about here? That gentleman will not be around here 7,500 years from now.

Mr. Speaker, this is no surprise because he ran up a \$3 billion deficit trying to buy votes, Mr. Speaker. On every issue important to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale and his party are incapable of supporting a position of their own. They're incapable of standing up and taking a stand. They just say what sounds good at the place and the time that they're in. They stall. They invade, and they flip-flop, and they attempt to hide, and they won't face the truth, Mr. Speaker. The truth of course — they have no policy, they have no position, and they have no plan. That could be because those three words start with the letter "p". They choke on those words — prosperity, progress, profit, position, policy, plan. They can't say those words, Mr. Speaker.

All that matters to the opposite is to be elected. For the

NDP, the whole purpose of being elected to office is power.

Power. That's what they want — power. Not building Saskatchewan and helping secure the future but power for its own sake — power for its own sake, Mr. Speaker. And because that is their only goal, they have nothing to offer, they have nothing to offer Saskatchewan. They tailor their remarks and promises to fit the situation and for standing for nothing.

So of course when you look at the whole picture, it becomes clear the NDP have nothing but empty promises, carefully staged performances, Mr. Speaker, to offer Saskatchewan. No plan to deal with the present or the future, only a desire to gain power.

Mr. Speaker, the budget we are debating here today prepares the province for the future. We have a six-point plan. We will put our plan out. Good or bad, it's out there. We will take a stand. We'll put our money where our mouth is, Mr. Speaker. And it continues to protect health care, education, and agriculture. We continue to do that.

The difficult choices contained in the budget make it possible for us to continue to stabilize our rural communities. And, Mr. Speaker, this must be done if we are to protect Saskatchewan's entire economy. Saskatchewan without the rural economy would just not exist. That's reality.

In addition to this, we have introduced programs and policies that are helping Saskatchewan people use their resources to diversify, to build, and to grow. In the past nine years, our industrial sector has grown faster than at any period in our history. We now have strong manufacturing and processing industries that are able to compete with anyone world-wide, anywhere. Mr. Speaker, we have an industrial sector that is lean, efficient, and ready to take full advantage of any opportunity that becomes available. And we are implementing the democratic reforms that the Saskatchewan people ask for, reforms that will bring government closer to the people and keep our form of democracy in step with the wishes and expectations of the people.

These are the four parts of our plan, Mr. Speaker: protecting rural economy; stabilizing our communities; promoting diversification and growth; and reforming the democratic process.

The members opposite are very good at criticizing but they are incapable of offering alternatives. They have failed, Mr. Speaker, to present Saskatchewan with a single workable solution on any issue — any issue. They say they'll have a short-term moratorium on debt and they admit in the next breath that it don't work.

Mr. Speaker, how ridiculous can they get? The government on this side of the House, through their programs, have put road-blocks in front of the foreclosures for at least three years. Now what . . . a short-term moratorium. What more do you want? Three years?

Well they have failed to present any solution. Instead they just continue, Mr. Speaker, to duck the issues. They duck the issues and promises they can't keep. They cannot keep their promises.

Mr. Speaker, the budget the Hon. Minister of Finance has tabled is a good budget, and it sure is a bright future for Saskatchewan. The job of building Saskatchewan and protecting our way of life — this budget makes it possible.

Mr. Speaker, just before I close my remarks, I would like to just . . . for the members over there . . . I have a long list of expenditures that they have promised. I won't go through that list with respect to you, sir, and the time, but I will give you a short summary just to show you what happened.

Now if we go through all their promises like stop deducting family allowances from social services, that brings us up to \$9,200,000. Total expenditures, Mr. Speaker, in that one area alone — that's with care givers, independent living, the whole thing — \$8,317,470,000. Now we give them the cuts of \$334.079 million. Okay? Now, we also allowed them the revenues. I mentioned the revenues. I allowed them a revenue forecast of \$6.6743 billion, and then we gave them the 250 million oil revenue. We threw that in. That gives them total revenue \$4.9243 billion. Okay. Actual spending, Mr. Speaker, \$7.98339 billion. And their total revenues, Mr. Speaker, \$4.9243 billion. Total deficit, total deficit, all their promises, \$3.05909 billion. And I will make these available, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am therefore, Mr. Speaker, proud to stand in my place in full support of the budget, and thank you very much for your time.

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

(2015)

**Ms. Smart:** — Mr. Speaker, I've said this in the House before and I'll say it again now, that there are times when I'm listening to the government members opposite when I feel that I've gone through the looking glass with Alice in Wonderland, and I'm in some bizarre environment that makes no sense whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the budget speech the other night, and I was interested in the fact that the Minister of Finance, when he talked about what was going to be happening in Saskatchewan and to people in Saskatchewan with his budget, did not mention . . . there was very little mention of older people, of seniors.

They weren't included anywhere in this budget except to reflect the fact that because Saskatchewan has an ageing population our health-care costs are going up. And actually the research shows that that's not true, that the costs of health care are going up for other reasons, and that seniors are by and large healthy people, but they have particular concerns that need to be addressed.

This budget did not address the concerns of older people. In fact, older people are very concerned about the fact that they often remain invisible. This is considered by

seniors to becoming victims of what's called ageism, Mr. Speaker. And certainly the Minister of Finance is guilty of that in this budget. Even when he's talking about protecting agriculture and rural Saskatchewan, he doesn't mention the seniors. And we know from the statistics that out in the cities, towns, and villages of Saskatchewan we have an increase in the population that are ageing, and we have many older people. They are not mentioned in this budget.

Today we received the annual report from the Seniors' Secretariat for '89-90, and in there they list the Saskatchewan seniors population statistics. In 1989, the covered population report published by Saskatchewan Health shows that there were 136,335 persons aged 65 and older resident in the province in June of 1989. They represent 13.2 per cent of the total population in the province. Among the provinces, Saskatchewan has one of the highest percentages of seniors in Canada and the seniors population continues to increase each year. The number of seniors has increased 37 per cent from 1964 to 1989, representing an average increase of 2,000 seniors per year over the period. The number of seniors increased from 9.3 per cent of the total population in 1964 to 13.2 per cent in '89.

So it's very important, with that ageing population growing, that the budget address the concerns of seniors, but it does not. They use seniors, the government does, when they want to project an image of caring. They make token gestures every once in a while. But seniors are victimized by this budget and by this PC (Progressive Conservative) government along with the other groups whose concerns are not addressed.

There is no mention in the budget about the food banks, and there are now eight in Saskatchewan. And I know that the fact that there are food banks in Saskatchewan concerns older people very much. I'm talking about the people that can remember the Dirty Thirties, and they remember what it was to be very hungry and poor in this province. And they are heart-broken that we have food banks again in Saskatchewan. In the bread-basket of the world, we have people who are hungry — and those are children. We have hungry children and family poverty. Not mentioned in the budget.

Family violence. Violence against women and children. Elder abuse. And the resources that are needed to assist people are not mentioned in the budget.

Job creation for young people. A very great concern for the older people of Saskatchewan is to see jobs created. Not mentioned in the budget.

Concern for students in schools and all through the province, from kindergarten through the university and SIAST. No mention of the concerns about education.

Spring seeding assistance for farmers, not mentioned. And the issue of free trade was not mentioned. And I want to say some more about that. Many New Democrats on this side of the House have addressed the concerns, and I share all the points that my colleagues have raised on this side of the House.

But as the critic for seniors' issues, I want to state that New Democrats value seniors. We respect the work that they've done building up the province over years and years. We appreciate the programs that they put in place. We appreciate the progress that they made in the past. We are very concerned about this government which has destroyed so much that the people have built up in the province, and we know that the seniors are hurting desperately as they see what has been destroyed in such a short time that took so long to build up in this province.

Mr. Speaker, it was because the opposition created a critic for seniors' issues that the government opposite was forced to create a minister responsible for seniors. The minister responsible for seniors — and look what he's done.

Mr. Speaker, the government didn't mention seniors in the budget because they didn't want to draw attention to what is actually in the budget, or what is not in the budget regarding seniors. In his budget speech, the Minister of Finance said:

... this budget does not single out any particular group, organization or sector to bear an unfair share of the burden of expenditure reduction.

Mr. Speaker, that is not true. I want to look at what has happened in programs for seniors. Just look at the cuts to the programs that benefit seniors: a 25 per cent cut in the Saskatchewan Income Plan, the program to help the neediest seniors in the province; a one and a half million dollar cut in the heritage grant program, another program to support seniors with lower incomes; another cut in the grants to the senior citizen's services, services to help seniors from non-governmental organizations. That program is gradually being eroded.

This budget reflects a decrease in the amount for the hearing-aid plan, plus the introduction of charges for hearing assessment and fitting fees for those who get hearing aids through this provincial hearing-aid plan. Mr. Speaker, that is the beginning of the privatization of health care.

A decrease in the amount available to the Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living and plans in the works to review how the money is distributed. Another attempt at privatization.

There was only a \$2 million increase for home care but there was an expected increase of 15 per cent for meals or housekeeping services charged to the seniors of this province. Another privatization of health care.

There will be a new charge of \$10 per clinic visit for people seeking chiropody treatment from a foot specialist. More privatization of health care. The attacks on seniors continue, Mr. Speaker.

There's an increase in fees for drugs, including stinging the seniors who are in nursing homes by charging 25 per cent of the costs to those who are only given \$100 left to pay for all their needs, Mr. Speaker. And expenses in nursing homes are mounting daily for the seniors who are there.

There is no money in the budget for staffing and beds in hospitals and nursing homes. The seniors are horrified by the opulence of the facilities that have been built, contrasted with the fact that there's no help for the patients.

The budget speech confirms that the PC government wants to go ahead with the biggest tax increase in Saskatchewan's history, the provincial GST. They claim that this is fair taxation and that they aren't introducing any new tax increase. That is totally false.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — Their plan, Mr. Speaker, is to bring the provincial GST into full force in January of '92. So people all across this province will be facing a 14 per cent increase in goods and services. That hurts seniors very much. People on fixed incomes are going to find it very difficult. That is not fair. It's not fair on the seniors, and they're very disappointed that you would bring in this increase.

You promised in 1982 that you would decrease the provincial income tax by 10 per cent and that you would take off the provincial sales tax. Look at you now. In order to deal with your waste and mismanagement, you have to gouge everybody in this province. That's not fair, Mr. Speaker, and that's an attack on the seniors. And off-loading the costs on municipal governments means increases in property taxes and that means another increase for the seniors to face.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly concerned about the attack on the Saskatchewan Income Plan. According to this annual report that we just received today, the seniors' income plan has been going up every year. In 1988-89 it was \$14 million. In the next year it was 15 million. In 1990-91 it was estimated as 17 million, and now it's reduced to 12.8 million, the same rate as in '87-88. That is a cut to low-income seniors at a time when their population is not decreasing, Mr. Deputy Speaker; it's increasing.

And who's being particularly hurt by this attack on the Saskatchewan Income Plan? I have received a report from the National Council of Welfare called *Women and Poverty Revisited*. And in this report, which is very interesting, it says this:

... seniors living alone or with non-relatives, where most women are found, had much higher rates of poverty which increased sharply for women with advancing age.

At 75 years and over ... 50 percent of unattached elderly women lived in poverty. Their real poverty rate was probably much higher because the Survey of Consumer Finances on which these poverty figures are based excludes people who live in institutions.

Many women are left alone in their very old age and they fall into poverty. The Saskatchewan Income Plan was there to help them. Why it has been so reduced is

anyone's guess. What I suspect has happened is that the government opposite has not let the seniors know that this plan exists, and they are hoping that seniors can just hunker down and survive without any help at all.

The heritage grant program, which was cut by over one and one-half million ... the amount of the grant is still the same for individuals but the total amount available in the program is down. Why? Do we have fewer seniors? No we don't. Do we have suddenly wealthier seniors? No we don't.

People retiring at 65 now often do have a higher income than people who retired at 65 20 years ago. But we have an increased ageing population. We still have pension plans that are very ineffective in terms of protecting seniors. Many private plans don't have survivor benefits — and public plans too.

We have a lot of problems for older people in having the income to deal with the increased costs that are tumbling down on their heads. And the government opposite is not committed to helping seniors.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Finance boasted in his budget talk about being committed to sound financial management. And then he asked the question, but what does that mean? And, Mr. Speaker, after I listened to his budget speech and to the comments from the members opposite, I realize that they don't know. They don't know what sound financial management means.

If they did, they would not have engaged in approving the cuts that have happened through the federal off-loading. The minister tried to complain about the Conservative government's fiscal off-loading at the federal level onto the backs of the provincial taxpayers.

(2030)

But complaints from him are not credible. This is the same Minister of Finance who didn't say anything when the federal government brought in the GST.

This minister represents a government that has steadfastly supported every single one of the Mulroney government's measures. They supported the indexing of the seniors' pensions, Mr. Speaker. They supported the elimination of two-price wheat, the federal farm fuel tax rebate, and the interest-free cash advance. They supported the cuts to the established program funding which have shifted the federal fiscal responsibility on to the provincial taxpayers. And there's a big story there that people need to hear about, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

When the federal government brought in Bill C-69 last summer, and drastically cut the transfer payments to the provinces, this government opposite said nothing. They enthusiastically supported the Mulroney free trade deal, which has cost the country dearly. And they supported the destructive changes to the drug patent Act, which deeply hurt the Canadian generic drug manufacturers and has lead directly to the dramatic increases in the cost of drugs and to off-loading these costs on to the people of Saskatchewan.

And that, Mr. Minister, is reflected in your huge increase in the prescription drug plan costs. That has nothing to do with the fact that people are buying more drugs. Drugs are costing more. And you are trying to cover this by charging people 25 per cent for the cost of their drugs, including the people in the special-care homes. Shame on you, Mr. Minister. That is a real attack on the seniors.

Now referring to his financial plan, the Minister of Finance said, the government has maintained a co-operative approach to federal-provincial relations — a co-operative approach — he doesn't even know the meaning of the word. What he did was he rolled over and played dead. And the government federally has brought in all these attacks on the people of Saskatchewan and the provincial government said nothing.

I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when the government claims it has a plan, that is contemptible. First of all, they are a government that has never believed in plans. In fact, economic planning has always been something that they abhor. They have been all the way through the discussion on the free trade deal, all the way through the discussion on the GST. They constantly tooted the philosophy that the market must decide, that we must have rampant free enterprise, and that they couldn't do anything about what was happening to us.

From time to time they have brought in what they call plans. Their long-term, five-year plans have lasted on an average about three months. In 1985 Finance minister, Bob Andrew, said in his budget that he had a plan, a five-year plan. In fact he said he had several of them: one for jobs, one for health, one for agriculture, and one for education. But they came to nothing. And he's gone off; the minister who was Finance minister then has gone off to a nice patronage, plum position where he's all right, but the province isn't.

In 1986 the Finance minister, the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, said he had a plan to balance the budget by 1990. And in 1989 the Premier boasted about his privatization plan. His slogan that was year was: if it moves, privatize it.

**An Hon. Member:** — Open for business.

**Ms. Smart:** — Right. They announced a plan in the Murray Commission report. They had a plan to support the Meech Lake accord. They had a plan to privatize SGI and a plan for Consensus Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the public has rejected any boast today about yet another PC plan. In fact they don't believe what you say, and they are sick and tired of their deceit. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know from talking to seniors around this province that they are particularly deeply offended by the dishonesty of the government opposite. They don't like that sort of thing. They want integrity in government. They don't like the fact that this government said in 1986, quoting the minister of Finance, again the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden: this government is confident that a balanced budget can be achieved within the next five years. That's what he said in his budget speech of 1986.

And then look what happened. The deficit for '86-87, he said, is currently forecast to be 1.2 billion, about 800 million over the budget figure of 389 million. That same man was saying that one year later in his economic and financial report — a 217 per cent difference. Seniors across this province were really upset about that. And now the Minister of Finance is saying, tonight . . . In the budget speech he said, tonight I am laying out a three-year timetable to balance the books. Huh. Another attempt just before an election to hoodwink the people of the province.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's too late. The people of Saskatchewan, and the seniors of Saskatchewan, all around the province . . . And you have to court their vote if you hope in heaven to win a seat but you're not doing it with this budget. And you haven't got any chance of winning their support now.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — Seniors are particularly concerned about the deficit because they believe in paying their way. It's very hard for them to accept that you could have gotten us in such a big mud hole. Seniors believe in helping their neighbours and they will not be impressed with the attempt by the member from Wilkie to make fun of the compassionate needs of people in this province.

The seniors know that care is needed in this province; that compassion is needed; that a sense of community is needed. They understand that from their experiences in the past. Young people understand it too. I'm not by any means setting the seniors up ahead of all the wonderful younger people in this province, but I am particularly reflecting their concerns in this budget speech because the seniors are being used by this government. They're being encouraged to accept these cuts because they believe the deficit must be reduced — and it must be. But you can't do it on the backs of seniors, and you must not do it on the backs of people who are living on fixed incomes and who cannot bear these increased costs and taxes.

This government has had nine years of waste and mismanagement and deficits. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the province is being taxed to death and buried in debt. That is appalling to seniors because they care about each other, and they care about the younger generations and how they will manage. They hate the fact that over 80,000 people have left the province more than have come into the province since 1986. Almost all of those people were younger people, often the sons and daughters of the seniors who are now the majority of the population in many of the towns and villages across this province.

The seniors' own sons and daughters and grandchildren are among the 2,330 people who have lost their jobs in the civil service since 1982, since this government took power. Those were young people who were educated in this province, trained at our universities, and then dumped onto the unemployment and the social assistance rolls, not to mention all the many, many people in the private sector who have also lost their jobs

as businesses have gone bankrupt and as Crown corporations have been destroyed.

It's a horrible picture, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's very, very sad for the seniors to be left in a province in such destruction and with such pain and hurt, not only from their fellow citizens who are older but also the younger generations as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government has said it has choices, and I was really surprised to hear them use that word because it seems to me when you look at what's happened over the last nine years, when you look at their record in terms of not standing up to the federal government but rolling over and playing dead, that they didn't believe they had any choices. In fact they were telling us over and over again that there was all sorts of things they had no control over — drought and grasshoppers and other things that were happening.

All of a sudden now, they say they have choices. We've always said that government is an organization that has choices. It has choices in social policy; it has choices in economic policy. And this government has been making choices, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all along, but they've had nine years of making the wrong choices. Finally they are admitting it.

For nine years they made the choice to give tax breaks to resource companies and big corporations, and now they are making the choice to tax children's clothes and restaurant meals as part of the provincial GST, not to mention the tax on reading which has appalled people all around this province.

For nine years they have made the choice to have too many cabinet ministers, too many legislative secretaries, and too many political advisors. And today they are making the choice to cut the jobs of nurses and other health-care workers. For nine years they have made the choice to waste taxpayers' dollars, and now they have made the choice to have their 10th straight deficit budget. For nine years they have made the choice to support the Mulroney government's off-loading of costs on to the province, and now they are making the choice to raise provincial taxes and cut important public services.

They have had nine years of making the wrong choices; void of ideas and now desperately trying to scramble to retrieve it. But by not mentioning the seniors, by making them invisible in this budget, and at the same time bringing in all these cuts and all these increased costs which are affecting the older people in this province, you have earned their condemnation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Finance Minister.

You have earned their condemnation and I am sure you will experience it when the election is called. I am sure that you're going to get a strong message from the people of Saskatchewan because you don't even recognize that all across this province in the cities, towns, and villages there are many, many older people.

This was a phoney budget. It was full of incredible promises, cooked forecasts, and unbelievable claims. And there would be no way that I could ever vote in

favour of such a budget. I would vote in favour of a budget that showed the compassion that New Democrats will bring in when they form government.

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

**Ms. Smart:** — I would vote in favour of a budget that recognized that there are human beings in this province, among them seniors, and that they are hurting and that they are depending on government to bring in good social policies and good social programs; to have economic plans that make sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And this government opposite has had nine years to show that it has no intention of doing any of that; that rather than compassion they value cruelty. They value, I'm all right Jack, but I'm not going to care about you. I'm going to laugh at the need for Indian and Metis people to have counselling services for foster children; I'm going to laugh at the need to have high quality child care. That's what the government opposite is saying — laughing at the fact that women who are suffering abuse need to have services. You sneer at all that. You treat it as if it has no value. You treat the seniors as if they were invisible. You are guilty of ageism. You are guilty of hurting people who need our support, people who deserve our support, people who will be supported by a New Democrat Government. I look forward to that day in this House.

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

(2045)

**Ms. Smart:** — And I certainly will be voting against this budget. And I'm bringing in an amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My motion is this:

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

regrets that the provincial budget has shown the government's failure to commit itself to fair taxation; to controlling waste, mismanagement, and the enormous accumulated deficit; to providing economic opportunities and jobs for Saskatchewan people; to supporting farm families and rural communities; to protecting seniors; and to maintaining health care, education, and quality-of-life services throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

I am moving this motion, this amendment, seconded by the member from The Battlefords, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to present it to the House. I know that many of my colleagues on this side of the House will speak to this. They will raise many points that I have not touched on because we all in our critic areas have a different perspective on this budget, but together we form a holistic picture of the devastation of this government opposite, and the terrible travesty of the Minister of Finance, and what he has brought in in this budget.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to be able to rise this evening — and it's the first opportunity I've had to speak since the continuation of this session of

the legislature — and to second the motion of the member from Saskatoon. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the only thing worse than the heckling of the Minister of Finance is the deplorable state of the Conservative party in the province of Saskatchewan.

The budget that was delivered on Monday night, Mr. Speaker, is a budget of a government whose time has certainly run out.

I did a little bit of research the other day, Mr. Speaker, and going from the period of 1905, when Saskatchewan became a province, up until the point of time in 1982 where the Conservative party came into government in the province of Saskatchewan, the average term of a government was three days longer than four years. And traditionally, going four years into an election mandate is something that is very important. The tradition is very important because in the British parliamentary system, which we've operated under until 1982 at least, tradition is almost as important as the written word in constitution and law in Canada and throughout the legislative assemblies, throughout the provinces throughout this great country.

But they have defied tradition, Mr. Speaker. This government goes four years and longer and longer and longer. In fact, we wouldn't be surprised, and the people of Saskatchewan wouldn't be surprised, Mr. Speaker, if this government went the full five years. And one of the things today that makes me restore faith in the monarchy is the fact that they would have to step in on November 12 of this year, 1991, and call an election if the members on the other side don't have the courage by that point to put the test to their mandate to the people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is a betrayal of people in the province of Saskatchewan. Over the years, since 1982, this government has run consecutive deficit budgets, consecutive deficit budgets, as the member from Moose Jaw North says, year after year after year after year after year. Now I don't know if we had nine or ten in there, but it's been a long time since the province of Saskatchewan saw a balanced budget. In fact, if you go back to 1986, the biggest betrayal of all in terms of budget speeches is when the Minister of Finance, the then Minister of Finance, the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, stood in his place and said that the budget deficit would only be 300-and-some million dollars. People in Saskatchewan were relieved because of the huge deficit that was increasing at that point in time.

But was it correct? No, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't correct because after the election, within a couple of months, the same member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden stood and said, whoops we made a mistake; it is \$1.2 billion. Well, I would point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that is the worst example of betrayal. But the betrayal has happened every single year since 1982 because although they forecast deficit budgets the government never once hit the target of their deficit.

The deficits were always more than what they projected to the people in the province of Saskatchewan. And that budget deficit will continue to increase as long as the

people in the province of Saskatchewan are betrayed by an uncaring, unsharing, undemocratic Progressive Conservative government, Mr. Speaker. The confidence of the people in the province of Saskatchewan has long left their confidence in the Progressive Conservative Party. There is no confidence whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, we look at the revenue that has come in in the province of Saskatchewan. Since 1982 until the present budget has been introduced, this Conservative government has increased their revenue by 69 per cent. Almost 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker, the government has increased their revenue and how've they increased that.

It hasn't been on the multinationals. It hasn't been on the Cargills. It hasn't been on the Weyerhaeusers. It hasn't been on the Gainers. It hasn't been on all the multinational companies that deal in Saskatchewan since 1982. It's been on the back of ordinary working men and women in the province of Saskatchewan, the small businesses, the people that make those small businesses run because there is where the tax burden lies the greatest, because of betrayal of a Progressive Conservative government, Mr. Speaker.

In fact we are now the highest-taxed individuals of anywhere in Canada. The Progressive Conservative government betrayed their election promises in 1982 and 1986 where they promised tax relief, where they promised the greater tomorrow, a new horizon for the people of Saskatchewan, so much more we could be, the builders of Saskatchewan were coming into power.

They're the destructors of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and their record speaks for itself, regardless of the rhetoric of members like the member from Wilkie. And I point out the member from Wilkie . . . the Liberals and Conservatives have held that seat, Mr. Speaker, since 1948 — 1948. And I would predict to you, Mr. Speaker, unless this government can turn things around, he will be the last Progressive Conservative member to ever represent the Wilkie constituency, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, the record and the betrayal of this government is not good. It's not good in that it's lost the confidence of the people, and any government that has lost the confidence of the people will not form government again. Almost 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker . . . these renegades have increased taxation on the people and the province of Saskatchewan to the point that there's almost a tax revolt in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And what did they do at the same time? They said, oh it's the fault of grasshoppers and it's the fault of low grain prices and it's the fault of falling resources. But how could they have raised revenue by almost 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker, if things were so bad in the province of Saskatchewan? Well things are bad, but you know what made them bad, Mr. Speaker? The Progressive Conservative government in the province of Saskatchewan made things bad for ordinary men and women and their families, Mr. Speaker. That's what happened in the province of Saskatchewan. No shame in

what they do, Mr. Speaker. No shame.

They're undemocratic, they've ... many examples of undemocratic actions by the government. They have no respect for the parliamentary system. They have no respect for the rules and the institutions in the province. In a last-ditch effort to save their souls in the province of Saskatchewan they bring in legislative, parliamentary reform. They say they are going to do better for people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well how have they done better, Mr. Speaker? Over the same period of time that they have increased the revenues by almost 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker, they've created deficit budgets because they've raised expenditures by almost 90 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And by raising those expenditures 90 per cent have they made things better for people in the province of Saskatchewan? No they haven't, Mr. Speaker. There's no new services, no ideas; they're bankrupt of ideas, Mr. Speaker, and the people of Saskatchewan will speak at the very first opportunity when the Premier of this province musters the courage to call a provincial election so people can voice their opinion in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — And that will be a devastating election, Mr. Speaker, for the members that sit on the government side of this House. It will be a devastating election. They know that. You know why, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, they know that because Allan Gregg has told them that, from Decima Research, their big pollster out of Toronto. Nancy McLean has told them that, their big image builder out of Toronto, Mr. Speaker. They know that because they've paid hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars — of taxpayers' dollars — to try and get the best information they can.

And they have got the best information they can get, Mr. Speaker. It's Decima Research, Allan Gregg, and Nancy McLean that they have paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for. They know what they're doing. And they give examples to this government that they couldn't even sell dog food to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. Know why, Mr. Speaker? Because the analogy they gave is because the dogs don't like the dog food they're being fed, Mr. Speaker. That's what's wrong in the province of Saskatchewan.

What the Conservative government of Saskatchewan has done, Mr. Speaker, is underestimated the political smarts of people in the province of Saskatchewan. The people in the province of Saskatchewan are the most politically aware and politically astute people of anywhere in this great nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker. And they know when they're being dealt a bad deal because they follow politics.

It's not like the province of Alberta where, in the last general election, less than 50 per cent of the people turned out to vote. It's not like America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where far less than 50 per cent of the people turn out to vote. It's not uncommon in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, to see 80 per cent of the people in Saskatchewan turn out to voice their

opinion in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the turn-out may be lower this time. And the only reason it may be lower than 80 per cent is because those people who can't vote any other way — because they're committed to a Progressive Conservative ideology — is because they know this government doesn't even represent the Conservative ideology in the province of Saskatchewan or anywhere else. They're a government gone astray. They have had no plan. They have no plan for the future and they are going to be a government of the past because they have no plan, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — Mr. Speaker, you know why revenues have increased by 70 per cent and, more disastrously, expenditures have increased by 90 per cent in the Government of Saskatchewan? It's because of things like GigaText in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you would remember and the people in the province of Saskatchewan remember when Guy Montpetit came to Saskatchewan and he said, I can tell you how to translate the laws from English into French in the province of Saskatchewan. We have some artificial intelligence. The partner I have in Winnipeg ... Yes, well artificial intelligence, that's correct, Mr. Speaker; artificial intelligence could replace the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, but they came along and they said to the province of Saskatchewan, this great Progressive Conservative government — the open for business government that's supposed to have been so good for businesses that are now devastated and disillusioned — they came here and said, we'll translate your laws. All you have to do is put the statute in one end, and the printed copy will come out the other end and just be in French instantaneously, so all the francophones in the province of Saskatchewan can be served in either of the official languages of Canada, Mr. Speaker. That's what they brought Guy Montpetit in for.

(2100)

So Guy Montpetit came along and he put in his technology, and he got 75 per cent of GigaText, Mr. Speaker, 75 per cent of GigaText. And these brain childers on the other side that call themselves the government, Mr. Speaker, put in \$5 million, Mr. Speaker, for 25 per cent of the great company GigaText. And I say that facetiously because it wasn't a great company; it was a great betrayal again to the people in the province of Saskatchewan, a great example of waste and mismanagement. No plan. No control, Mr. Speaker.

So about six months went by and old Guy Montpetit became a millionaire again, Mr. Speaker. He became a millionaire because he had sole signing authority for GigaText. The member from Cut Knife-Lloyd didn't check on that. The former member from Souris-Cannington didn't check on it. They just gave Guy Montpetit sole signing authority for Saskatchewan's \$5 million, Mr. Speaker — betrayal of the public purse, no other explanation of that.



So after less than a year, Mr. Speaker, when Guy Montpetit had the signing authority of the company GigaText, to translate our statutes, they were broke, Mr. Speaker, absolutely no money. Well how would that happen? Well I think that Guy Montpetit was watching the Government of Saskatchewan and thought these people are so easy, I'll come in there, give them some hocus-pocus, I'll drive the Premier around in Montreal in the back seat of my limousine; which he did. It's on the record, Mr. Speaker. He flew the member from Maple Creek, the member from Souris-Cannington, the member from Saskatoon Mayfair and others, flew them down to Winnipeg and showed them the hocus-pocus through the machine. Somebody shoved in a piece of paper, French translation came out on the other side, Mr. Speaker. That's what happened.

And know what else, Mr. Speaker? He learned so well by driving the Premier around in the back seat of the limousine and taking these high-flyers down to Winnipeg, and you know, really thought that Saskatchewan was a bunch of hicks. And I can understand why he would think that because he was travelling with the Conservative cabinet, Mr. Speaker. That's why he thought Saskatchewan were a bunch of hicks.

And so, Mr. Speaker, when they realized they were in trouble there started to be a court case in Montreal. And do you know what happened there, Mr. Speaker? A Japanese business man by the name of Mr. Tsuru had invested \$39 million with Guy Montpetit. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Tsuru got ripped off by Guy Montpetit. The same person that these hick seeds on the Conservative Party didn't check out, Mr. Speaker.

So do you know what happened in the court case, Mr. Speaker? I'll tell you what happened. The court, the judge, the judicial system — which we all have respect for — appointed a court auditor to provide expert evidence. They took a chartered accountant from the firm of Peat Marwick. And the chartered accountant from Peat Marwick — to provide expert evidence — looked at all the holdings of Guy Montpetit, not just in Montreal — the ones that involved Mr. Tsuru — but also the ones that involved Mr. Guy Montpetit in Saskatchewan. Really. That's what happened. And do you know what they found, Mr. Speaker? They found an atrocity in the GigaText situation of Saskatchewan.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, that Guy Montpetit paid over \$2 million for the computers for GigaText? Over \$2 million for the computers for GigaText. Do you know how much the court appointed auditor — to provide expert evidence — discovered the computers are worth, Mr. Speaker? Around \$40,000. Do you know where the computers were bought from, Mr. Speaker? The computers were bought from another company owned by Guy Montpetit. Oh no! That's what happened.

Guy Montpetit owned the company that owned the computers that sold them to the Conservative people in Saskatchewan — good business management. How could that be? That happened because Guy Montpetit had sole signing authority for GigaText — for our \$5

million. Our money but Guy Montpetit's technology. All of a sudden the \$40,000 computers became worth over 2 million. Wow.

Well do you know what else, Mr. Speaker, they found out by the court case in Montreal? This guy who provided the expert evidence discovered that GigaText in Saskatchewan was leasing a Citation jet. That's a nice plane — nice plane.

**An Hon. Member:** — How many people did it hold?

**Mr. Anguish:** — That plane held enough people: it took the Minister of Science and Technology, the member from Saskatoon Mayfair; it took the Deputy Premier, the former member from Souris-Cannington; it took the former Minister of Consumer and Commercial Affairs, the member from Maple Creek; and likely a couple of others I've forgotten about, and flew them all to Winnipeg to show them the demonstration I mentioned earlier. That's how big the plane was.

But do you know what else, Mr. Speaker? That plane was leased from a company at \$36,000 a month. Do you know who the company was? It was GigaMos Air Services.

**An Hon. Member:** — And who owned GigaMos?

**Mr. Anguish:** — Who owned GigaMos Air Services, you ask me? Guy Montpetit owned GigaMos Air Services, Mr. Speaker. Now Guy strikes again. Do you think Guy Montpetit got a good deal in the province of Saskatchewan? Of course he got a good deal because the people on the government side of the House don't care about the public purse. They don't care about the people of Saskatchewan. They care about their own largess at the trough of government.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker, that any of them have enough face left to sit in the House and look across the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, that's only one example of waste and mismanagement in the province of Saskatchewan. I want to allow my other colleagues more time to speak. I'm very pleased to support the motion from the member for Saskatoon Centre and I will be supporting her amendment to the budget, and I will not be supporting any budget from this government that has lost the faith of the people of the province of Saskatchewan. They have not got the ability to manage. They've got the ability to waste and mismanage, and that's not what the people of Saskatchewan need, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We just witnessed a very fine exhibition . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. Allow the Minister of Education to make his comments.

I'd ask the member from Regina North West to allow the

Minister of Education to make his comments.

**Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've just witnessed a fine exhibition from the member from The Battlefords on the other side, and as usual another member of the NDP who would stand up and criticize the government but obviously has no alternative to put forward.

We've seen that time and time again, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is no exception — no plan from the other side, no alternative being put forward. Not too long ago we heard from the member from Wilkie. We heard the NDP's budget if they happened to get elected. Some 8 to 9 billions of dollars, Mr. Deputy Speaker — that's what the NDP are going to spend if they happen to get into power with all of those programs that they've got. That's just wonderful, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We also heard as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the member . . . We had the member from Saskatoon Centre talking about the seniors and loss of people from the province of Saskatchewan, and you know again, her long-standing cry of doom and gloom and all of the terrible things this government has done. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that this government's record with regard to seniors in this province is very, very credible.

I think as well if she would just stop and think a little bit when she talks about the loss of people from the province of Saskatchewan, if the NDP had maybe had some forward-looking policies when they were in power in the 1970s, and had done a little bit about diversification, and something possibly about building up a Heritage Fund in the good times, maybe many of these people today would not have had to leave the province to look for jobs elsewhere. They would have had jobs here in the province. And I would also point out as others have, Mr. Speaker, that there are more people in the province of Saskatchewan today than there were when the NDP were in power.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to address the budget that's been presented by my colleague, the Minister of Finance, and I can certainly assure you that I will be supporting it and will not be supporting the amendment put forward by the hon. member opposite.

I want to speak tonight, Mr. Speaker, not only as the member from Saskatoon Mayfair, but also as Minister of Education and the minister responsible for the Status of Women.

Some of the areas that I will be talking about, Mr. Speaker, will deal with the K to 12 section, SIAST, the regional colleges, our universities, the programming that's going on with regard to distance education, and some of the initiatives that this government is putting forward, and has put forward in the last nine years, and will continue to look forward to the 21st century, Mr. Speaker.

I would start out, Mr. Speaker, by taking a look at the fact that education has been a cornerstone of this government. It will continue to be a cornerstone of this government, and we have to consider that we are making a very important investment in our future.

When you understand that today, in the year 1991, that we are educating somewhere in the neighbourhood of 275,000 students in this province, Mr. Speaker . . . We've got that many enrolled in our educational institutions; approximately 200,000 we have in our K to 12 schools, and also another 75,000 who are in the post-secondary institutions.

More than \$1.3 billion is going to be spent on education this coming year, Mr. Speaker. That's \$1.3 billion of taxpayers' money. One out of every \$5 that our government spends this year, as in past years, will again be going towards education. In total, our government's contribution to education for this coming year will be over \$900 million, Mr. Speaker.

And the opposition says that that isn't enough. But we've never heard them put forward any kind of idea as to what is enough, and where is the additional money to come from, Mr. Speaker. We feel that in this particular time, in these tough economic times, that spending somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$904 million is a pretty good chunk of money to be spending on education in a province with a population of 1 million people. And I'm sure that if you make a comparison with other provinces across this country, you'll see that we stack up very, very well.

I think as well, Mr. Speaker, you can see from this expenditure that there's no question that education is one of our key priorities, and we will continue to keep that priority as we move through the 1990s and on towards the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, the 21st century will belong to those who recognize that learning is a lifetime process and who are well prepared for the task. In a knowledge-intensive world the future security of Saskatchewan will depend on the education of our young people, what our young people receive today.

During the 1980s Saskatchewan was engaged in one of the most comprehensive reviews of the kindergarten to grade 12 education in this province's history. As you know, Mr. Speaker, as a former educator yourself, that a tremendous amount of time and energy was put into the development of the core curriculum and the whole *Directions* study, where you had people from every organization and from every walk of life involved in the development of that particular plan. And we see then today that as a result of the *Directions*, and all of those discussions and hearings that were held, that we now have new core curriculum being implemented into our school system.

We have to prepare our young people for the changing times that they're going to be facing. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that one of the biggest things that we can do for our boys and girls today is to prepare them for the changes that they're going to be faced with and also teach them to be able to cope with those changes. That's the biggest challenge that any of them are going to be faced with.

We know that today that we have to look at doing things differently. It's no longer a matter of teaching students a whole lot of content that is going to be obsolete within a

few years. We have to look at the whole process of learning. We have to look at not only the idea of teaching children how to think but also teaching them how to be creative learners and creative problem solvers, and the fact that they will understand that they are living in changing times and that they have to learn to do things differently than have been done in the past.

There's so much more with technology today that our boys and girls have to learn. We understand as well that boys and girls have to be more independent learners and have to be prepared to be flexible and to change and to meet all of those new challenges that are going to be coming at them. Consensus Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, recommended that our schools continue to implement the core curriculum. This coming September we will be moving into the fourth year of a 12-year plan as we move towards changing the curricula right across the system from kindergarten right through to grade 12.

This progress has been possible through sustained commitment, not only on the part of the Department of Education, but also on the part of school boards, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, the educational administrators, and all of those in the province of Saskatchewan who are concerned about having a quality education for their boys and girls.

(2115)

Mr. Speaker, we can't say enough about the fact that the success of these programs is ultimately going to lie with the teachers. It's important that we have well-trained, well-qualified teachers in our class-rooms. It's also very important that we have the co-operation of our teachers in implementing these new programs. And I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we do have that co-operation.

The Department of Education, during the last few years, have spent approximately \$3 million on in-service for the teachers. We recognize that this takes a tremendous amount of time. And I know that from time to time that school boards or teachers or administrators and sometimes the Department of Education, get criticism about the amount of time that teachers are out of their class-rooms. But, Mr. Speaker, we have to recognize that with the tremendous change that we're looking at in our programs, that it is necessary for the teachers to be well prepared and that the amount of time being taken for in-service is very, very critical to the success of these new programs.

So I ask, Mr. Speaker, that in those cases where people feel that there is too much time being taken out of the class-room, that the people have to be a little bit patient and understand that we are into a massive change in our programs today and we have to ensure that the programs are going to be done properly. To ensure, as well, that the new programs are meeting objectives, it's very, very important that we take a look at evaluation. We have to be concerned about the new programs, whether they are in fact meeting the needs. We have to be assessing them and we have to be prepared to make the changes as they are necessary.

I would also like to take a look then, Mr. Speaker, at the

amount of money that is being spent and has been indicated in our budget, as the member across the way says. Well I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that this current year in the K to 12 programs, that we will be spending in the neighbourhood of \$443.6 million. That's not only for programs in K to 6 but also for construction on renovation of facilities. Another \$58.8 million will be spent on teachers' pensions and other benefits.

And I know that the pensions, that's an area of concern with some teachers. And I've spoken to the member from Prince Albert who did a survey recently, and I've asked him to provide me with a copy of the results of that survey and also the summary that he did. I know that teachers are still concerned to some extent about pensions, tremendous changes that are taking place this year, because the teachers are going to be moving to the operation of their own pension plan.

But one of the concerns that a lot of these teachers still have, Mr. Speaker, is the unfunded liability that has grown up over the years. And I would point out that part of that unfunded liability — the biggest part of it — was allowed to grow during the 1970s when the NDP were in power. And I think they should be questioned on this as to why they were not paying into the teachers pension fund at that time to ensure that the unfunded liability was not building.

In fact we know very well that the member from Regina Centre was fully aware of this situation. That by 1979 that this unfunded liability had grown to something in the neighbourhood of \$911 million, and nothing had been done during all of the time then that the NDP were in power to address that problem of unfunded liability. Well obviously, Mr. Speaker, that's still a concern of teachers today, and it has to be a concern for us as well in that we have to move to address that problem as time goes on.

I know that the member from Saskatoon Nutana was raising questions this morning about the budget situation across the province and suggesting that many school divisions are getting a lot less money this year than they have in the past. And I pointed out to her — and I will do that again now, Mr. Speaker — that of all the school systems in the province, 62 of them are getting more money than they got last year; 47 are getting less. And it's quite easy to understand why some of them are getting less. It's because they have fewer students. We understand, as well, that in some cases assessments change. There may also be cases where moneys coming in from other sources is up and that cuts down on the amount of money that they would be getting from the department.

But overall I believe, Mr. Speaker, that school boards throughout the province understand, with the economic situation such as it is, that a 3.5 per cent increase in the operating grant was fairly reasonable. And that was a quote, as well, from the head people in the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. They felt that a 3.5 per cent increase was fair and reasonable.

Now we know, as well, that boards are required to make very difficult decisions, and we've all seen that over the years. She was, I think, chastising me a little bit about the

fact that we've had some school closures this year, or we've had some down-sizing. That's no different this year, Mr. Speaker, than it's been any other year for as long back as I can remember and have been involved in the educational field.

I can think, as well, that we've all faced those situations, I'm sure, at one time or another. I can think of my own home town where this year there was quite a hullabaloo in the town about the fact that they might be moving the elementary school into the high school. And I can recall when I was working in that school division that there was a very large enrolment in each school, and they needed the two schools. But now they're reaching the point where the board feels that it's almost a matter of . . . there's not that much choice. They have enough room in the one school to accommodate all of the children. And this is the reality today.

We know that our enrolments are going down because in our rural areas people have moved out. They've moved to urban centres. Some have left the province. We also have to understand that today, for the most part, that many families have fewer children than they had a number of years ago. So these are decisions that have to be made.

And I think as well on the example that I used this morning that boards are accommodating these problems today, trying to be as efficient as they possibly can.

And I cited the example of Lemberg and Neudorf, two consolidated school divisions who have operated independently for many, many years, and this year find themselves in the situation where they were going to have to raise their mill rate substantially if they were going to continue to operate both of their schools. Now obviously taxpayers were not too happy about that and at the same time parents are concerned about having quality education for their children.

So after many, many discussions and taking a look at all the options, these two boards got together and made the decision that they would have K to 6 in one school and 7 to 12 in the other. Now since no one likes to see young children in kindergarten travelling any great distance they also made the decision that they would have kindergarten in both centres. And I think that these two boards really need to be commended because they are addressing a situation where enrolments have gone down. They're addressing the tax problem where people are complaining that they're being taxed enough now and at the same time they are concerned about having a quality education for their children.

And in this way I think that all of the parents and all of the children in those areas are going to be winners because the quality of education will continue to be provided. I notice that one of the board chairmen said that this was something that should have happened several years ago but I really commend them for making that decision today and I'm pleased that we were able to help out in the transition that will be necessary over the next year.

Now I know that this is probably being talked about in some other areas of the province as well, Mr. Speaker. We know that in some school divisions this year that they had

talked of closing several schools or down-sizing them, and I would point out that this is the authority of the board. This has nothing to do with the Department of Education. They are charged with the responsibility of determining where children go to school and providing education for them. And then they find that with declining enrolments that it does become necessary to change the organization of their school systems, but that's the legal authority of the boards.

And I've had many letters from parents in some of these areas that have been affected, wanting me to do something about that, to step in and tell the board they can't do it. But the opposition knows full well and my critic knows full well that in The Education Act of 1978 brought in when they were in power that it's very clearly set out that the boards have this authority, and I know it's difficult. I've seen this happen in my own experience. I know that when I started teaching I taught in rural schools. We eventually saw those rural schools close and children being bused into the larger centres. Today we see some of those larger centres facing the problem of declining enrolments and either being closed completely or being down-sized.

Those are tough decisions. Those are tough decisions, Mr. Speaker. And I know at the same time it not only means children having to go farther in some cases but it also means in some cases loss of jobs. And we know that that can be very, very traumatic for people, particularly if they have taught in some of these areas for a number of years and suddenly have to uproot themselves and move to another place. That is not easy.

I would point out as well though, Mr. Speaker, that what we see happening today . . . and I know that the member opposite has indicated that there may be some 360 jobs lost this year. Well I can't say at this point whether there'll be 300, 200, or whether there'll be a hundred. Whatever, it's unfortunate.

But I think it's interesting when we consider that over the last 10 years that throughout the province of Saskatchewan we have lost . . . I shouldn't say we've lost; I should say that the enrolment has decreased by 6,000 students — 6,000 students, Mr. Speaker. And during that same time, the number of teachers has increased by 626 — 626. Now I think it's understandable today why there are some positions being cut.

Well we've got special services that are being provided in many cases. I think as well that we know that there is more of a need today, in some cases, in dealing with these special needs. We've had children that have been moved from some areas in the province, and now that we talk more about mainstreaming and integration . . . and it has resulted in more of these services. But I would point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that with these increased services there has also been additional money provided through the special education grants to meet these concerns and these needs.

So when we take a look at it, Mr. Speaker, when we consider what's happening in rural Saskatchewan, we all have to be concerned, or should be concerned, because it's through our agricultural industry that we enjoy the

excellent health programs and the excellent educational programs that we have in this province. Traditionally, that was our major source of revenue.

And so when we come out with agricultural programs such as we hear so much about today with GRIP and NISA and the third line of defence, and we also hear about the community development bonds and we hear about Fair Share — these are all programs and part of the strategy, Mr. Speaker, to try and bolster those rural areas so that we will not be losing people from them to the larger centres, or they won't be moving out of the province to where they can get jobs. Through no fault of their own, we find that this is the situation today with the economy being such as it is.

Mr. Speaker, we clearly have a plan, but we haven't heard any plan from the other side as to what they would do.

One other area that I want to spend just a minute on, Mr. Speaker, and that's the whole area of special education. Since that is my background and I've spent probably the last 20 some years involved with special needs children, I know that we have many children who are less fortunate than others that do need special programming. And I think that we have done a pretty good job in this province of meeting the needs of those special children.

And I commend the government opposite who brought in the legislation in 1970-71 making it mandatory that school boards should provide services for these special needs children; and we have continued to build on that, Mr. Speaker. We know that there are still changes that have to be made, but we are continuing to address those changes.

And again, as part of the changing times, I want to spend just a minute, Mr. Speaker, talking about the R.J.D. Williams School for the Deaf in Saskatoon. Because of a declining enrolment again, you have a very, very large facility, which now I think is down to some 32 students, and at one time, Mr. Speaker, that building had over 200 students. So it no longer is effective or efficient in keeping such a large facility going for only 32 students. And the numbers that we would have, Mr. Speaker, would show that next year there would be even fewer students.

So the decision was made . . . And this is something that's been studied for many, many years, Mr. Speaker — there has been a study . . . it's been ongoing with regard to the numbers and whether or not the numbers are . . . the incidences declining at all. There are those that would argue that the rate of incidence of deaf and hearing impairment is not going down. But I think the biggest change that has taken place is the fact that today about 85 per cent of these children are being educated in regular school systems.

And that's not something that's being dictated by the Department of Education, Mr. Speaker, that has been the demand of the parents. They want their children on a day-to-day basis in regular schools with regular children because when these children finish school, Mr. Speaker, they are going to be out in the world in a non-segregated setting. And if they are going to be able to make that adjustment, I think that the majority of these parents feel

then that the best chance that they will have, the best opportunity, will be if they are housed in regular schools. So 85 per cent of about 300 children in the province today, Mr. Speaker, are in regular school systems, so only of some 32 that remain at the school for the deaf.

Now we know that this can be difficult for children who are older, who have been in that school for all of their school lives. And I don't have any doubt but what some of these — and I think they've already indicated that — that they will be going to the school for the deaf in Alberta for this coming fall. And that's the choice that they are making along with their parents.

Other children are going to be served within Saskatoon and some people have gone so far as to say that why would we want to make these changes before there were programs in place. Well it's quite clear, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the record, that Saskatoon public has had programs for deaf and hearing-impaired children for several decades. And at the current time you have in the neighbourhood of 80 children in the Saskatoon public system that are deaf and hearing impaired that are receiving their education in the regular school system. So to suggest that there were no programs in place is just not true at all, Mr. Speaker.

(2130)

Now we want to accommodate these children as best we can. We want to ensure that their education is going to be equally as good as what it has been. And nobody has ever questioned, nobody has ever questioned the quality of education at the R.J.D. Williams school. But it's just a matter of looking at numbers and where those children can best be served. So the decision was made and announced at the end of June last year that the school would be closing June 30 of this year.

Now we have had several meetings throughout the course of the year. We've had the advisory council that's been very, very involved and a council that has had representatives who are themselves deaf and hearing impaired. We have had representatives from the school for the deaf. We have had parents from different areas in the province. We've had all of the organizations in the province that are involved with deaf and hearing impaired involved on this advisory council. And we've had Ruth Warick as the chairperson of this committee, Mr. Speaker, who is herself hearing impaired. And Ruth has just done a tremendous job in chairing this committee throughout the course of the year and looking at the needs of these children and making sure that their needs are going to be met, not just their needs within school but also the living arrangements as well. And at the present time the committee is still involved looking at needs of pre-school deaf children, and also for those after they finish high school, what is available for them as far as the post-secondary is concerned.

So plans have been moving along very, very well, Mr. Speaker. And we, I think, have and will have very shortly the information as to where all of these children are going. We'll have all of the living arrangements made. Some of them we know will live with foster-parents; some will maybe be in a group home; and some will go to the

school for the deaf in the province of Alberta. But that, Mr. Speaker, is there a choice, because we do have children of all ages in these particular classes in Saskatoon, right from kindergarten right through to high school.

So that program is moving along, and I know it's created some stress. It's created some stress for some of the parents, certainly for some of the students, and it has created some stress for the staff. And I think that's understandable. However the school will be closing the end of June, and the children's needs will be met with quality education. And, Mr. Speaker, we have to be concerned, not only about those children in the school for the deaf, but also the other 85 per cent of the deaf and the hearing impaired that are located throughout the rest of the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to move on from there to looking at post-secondary education in our province, and I think that we have been able to develop over the years an excellent program in the whole post-secondary area. I think when you consider the programs that are being offered by our two universities, by our four SIAST campuses, and by our nine regional colleges that we have an excellent network throughout our province which is probably the envy of many other provinces in this country.

We know that it's important that we look at world class opportunities for, not only our young people who are graduating from grade 12, but we also have to consider today that we have many people who have been out of school for a long period of time who wish to go back to school and pick up more skills, more knowledge, and to better their positions, whether it's getting a better job or whatever the case might be.

We also have many seniors today who are interested in taking more education, and I know the member from Saskatoon Centre is very concerned about that. We do have seniors that are taking university courses. And I had a meeting yesterday with an individual who's involved in a workshop here in Regina, I think in the next couple of weeks, where they're looking at how we can do more in this particular area.

But today it's important that we have access to these programs all across the province, and I think particularly when we realize that, today, education should never, ever stop. We have students today then that set their goal as completing grade 12. And I tell them that they should not stop at that point. They should simply set another goal, whether it's going on to SIAST or to a regional college or to university. And they should never, ever think that when they get a university degree that that's enough because today we talk about lifelong learning. And I think that that's so important, so important, Mr. Speaker.

We know that enrolments have gone up substantially over the last few years when you look at what's happened at our universities alone, that the enrolment has gone up 50 per cent since 1981 — 50 per cent. It's created its problems, certainly. We've got enrolments in full-time diploma and certificate level skill training programs has increased by 83 per cent over the same period. So when you consider breaking that down into numbers, Mr.

Speaker, we have got a lot of students today that are in our post-secondary institutions and we know that in many cases there are more that would like to be there.

More than 28,000 students will enrol in courses at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina in this year alone — 28,000 students. And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, when we heard the member from Saskatoon South talking, in that he says our young people can't go to our universities because of underfunding and because of quotas. Well, Mr. Speaker, the enrolments have gone up 50 per cent in the last 10 years; we've got 28,000 students at our universities this year; and the member from Saskatoon South says that our young people can't go to our universities because of underfunding and quotas.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to just address the whole idea of quotas for a minute and the whole idea of underfunding because in fact we have increased spending to our universities substantially over the last nine years. Each and every year the operating grant is increased to our universities.

As well when he talks about quotas, I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that the member from Saskatoon South should be well aware of the fact that when they were in power in the 1970s they were having studies done as to how many students should be handled at the University of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, those studies were telling them that there would never, ever be more than 10,000 students at the University of Saskatchewan. Well today, Mr. Speaker, we have in the neighbourhood of 16,000. Now there must have been something wrong with the person doing the studies because they were a way, way off.

And part of the reason that there are quotas today, in fact the biggest part of the reason, Mr. Speaker, is because there isn't room for all the students. And if the government of the day in the 1970s had been busy with some capital projects on the University of Saskatchewan campus, maybe more of those students could have gone to university today and the quotas would not have been as they are. Well, Mr. Speaker, we do have lots of students and many more would like to go but at the present time there are the restrictions. And quotas are not new to universities. I think that if you go to the majority of universities across Canada today, that you'll find that they have quotas.

Mr. Speaker, this year we have increased operating grants to the universities by \$5.4 million, total funding approximately \$200 million. Now we know very well that the universities have put forward the argument that they need much more than that, and I would think, Mr. Speaker, that there's a lot of justification for their arguments. But what we have to do is match up the reality of what the taxpayers can afford.

We know as well that because of the grants that we have provided that tuition fees are going to be going up. They've already announced them here at the University of Regina, going up some 17 per cent. The University of Saskatchewan, I believe, will set theirs tomorrow. And I know that this will create an additional burden on students going to university but at the same time when

you make comparisons of our tuition fees here to other provinces, to other universities, I'm sure that you will see that they are very much in line with what they are charging.

We still, I think, have a pretty good deal when you can consider that a student going to the University of Saskatchewan at the present time only pays about 16 per cent of the total cost of his year or her year at university. The University of Regina, it's in the neighbourhood of 19 to 20 per cent. But I'm also aware, Mr. Speaker, of situations where students going to university are paying in the neighbourhood of 30 to 35 per cent of the cost of their year. Now I hope that we don't get to that particular level here in Saskatchewan, but at the same time, unless costs can be controlled and unless the economy turns around, the possibility of grants becoming much larger from the provincial government are very, very slim. And if universities are going to require more and more money, then tuition fees are going to continue to go up.

Mr. Speaker, this year the new \$92 million College of Agriculture Building will open in Saskatoon, and it will open, Mr. Speaker. They're going to be moving into it, as I understand it, starting this next month and the official opening being held some time in October. Now this exciting, cutting-edge facility will secure Saskatchewan's position as a world centre of excellence in agricultural research and development and will benefit thousands of Saskatchewan people for decades to come. As well, the University of Regina will see the opening of the first International Language Institute in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

And I think that that's a very, very credible achievement for both of these universities. We know as well that there have been other projects built on these campuses over the last number of years. Well let me just point out what these are, Mr. Speaker.

And we wonder, where was the opposition back in the 1970s when the economy was good? What was their plan? I mean their plan was to buy potash mines and to put money into land bank. There was no thought of maybe looking at our educational institutions and doing something about it.

Well one thing, Mr. Speaker, that was built at the University of Saskatchewan, the new Geological Sciences Building, total cost of \$19 million. Now that wasn't something that was just needed after the PCs got in power. That was needed for a good, long time when these people were in power. A new Administration Building, one where the old one was just about falling down and the change had to come very, very quickly — \$7 million put up by this government to build a new Administration Building at the University of Saskatchewan. A new Animal Resources Centre, \$5 million.

Again, all of these problems did not just develop in the 1980s, Mr. Speaker; they were there in the 1970s. These people did absolutely nothing about it. They had their priorities all wrong, Mr. Speaker, if in fact they had any.

Another thing — at the same time, Mr. Speaker, the University of Regina was spending about \$13 million on different projects. So a substantial amount of money

being spent on capital projects during the last nine years.

I mention about the College of Agriculture Building, Mr. Speaker. This is a project that the university had been asking for for 25 years, and the NDP did absolutely nothing about it — times when there was lots of money — but instead they decided that no, education is not a priority; we're not going to build any of those buildings on the university campuses.

Well I hear the member from Saskatoon South as well, Mr. Speaker, in his remarks talking about elimination of programs and colleges. You know, we get the same old scare tactics coming out that they've used in the past with other areas, Mr. Speaker. And there may well be some programs that need to be cut. There may well need to be some programs cut.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I really commend the presidents of our two universities, and the administration, for taking a good look at the problem and attempting to come up with some realistic solutions to those problems. I really commend the study that was done by Dr. Ivany in Saskatoon to take a look at areas where there was duplication, and where some of the duplication could be cut out without affecting any programs. I know that there will be some faculty positions lost at the University of Saskatchewan, and that may well be the case here. I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker.

But the administration will make those decisions. They are given their grants. It's up to them then to run their operations, and I would suggest that they are doing an excellent job of that. There's no question that they couldn't use more money, but in these times they will do the best that they can, Mr. Speaker.

One other comment that I must address that the member from Saskatoon South made, Mr. Speaker, was to do with student aid. And just to show how he likes to spout off before he gets all of the detail down, he's suggesting a \$5 million decrease in student aid. Well that is totally inaccurate, Mr. Speaker.

There is less money in the student aid fund this year, but it has moved into some other areas such as training programs. The fact is that programs like adult basic education and the VRDP (vocational rehabilitation for disabled persons) program, the money now has been moved into training programs. So rather than these people having to get student loans to take their programs, they now are going to be given training grants based on the need and also the type of programming that they're going to be going into. So, Mr. Speaker, if he'd taken a little bit of time to just take a look at what was happening here he would have seen that some of the money has maybe been moved from one area into another.

There's also a change in so far as the scholarship program is concerned which used to come out of the student aid fund. Now the scholarship program has been rolled in with operating grants, and money will be provided through there so that the institutions, SIAST, and the universities, will still make the determination as to who gets scholarships, and for what reasons. But the money now will be coming out of their operating grant, but

additional money is being provided for that. So just a couple of points that I wanted to make there, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the student aid fund.

(2145)

Well as I've indicated we've got a changing world out there, Mr. Speaker. And we know that over the next decade that there are going to be tremendous changes and many challenges facing the people in the province of Saskatchewan. We often hear, we often hear about the fact that many of our young people today — as they move out into different careers in the next few years — that they are going to find, with the changing times, that they may very well have to change their career three or four times in their lifetime. Now that's not such as it was, Mr. Speaker, when you and I went to school. When we graduated from high school we could go into many different occupations and be fairly sure of being in those occupations until we wanted to retire — whether it was after 25 or 30 or 35 years.

Mr. Speaker, that is not going to be the way of the future. We are seeing even today where some jobs suddenly become redundant, and people are faced with that problem of having to retrain and go on into something else. We know that just recently we had an announcement in Saskatchewan where MacDonald's Consolidated were laying off a group of workers.

Now you have people that have worked at the same job for maybe 15 or 20 years and now faced with the prospect of having to go out and find another job. Now some of them may be able to find another job doing the same thing that they were doing — others will not. This is traumatic for them and it is also traumatic for their families. But the fact is that they will probably have to take some retraining and go on into a different type of work. That's going to be the way of the future in a lot of cases, Mr. Speaker.

Well I ask you then, who's going to make these changes? Who's going to be there to provide the education and the training that these people are going to need? It isn't going to be our universities, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have to have that vision for the future, and that's why this government has had the vision for the future.

And that's why changes were made at SIAST three years ago, a reorganization of the SIAST programs in this province, because we could no longer continue doing the same things that we had been doing since the colleges opened their doors. We had to get into an entirely different situation to be prepared for the 21st century or, Mr. Speaker, we were going to be left behind.

SIAST campuses are going to be very much involved with the training of these people as they move into the 21st century. We know as well, Mr. Speaker, that the SIAST campuses are only part of the picture. We also have to take a look at the network of regional colleges that we have in this province. And at the present time we've got over 100 programs available on campus in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and Prince Albert, and on an extension basis in communities all across the province.

SIAST and the regional colleges have played an increasingly important role in Saskatchewan's economy by working with employers to identify their training needs. Now this is very, very important, Mr. Speaker, because we've got the employers involved. They are in the best position to know what the needs are of tomorrow. Without this partnership we will not have our workers prepared.

I was quite concerned when I was up to Lloydminster a couple of months ago and found out that in some cases they were having difficulty getting workers for the upgrader. And one of the reasons that they were having trouble getting workers for the upgrader, Mr. Speaker, was because they did not have the type of training that they needed for those jobs, and in some cases had to bring workers in from the United States. Now that's a sad day, Mr. Speaker, when we cannot be providing the type of training that our people need, not just our young people, but people who have been out in the labour force for some time.

I think I would add one other fact with regard to this problem that we're faced with today and how we have to be ready. It's indicated that across Canada we may have 1 million people unemployed today. But, Mr. Speaker, we have 600,000 positions that are vacant because we don't have people who are trained to go into those positions. Now where is our education system falling down? That's why then we had to reorganize SIAST. That's why we have to take a look at the programs that are being developed through the regional colleges, and that's why we have to work with industry throughout the province to ensure that we are going to be ready for the 21st century.

When you look at the number of employers that are involved with SIAST today and with the regional colleges — whether we've got SGI, SaskPower, SaskTel, Weyerhaeuser, Cominco mines, Gainers, General Motors, Federal Pioneer, just to mention a few — these are all businesses that are involved with SIAST in helping us to plan for the future, making sure that we are going to meet the needs of tomorrow.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this year SIAST will be working to establish a new centre of entrepreneurial development to provide education and training for Saskatchewan's aspiring entrepreneurs and small-business owners. And this is something I really commend them for, Mr. Speaker, because this is long overdue. We have done very, very little in this province to develop entrepreneurs. And it's something that I've stressed down in the K to 12 systems as well, Mr. Speaker, that too often the old philosophy that we would find, that would be put forward by that bunch over there, is that we train our students to be employees and not to be employers. Mr. Speaker, we have to do much more in that whole area of entrepreneurialism. There's nothing wrong with students growing up with the idea that some day they may have their own business and may employ their own people.

Well we're doing other things at SIAST, Mr. Speaker. The whole idea of computer assisted design is taking on a very, very important role today. And not too long ago I was involved with the official opening of the new CAD (computer aided drafting) system at Kelsey campus in



Saskatoon. This is state of the art equipment, Mr. Speaker, state of the art equipment that you'll find is not going to be outdone by any other centre in North America — and right in Saskatoon at Kelsey campus. I would point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that students that come through those programs have no difficulty whatsoever going out and getting jobs. What we have to concern ourselves with then is making sure that we have more and more of those programs, that when the students have completed them, that they can go out and get employment in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this government places a high priority on the important role that SIAST plays within our educational system and this year we'll be providing over \$80 million for SIAST. That's an overall increase of almost 10 per cent over last year. Now I get a little bit concerned, Mr. Speaker, when I hear some of the members on the other side and what they might do with SIAST should they ever get into power. And the one thing that concerns me, Mr. Speaker, is that the first thing that they would want to do is dismantle the corporate office and have a separate board in every centre.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's the old way. That's the old way, Mr. Speaker. SIAST is developed for the people of Saskatchewan. No individual campus is for any particular city. Kelsey is not just for the city of Saskatoon. Woodlands is not just for the city of Prince Albert and yet the member from Prince Albert would like to think that it is. The same with Palliser in Moose Jaw and Wascana here. Those campuses are for all of the people of Saskatchewan and through the reorganization that took place we cut out some of the duplication that existed and, as a result, SIAST is much more efficient today than it was under the old system. And we have to keep it going that way, Mr. Speaker, or we are going to be left behind.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most exciting success stories in education over the past number of years is the development of our nine regional colleges. This year the government will spend some \$7.7 million to support our regional colleges where more than 27,000 students will enrol in a whole range of courses from adult basic education to full-time university programs in rural centres across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as I have travelled around the province visiting our regional colleges, I really commend the men and women who are involved in the provision of programs in these centres. We've got boards that are committed and dedicated; we've got staff that are committed and dedicated; and a tremendous range of opportunities exist in our rural areas today that would not exist otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, as you would well know, being from a rural area, that there are young people today, and some not so young, who would very much like to get more post-secondary education, but they can't afford to go to Saskatoon or here to Regina. Through the regional college system, Mr. Speaker, with the introduction of more first- and second-year university subjects, it now is possible for many people to live at home or close to home and take university or post-secondary courses. That has made access available then, Mr. Speaker, all over this

province to many, many people who would not have had that opportunity otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, again the NDP never had any plan then. They never had a plan for regional colleges back in the 1970s. They talked about community colleges and all the great and wonderful things that they were doing, but, Mr. Speaker, for the most part the community colleges, the community colleges did not meet the needs. They might have met the needs of the 1960s and '70s, and that's the party of the 1960s and 1970s, but, Mr. Speaker, they didn't meet the need of the 1990s and the 21st century.

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

**Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn:** — Mr. Speaker, another exciting new development that we see taking place today is the whole area of Saskatchewan's communications network, SCN (Saskatchewan Communications Network Corporation).

Mr. Speaker, this is another example of new technology that is bringing access to more and more students all across this province. More and more people in rural areas, more and more people not only for post-secondary education but also for grade 12 subjects or other high school subjects, have opportunities that they would not have had otherwise without the Saskatchewan Communications Network.

It's now delivering some nine, first- and second-year university courses to almost 3,000 students around this province. And, Mr. Speaker, we're just skimming the surface as to the possibilities that exist with the Saskatchewan Communications Network. Through SCN we now have accessible, affordable, quality education programs and opportunities for people in their home communities, whether they're out in smaller urban centres or whether they're out in remote rural areas.

Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting time to be in education and the SCN is just one other part to the whole puzzle in providing those quality programs.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to spend just a minute on the whole area of private vocational schools because I know that over the last number of years that private vocational schools have been a cause for some concern. They've been a cause for concern for me and I know that they've been a cause for concern for some students and people in different parts of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out that private vocational schools have been in existence in this province for many, many decades. Some of them have been turning out excellent products that had no difficulty going out into the work force and getting a job. Some of the problems that have cropped up over the last several months we feel now that have been taken care of with the new regulations. Some of them have gone. Some we have closed. Some have closed without any advanced warning to us.

But I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, and to all the members of the House that the Department of Education has done everything in its power to ensure that the students who were involved in these schools were provided with

comparable programs in other schools. We know that in some cases this was not possible. In fact, Mr. Speaker, there were some cases where the students couldn't even be found, and I find that somewhat a little bit disturbing.

But at the same time we have been very successful in placing the majority of these students into other programs and ensuring, in fact, that they did not suffer undue losses because many of them were on student loans. But at the same time there was hardship, and there was stress because some of them were out of school for a period of time, and they had taken that risk of going back to school and trying to upgrade themselves so that they could have a better life for themselves.

The other area, Mr. Speaker, that I would mention is the whole area of adult special education. We've been talking a little bit about that. And the fact is that we now have an adult special education branch set up. And one of the areas that they're going to be dealing with, Mr. Speaker, is the whole area of literacy. We have done a tremendous amount in this province during the last three to four years with literacy programs. And thanks to a joint venture with IBM, we have been able to bring services to many, many people throughout the province who otherwise would not have been able to learn to read and write.

We know that this service is still very badly needed, Mr. Speaker, and we will be doing our utmost to carry on with the literacy programs. The Literacy Council is going to be disbanded, but there will be an advisory body in its place. And we will continue to work with all of those different agencies who have been providing the programs over the last three or four years to ensure that we do still meet that need that's out there in addressing the problem of illiteracy . . .

**The Speaker:** — It being 10 o'clock the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 10 p.m.