

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Pringle: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to rise pursuant to rule 11 to present petitions on behalf of Saskatchewan residents. These petitioners, Mr. Speaker, oppose the provincial goods and services tax. They say that the provincial government has no mandate to impose this tax at this time and they urge the province, the provincial government, to reverse this decision.

Mr. Speaker, these petitioners today number some 3,000 in total and I am proud to present their names on their behalf. This brings us, Mr. Speaker, to 123,000 petitions presented in this legislature on behalf of Saskatchewan residents on this issue, the largest in our history, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to thank the citizens of the province on behalf of the opposition for becoming involved in this very democratic process of exercising their right, and I urge the government to listen to their message. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — I also rise under rule 11 of the Assembly to present a number of petitions signed by people in the province of Saskatchewan who are calling on the Legislative Assembly to find a remedy to the provincial government's desire to impose a very major tax increase which will result from the proposed provincial goods and services tax. And I'd like to present these petitions here in the Assembly this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I rise as well pursuant to rule 11 to present a petition to the legislature here that petitions the Assembly:

That the closure of Myers House and the failure of the provincial government to provide an in-patient facility in Regina for the proper care and rehabilitation of alcoholics and people suffering from drug and other abuse problems is unwarranted and improper.

Mr. Speaker, the many people who have signed this petition, many from Regina but not all of them from Regina, would like the government to review its policy here to shut down the Myers House and I hereby present this petition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order, the following petitions that were presented on June 5, have been reviewed under rule 11(7) and are in order. They are hereby read and

received:

Of certain residents of the province of Saskatchewan praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to urge the Provincial Government to stop the provincial GST;

Of certain residents of the province of Saskatchewan praying that the Assembly may be pleased to refuse to extend the PST to goods and services;

Of certain residents of the province praying that the Assembly may be pleased to urge the Provincial Government to reverse its decision to tax reading materials;

And of certain residents of the province praying that the Assembly may be pleased to urge the Provincial Government to call a provincial election to decide on the new tax measure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to rise and to introduce to you some students from Regina North East constituency who are here today. They are students from Dr. George Ferguson School. They are from grades 7 and 8 and there are 66 of them who are here, which is a very large number, and it's really exciting to see them here. Mr. Speaker, they are accompanied by Ms. Barb Hiltz, Mr. Con Nelson, and Ms. Marg Zalusky.

I want to extend on behalf of the members here a welcome to these young people who are here and hope that they find their visit here interesting and informative. I look forward to meeting with them after question period after 2:30 to take some photos and to give them an opportunity to ask any questions about the legislature or the systems of government under which we operate.

I ask the members therefore, Mr. Speaker, to join me in extending a warm welcome to these students from Dr. George Ferguson School.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and other members of the legislature, a former member of the legislature, Wes Robbins, who was the former member for Saskatoon Nutana, the seat that I presently represent.

Mr. Robbins has a proud history of representing the people of Saskatchewan in this Assembly. He was the former Finance minister at a time when we could balance the books in this province. He was . . .

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — He was the former minister of Health as

well as the former minister of Co-ops. And, Mr. Speaker, I understand that he was an undisputed heavy-weight boxing champion in the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and we used to call him "Smokey" Robbins.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, on behalf of all of my colleagues, welcome Wes to the legislature and thank him for the years of service that he has given on behalf of this province.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the member for the riding of Kinistino, that I introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, a group of students in your gallery, in the Speaker's gallery. These students are from St. Benedict School in St. Benedict, Saskatchewan. They are 24 in number — grade 6, 7, and 8. They're accompanied by their teacher, Gary Hackl. They also have some chaperons: Dave Marko, Shelley Parker, Mona Jasken, and Judy Hackl.

These students have come in all the way from St. Benedict. I trust that you have had a good trip to Regina. I do hope that you have an enjoyable time here in the legislature. I hope you find it informative and interesting and exciting. I do expect that one of our members will meet with you and have some refreshments and take some pictures and just have a general visit.

So on behalf of the member for Kinistino, I ask all members to join with me in welcoming this fine group of students from St. Benedict School.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join the Minister of the Environment in welcoming the students from St. Benedict. The Leader of the Opposition and myself, as well as a number of members of this Assembly, had the opportunity to receive a number of letters from the St. Benedict students as they lobbied members of the legislature to save their school.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I don't believe we should get into anything that may provoke debate. This may in fact be happening in that community, but I believe that you can deal with that in another forum.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, these young people have participated in the democratic process. They will see some of the democratic process at work in the legislature today. And on behalf of the official opposition, I want to welcome those young people to the legislature, and have a safe trip home.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gleim: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to introduce through to you and to the Assembly 17 students from the school of Admiral. Along with them their teacher, Don Friesen, and bus driver that is responsible for getting everybody here and back is Jocelynn Hammond.

I would like to welcome them here today and to listen to the proceedings for a half an hour. And I'll be meeting with you people at 3 o'clock on the stairs for pictures and drinks. And I look forward to talking to you and asking questions, any questions you have to ask, and answer some. And I hope you enjoy your stay and have a safe trip home. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with pride that I have the opportunity to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 24 students from the Cut Knife Elementary School. I'd like to say, Mr. Speaker, that they are as well accompanied by teachers, Len Dupuis who has made this a very, I guess, probably a very important annual trip from the school. And along with Mr. Dupuis is teacher Melissa Stockbrugger. Chaperons are Linda Veikle and Marion Robertson. Bus driver is Kevin Beatch.

Mr. Speaker, they are seated in your gallery and I'd like all members of the Assembly to please help me welcome these young people from Cut Knife.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Electoral Boundaries Commission

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the Premier I guess my question will go to the Minister of Justice today. Mr. Speaker, in March of this year the Minister of Justice in an open letter addressed to me stated — referring to the Archer Commission on boundaries — the following:

This course of events will, of course, be interrupted if at any time prior to its completion the Supreme Court of Canada advises that constituencies defined in The Representation Act 1989 are (un)constitutional. Those boundaries will then apply.

Those were the words in the letter which the Minister of Justice for the province of Saskatchewan . . . the rules that the government set out. My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is: do those same rules still apply today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I think I indicated to the Assembly as well when we discussed the Bill, that there would also be a situation where you get later on the deliberations of the particular commission. My understanding that their last hearing is today and that a report will be tabled within the next . . . shortly. I gather a little better than a week.

Well I do find it a little humorous, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. members opposite said that it was a gerrymander before and now seem to be changing their mind. I know NDP (New Democratic Party) across the province are embarrassed by the political position of the New Democratic leadership. But having said that, as I

indicated that once the commission is well developed, we would take a look at it then as well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the minister, and I must preface my question by saying, Mr. Speaker, I'm not quite sure what that answer told us, except it does seem to indicate that the rules set out by March 1991 letter are certainly at variation or under change.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is this: we assume that the 1989 boundaries Bill was appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada by this government because the government wished to validate those 1989 boundaries so that the government could use them in the forthcoming election campaign. Mr. Minister, will you confirm clearly that this was the purpose for going to the Supreme Court?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well certainly the 1989 boundaries were called into question by members of the New Democratic Party and their supporters. As a matter of fact, I think the partisan statements were that it's unconstitutional, illegal, gerrymandering, and the words went on and on and on, that the NDP were using.

And with that challenge, it was certainly appropriate — and the refusal I might add, of some of the NDP professors — to take the matter to court, that it was appropriate that the matter be clarified, and a reference was done. I note, Mr. Speaker, the sudden change of the NDP from the Court of Appeal decision to the Supreme Court decision.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question for the minister. If those last two answers don't leave the voters in a total state of utter confusion, I don't know what answers will leave them in total confusion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I simply want to ask as non-politically as I can of the Minister of Justice, whether or not the letter of March 19, 1991 is a letter which the government still adheres to, and whether or not the appeal which the government took of the 1989 boundaries Bill was taken on the basis that the government believed in that Bill and believed that it should be a Bill upon which the next election should be run.

If that's the case, why isn't the government ready to follow those rules and follow its own dictates?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well I've already answered the Leader of the Opposition that there was a discussion during the debate that at some point once the new Electoral Boundaries Commission had advanced significantly, that we would have to take a look at it. Again I'm advised that

they can probably have their report done by I believe a week Monday or something.

But where the confusion comes of course, Mr. Speaker, is in the NDP minds, in that on the one hand they called and told everybody in Saskatchewan that the 1989 boundaries were a blatant gerrymander, that they were unconstitutional, that they were illegal, and proceeded to tell everybody in the province. Now they're trying to reverse themselves and say, well, gee, maybe they're all right after all.

So, Mr. Speaker, NDP across the province are today having a great deal of digestive problems eating crow, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have a straightforward question to the Minister of Justice. We're prepared to live with the Supreme Court of Canada's decision, which is decided on the law. That's the law of the land. That's the law of the land.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — My question to the Minister of Justice is: are you prepared with the law of the land, and are you prepared to call the election that the people of Saskatchewan so urgently want?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well you see one of the difficulties that the NDP have is that they publicly discredited the 1989 boundaries in the minds of many Saskatchewan people. And there is the question of which would be credible, Mr. Speaker, a legislation that has the legal sanction of the Supreme Court of Canada or an Electoral Boundaries Commission report and its legislation which has the sanction of both political parties, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Effects of Decentralization

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister in charge of decentralization. Mr. Minister, today you made another phoney decentralization announcement. Your series of announcements, Mr. Minister, has now become a circus except that there is no joy in it because of the tragedy that you are forcing on hundreds of Saskatchewan families and because of the tragedy that you're inflicting on Saskatchewan communities you are using for sheer, cynical political purposes.

In every one of these communities you've said that you are beginning the implementation of your plan immediately. But your own estimates show that the cost of this is going to be 30 to \$35,000 per employee, where at 30,000 it'll cost \$14.2 million and you've only budgeted 2 million.

Isn't that why, Mr. Minister, you are hiding your cost/benefit analysis? And why is your plan so secretive

and dishonest with the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, the plan is not dishonest with the people of Saskatchewan. Dishonesty with the people of Saskatchewan comes from the group over here who in Regina say, we're against decentralization, and in every community in the province are out there saying, we're for decentralization. Mr. Speaker, that's dishonesty, not to say the same thing in town as you say in the country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — If you're going to be in a leadership role in public life in Saskatchewan or anywhere else, you must stand by what you believe and say it wherever you are, which is something that that member and his party do not do. That's the first point, Mr. Speaker.

The other point is, Mr. Speaker, the Fair Share program, the decentralization program is a significant part of a stabilizing force in this province for rural communities. And, Mr. Speaker, stabilized rural communities are absolutely essential for a prosperous economy across the province, including prosperous cities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — A new question to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. I say to you, Mr. Minister, that this party is for fair, honest, and effective government. That's what we stand for.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — If your plan and proposals, Mr. Minister, are to be taken seriously, a farmer from Shellbrook will now have to travel to Watson to deal with the soils and crops branch. Then he's going to have to go to Melville to deal with crop insurance, and then he's going to have to go to Eastend to deal with the agriculture services branch of Rural Affairs.

How can you call this bringing better services to Saskatchewan farmers, Mr. Minister, and why do you inflict such an insult on our farm families who've already suffered enough in recent years, Mr. Minister? Why do you do this?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, that question, that very question from that member indicates what's happened to the member who once represented a rural riding and at that time must have understood or at least had people believing that he understood what really goes on in rural Saskatchewan and who the farmer would go to see as it relates to the various branches of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, rural service centres in all of the locations . . . whether that member is in Shellbrook or the member is in the north-west where I'm from in the Meadow Lake area, a long way from both Melville and Watson and a long

way from Carievale and other places in the province. Mr. Speaker, the farmers of the province don't make a practice of going to the policy development centres of the Department of Agriculture, whether it's related here in Regina or in Watson or in the crop insurance branch, the Crop Insurance Corporation of Melville. Mr. Speaker, the Crop Insurance Corporation of Melville has been a resounding success in Melville. Farmers across the province receive services, send their policies in by mail. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely out of touch with the rural part of this province since he centralized himself safely to the arms of Regina.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the same minister. Mr. Minister, you plan to send liquor inspectors to Hudson Bay and then you're going to make hotel owners and bar owners travel long distances at great increased costs to deal with them. You now own a Liquor Board set-up in Regina but you're going to pay more taxpayers' money for expensive leases.

You're going to send the communication unit of Rural Affairs to Cabri, a very fine community, but a community . . .

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — But a community, Mr. Speaker, not known for its access to multiple printing plants or as a major media centre.

Mr. Minister, you send the Correspondence School to Assiniboia despite the fact that it needs many, many teachers at certain times of the year that are part-time teachers; otherwise results and exams will be delayed for weeks and weeks and weeks.

In view of this, Mr. Minister, I ask you to explain: how is this making public service more efficient and responsive to the needs of Saskatchewan people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member once again . . . his whole question is based on the premise that people who receive the services from the various agencies that he talked about, each one was looked at very, very carefully before being decentralized. These are the administrative functions, the central administrative functions which do not deal on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis with the walk-in traffic or with the drive-to-the-head-office traffic from various places in the province. That's not the case.

What the member is understanding of how the administration of the Liquor Board works is absolutely erroneous in terms of what he's just laid out in this House, in terms of what happens. That's not the case. Mr. Speaker, the administration of the Liquor Board can carry on in the way in which it now carries on in Hudson Bay as well as it can in the city of Regina.

And as for the hon. member's edification, there are people who live in all parts of this province, all over the

province — which he may be not aware of, I'm not sure. Since he's become centralized he doesn't understand that people live all over the province. And that there's technology, and that technology is the way in which people communicate with the administration centres.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, another question to the same minister. Mr. Minister . . .

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

Mr. Tchorzewski: — A question to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, there is no farmer in Saskatchewan who would put his fuel depot on one quarter, his barn on another quarter, a machine shed somewhere else, and a granary on every quarter on his farm, Mr. Minister.

What you are doing, Mr. Minister, is eroding public service delivery. What you are doing is going to create extreme and great inefficiency. What you're doing is going to increase the cost of government by millions and millions of dollars.

And I ask you, Mr. Minister, what you are doing is bizarre and incredible and you have no mandate to do it. Therefore, Mr. Minister, will you put a stop to this bizarre stuff that you're doing and will you wait for an election to be called so that the people of Saskatchewan can pass judgement on what you're doing, since you have no mandate to do it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, in each case the Fair Share Saskatchewan or the decentralization programs make sense from the point of view of administration and they can be carried on. They can be carried on.

Mr. Speaker, just in answer to the hon. member's little analogy that he uses. What he doesn't understand, that is in . . . this is 1991 — 1991, hon. member. People in rural Saskatchewan now have individual line service. They have a phone in the barn and in the shed and in their house and in the tractor, Mr. Speaker, some of them.

The hon. member needs to know that this is 1991. Agriculture is not the model of the 1940s that the NDP continue to cling to, whether it's in agriculture or health care or whatever it is. They cling to the old models of the 1940s and don't understand what's happening, not only here in Saskatchewan, but across North America and the world.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Government Office Vacancy Rate

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the same . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the same minister, and I guess with their record of

incompetence and waste and mismanagement, the best we can actually hope for is that one of their new offices don't end up in North Dakota or Alberta or Manitoba.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Minister, I think we need to get to the root of the questions that are being asked today . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'm going to interrupt you again, but I'm going to have to ask the hon. members to allow the member to put his question. We're having a great deal of interruptions, quite frankly, in this instance on both sides of the House, and I'd like you to show the courtesy that is becoming to allow the member to put his question.

Mr. Anguish: — The root of the problem here today, Mr. Speaker, is we're trying to get at the cost of what this is to the taxpayers in the province of Saskatchewan.

In regard to that, we'd like to ask the minister here today, Mr. Speaker, what is the square footage of leased and government owned office space that's going to be left vacant by the planned moves, and what is the cost of that going to be to the taxpayers in the province of Saskatchewan? That's what we want you to answer. Come honest with people. Just tell us the true facts.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the vacancy rate in government space in this city of Regina now and in recent months has been in the neighbourhood of 1 per cent — less than 1 per cent vacancy rate — the best record of management of office space of any government across the country. And in the private sector in this city it's about 4 to 5 per cent, as I understand it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to this member's little analogy about North Dakota, Montana, Alberta, that this would be so out of control that these offices will end up elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from the NDP, the hon. member from the NDP needs to understand what's happening in this country where the only jurisdiction, . . . very large jurisdiction in this country under an NDP government is losing a company with such Canadian roots as the Hudson's Bay Company. Suggestions from the Hudson's Bay president that it's not totally impossible, because of Ontario government NDP policies, that they may be in . . . a large warehouse position to be moving into the United States of America.

The NDP should be apologizing to all citizens of Canada and to the business community of this whole country for the policies that they undertake, not only in Ontario, but what they advocate here in Saskatchewan as well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — To the same minister, Mr. Speaker — is your position so weak that you have to attack a government 2,000 miles outside of our own borders, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Is your position so weak? We're not talking about your past record; everyone knows your past record.

The question we're asking you is not about the record of 1 per cent vacancy in government office space. We're asking you, what is the cost to the taxpayers in the province of Saskatchewan by the vacant office space you will leave strewn across Regina, to vacate those offices, to move somewhere else where you may not even move to, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — The hon. member should make no mistake. Decentralization and stabilizing of rural Saskatchewan is a policy that must happen and it's a policy that is on. It will happen.

Mr. Speaker, and as it relates to the suggestion that I would attack a government 2,000 miles away because I don't have an answer for what's happening here, I'll say this, Mr. Speaker. The attack of the NDP government 2,000 miles away . . . the Government of Ontario and its policies which have a direct effect not only on people in Saskatchewan but direct effects on the economy of this whole nation, and that is absolutely the case. And, Mr. Speaker, I will stand as a public figure in Saskatchewan and attack that NDP government and that NDP policy whether it's in Ontario or that group across the way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Obviously the Deputy Premier won't answer the questions in regard to cost. I'll ask a supplementary to the minister in charge of the Property Management Corporation, Mr. Speaker. My question to that minister is that how much office space will be vacated and what is the cost of that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wolfe: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite asks about space. And I ask the member opposite, what about space in rural Saskatchewan? What about houses in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? What about the stores and businesses in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? What about the schools and hospitals in rural Saskatchewan? What about working with the federal government — instead of fighting with them — for a greater federal presence here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, that member and those members opposite have continued to confuse and mislead the public. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition in his report, Mr. Speaker, in his report on how he was going to deal with the unanswered question of where is the \$125 million coming from, Mr. Speaker . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, the government's already

acting like they're in opposition. They're asking the questions. Let's talk about rural Saskatchewan.

Tell us, Mr. Minister, how much office space have you secured for these moves that you tell are going to be done immediately, you're telling people that's happening in rural Saskatchewan. And are you going to keep the public posted on where these accommodations are going to be acquired? Are you going to make secret deals with your Tory friends to prop up their economy, not the economy of the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wolfe: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's very interesting that the members opposite can afford to alienate all of Saskatchewan — all of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, not just rural Saskatchewan — all of Saskatchewan. They forget . . . They've been in the city too long, Mr. Speaker. They forget that the rural economy and the urban economies are tied together. Mr. Speaker, those schools, those hospitals, those homes, those businesses, are what the cities were built on, Mr. Speaker. They really have and they really will in the future, Mr. Speaker.

I wanted to finish answering the question, Mr. Speaker, as it related to the misinformation from the members opposition and the misinformation from the Leader of the Opposition in his report over the unanswered question, Mr. Speaker — the unanswered question of the \$125 million and where was it going to come from.

He talked about space, Mr. Speaker. He talked about leased space. He talked about a reduction of 25 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Closure of Myers House

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan alcohol and drug council. I believe that's the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of talk about the building, developing, jobs you're creating. In fact you're cutting back, Mr. Minister, in a wide variety of areas on services that people need, none more so than with respect to treatment of alcohol.

Mr. Minister, the . . . well I want to — if now the minister begins to proclaim his righteousness on the subject — I want the minister to tell this House why you have ceased to fund Myers House, an institution of some 25 years standing with a good track record. Why have you cut back in this vital area, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member must understand clearly and the public needs to understand clearly, Myers House is not a recovery. It is a residence and not a treatment centre and there's been some misinformation around that it is a treatment centre. It is a residence.

Myers House, I agree with the hon. member, has been around for some time. The board of directors of the Saskatchewan Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, a group of people who have . . . many of them have a long experience in this area of alcohol and drug abuse counselling and treatment, and some have been through treatment in their own right.

Mr. Speaker, the service changes that are taking place here in Regina are from in-patient to day-patient and out-patient. That's a change that's consistent with the view that recovery to this disease, alcoholism, is not an event, is not just an event. Recovery in itself is not an event. It is a total change in a life-style. That's what the treatment will be. That's what the increased day treatment will be. Mr. Speaker, that's a philosophy that goes on in the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission and it's one that I concur with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder, with leave, if I might revert to introduction of guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce to all members of the House a number of people who form a committee which is concerned about the future of Myers House. I think one might call them friends of Myers House. They're here, Mr. Speaker, in you gallery. They are here to hear the question and hear the minister's response, such as it was, with respect to their concern.

I know all members will want to join me in welcoming them here to this Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Speaker, with leave I wonder if we could just drop the two items under government motions.

Leave granted.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Speaker, before the order of the day is called for resuming debate on item no. 7, second reading of Bill No. 61, I would like to move:

That debate on the motion for second reading of Bill No. 61, An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act (No. 2) and any amendments thereto shall not be further adjourned.

The division bells rang from 2:43 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 27

Devine	Hopfner
Muller	Martin
Klein	Neudorf
Hodgins	Gerich
McLeod	Swenson
Lane	Britton
Hepworth	Pickering
Hardy	Sauder
Kopelchuk	Toth
Petersen	Duncan
Wolfe	Gleim
Martens	

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order. Even the Clerk can't hear me. I ask you to allow the vote to go forward.

McLaren	Muirhead
Swan	Johnson

Nays — 21

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

Mr. McLaren: — May I ask for leave to introduce some guests, please.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. McLaren: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With the bells ringing a few minutes ago we didn't have the opportunity to introduce my students. So it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, 47 students from St. Paul's School in Yorkton. They are accompanied by their teachers Ardis Wayman and Irene Fahlman. And we've already had our photos and our drinks, Mr. Speaker, so I just want to welcome everyone to the Assembly.

You've seen a recorded vote taking place today. We hope you enjoy the rest of your tour in the city. And have a good summer holiday. Good luck in your exams. And I'd ask all members to please welcome these students from St. Paul's School in Yorkton.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 61

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hepworth that **Bill No. 61 — An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act (No. 2)** be now read a second time and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Van Mulligen.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Twenty minutes is not long to deal with this particular tax Bill. Mr. Speaker, from the very beginning, this Bill has been clothed in illegitimacy. It was never intended to be a serious fiscal measure. This Bill was introduced outside the legislature, outside a sitting at all.

It was designed, Mr. Speaker, to allow this government to shore up its support. And we find out from the polls that their support badly needed shoring up. Mr. Speaker, this tax Bill was never intended as a fiscal measure.

It was done on the eve of what they thought was an election and it was done not with a view to taking a serious stab at the fiscal problems which this government has, which this government has visited upon this province, it was done with a view to shoring up their support.

This tax Bill, Mr. Speaker, was simply one step in a series of long steps designed to drive a wedge between rural and urban Saskatchewan. That's what it was. It was one in a great number of steps.

This government cynically after 1986 decided . . . they counted to 35 — there were that many rural seats — and they decided that's all they wanted. And since then, Mr. Speaker, this government's approach to governing the province has been to shore up that rural support and to treat urban people as if they were simply not a part of the province.

Mr. Speaker, one of the really heart-warming things about the Angus Reid poll was not the discrepancy between the parties. That comes and goes. What I found heart-warming about the poll was the fact that rural people found that as distasteful as urban people. I found that heart-warming.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to live in a province where rural and urban people alike say, I am my brother's keeper. I am proud to live in a province where the public reject the kind of crass, destructive tactics which this government has engaged in for four years. I find that heart-warming that rural people reject it by almost the same numbers as urban people. That, Mr. Speaker, says volumes about the commitment which the people of this province have to fair play, to compassion.

It also shows, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province want to get everyone united, working together to solve the province's problems. And that's why they reject the approach of members opposite so massively, because it does exactly the opposite.

This Bill was not, as I'm going to explain in a moment, this

Bill was not designed to deal with the fiscal problems of the province. This Bill was designed to deal with the political problems of the Progressive Conservative Party. In fact it has done exactly the opposite. In fact it has done exactly the opposite, because the public reject this kind of crass political tactics.

Mr. Speaker, it is the exact opposite of what's needed. What is needed in this province is not more revenue, more largesse in the public treasury. What's needed is less. What's needed is self-restraint.

Mr. Speaker, in the last couple of days we have had a couple of interesting reports by groups which are not traditionally considered New Democrats. One was Global Economics. Mr. Speaker, they pointed out that Canada, in terms of taxation of the individual, Canada is the highest taxed country among the western nations. It is third or fourth from the top. I see members shaking . . .

An Hon. Member: — How about Ontario?

Mr. Shillington: — Well we'll deal with Ontario in a moment.

I see members opposite shaking their heads. It is true that Canada is the third or fourth highest in the world. And I wouldn't be particularly proud of that if I were a Conservative or Liberal. But Canada is third or fourth from being the highest taxed in the world.

But in terms of the taxes paid by the individuals, it is the highest taxed in the world. Among the developed nations in the world, this nation has the least progressive tax system. And that is what eight years of Tory government and 20 years of Liberal government have brought to this country is regressive taxes, and taxes which are among the highest in the world. It has given us a tax system which is the least progressive in the world, and a tax system which is one of the highest in the world. That's what it has given us.

Turning from Canada to Saskatchewan I see, Mr. Speaker, a report done by Burns Fry. Now Burns Fry are not normally thought of as being a handmaiden of the NDP. What do they tell us about the relative rates of provincial taxation?

What they tell us is Saskatchewan is second high, second only to Newfoundland. That, Mr. Speaker, is an absolutely astounding statistic. Because in 1982 Newfoundland had a debt which had built up over two or three decades. This province was debt free. In the last nine years, Mr. Speaker, this province has overtaken all other provinces and almost overtaken Newfoundland. Now that is an astounding statistic.

So what do we have? We have a province which has the second highest per capita debt in Canada, which has the highest rate of personal taxation in Canada. The people of this province are the highest taxed people in Canada, one of the highest taxed nations in the world. Is it any wonder that the people in Saskatchewan decided they didn't want this massive tax increase. Of course they didn't.

What do they see? They have seen this government

frittering away the money, one hare-brained idea after another. And one cannot be any kinder to the likes of GigaText, Supercart, etc., etc., etc., than to say this government has frittered away the money on one hare-brained scheme after another.

And it goes on. The government is engaged in a massive decentralization, unprecedented, I'm sure, anywhere in the world. What kind of studies do they have to suggest the efficiency of it, the cost of it? Absolutely none. Absolutely none. No one has given 10 seconds thought to what this decentralization is going to cost the province.

All members can think about is the next election. Well members opposite would do well to think about the next election. Because given the manner in which you have governed, given the manner in which you have wasted resources, given the manner in which you have increased the provincial debt, you ought to think long and hard about the next provincial election because it's going to be a day of reckoning for you people. It's going to be a day of reckoning.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — If you somehow or other have the notion that you can spend \$2 million a month on advertising, that you can give \$5 million or \$10 million to GigaText and then you could increase taxes on the eve of an election and not have people complain, then I really wonder where you people have been over the last four years. What on earth are you thinking about? What kind of discussions go on in that caucus of yours? Do you not understand how angry people are?

The public of Saskatchewan have said, enough — enough of these Conservative taxes, of Conservative waste and Conservative mismanagement. The public of Saskatchewan just want one more thing from members opposite. They want you to call an election, and that's all they want you to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — If there were one ounce of decency left in members opposite, they would admit that they do not have a mandate. In every practical and reasonable sense, their mandate has expired. It has expired because four years is the traditional length in which people go in Saskatchewan between elections. So in an historical sense, your mandate has expired.

In the political sense, your mandate has evaporated. When you are as low as you people are in the polls and going lower . . . Last year at this time your state in the polls was disastrous. This year it's much worse. That ought to tell you something about what the people want.

What they want you to do is just clear out and clear out quickly, and let someone else attempt to deal with the massive mess you've made. And if members opposite think that anyone in this province believes that exorbitant tax increases are going to solve the problem, then you really are living in an Alice in Wonderland, because it isn't going to solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, just as the prodigal son needs not more income but more discipline, so government opposite needs not more income but more discipline in its spending. Your problem arises because you have exercised no control over expenditures, not because you've suffered from insufficient revenues.

Mr. Speaker, I have said before in a different aspect of this debate that the raw statistics of government finances since this government took office tell the story and tell it very eloquently.

Mr. Speaker, since this government has taken office from April '82 to April '91, the nine years, inflation has gone up by 48 per cent, but your revenue went up by 61 per cent. Your revenue went up faster than the rate of inflation. Why then have you got a debt which is out of control, which has gone from nothing to the second highest in Canada? Why? Because your spending went up by 85 per cent.

Members opposite are fond of blaming all their problems on the weather. Well the weather had nothing to do with this problem. Your revenue has increased faster than the rate of inflation. And you certainly haven't had fiscal problems because you've improved the quality of public services in Saskatchewan. Patently, public services have deteriorated. And that's true everywhere.

It is true with respect to roads. It is true with respect to health services. It is true with respect to education. It is true with respect to the universities. It is true with respect to such important services as treatment of alcoholics.

I had the misfortune today to have to ask a question, a misfortune to ask a question on behalf of a group in Regina who for 25 years have worked and worked very successfully with people with severe alcohol problems — the Myers House. I say the misfortune not because I in any way regret my association with that group. Indeed the opposite has been true. I have found this to be a heart-warming experience. People, for nothing, doing their level best to keep their facility going until these members opposite finally are forced from office. They recognize that any other government would treat them and would provide funding for them. I say it's a misfortune because it should never have occurred.

(1615)

When your revenue has gone up 50 per cent faster than inflation, you ought to be able to keep the Myers House open. It's the only treatment centre of its kind in Saskatchewan. You've lots of money to provide the public services that this province requires, but you've wasted them, and additional revenue isn't going to solve the problem. You will find some way to blow the additional revenue just as you've blown the revenue in the past.

What this province needs is restraint. And the public of Saskatchewan, when an election comes, are going to turn to a party which will exercise some restraint.

I wish I had a dollar for every time the Minister of Finance has stood up in his place and in a condescending fashion

told us there's no money to be saved in paper-clips. What a silly asinine statement. Of course there's no money to be saved in paper-clips. There is money to be saved in \$2 million a month in advertising. There is money to be saved in the privatizations in which you have wasted money in a grand fashion. There is money to be saved in decentralization.

You people have wasted money from the time you've come in and apparently, Mr. Speaker, they're going to go on wasting money until the time they depart. Apparently it is going to be election-to-election waste and mismanagement. Apparently, Mr. Speaker, they simply won't change.

Of course there's no money to be saved in paper-clips, but there is a lot of money to be saved in running a more efficient government. And when the Minister of Finance stands in his place and tells us there's no money to be saved in paper-clips, what he is telling the public of Saskatchewan is, you better get yourself someone else to run this province because I'm not going to do it. That is what he's telling us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, it has also become apparent . . . since this debate started, it has become apparent that in an era of free trade — and there will be debate among members as to whether or not free trade is good or bad — but in an era of free trade, we are limited, Mr. Speaker, to the extent to which we can have a different tax regime than the U.S.

One of the penalties we pay for free trade is a lack of flexibility. We cannot have a sharply higher tax rate than the U.S. does because people are mobile. You can be in Minot in a few hours. You can load up your truck and come back, all in the same day — something our grandfathers and even our fathers could not have considered doing. People are more mobile.

And in an era of free trade our consumption taxes cannot be very different than the consumption taxes paid in the U.S. And they are.

And what we have found is an absolutely intolerable problem with people shopping in the U.S., and it simply can't continue. Now the members opposite, unless we are somehow rather going to repudiate free trade, and I don't think members opposite are suggesting that, then we are driven to a tax system which more closely parallels theirs.

Mr. Speaker, the solution to this province's problems are not higher taxes but lower taxes. We have got to go back to the days when government treated taxpayers' money with respect and when . . .

An Hon. Member: — Like their own.

Mr. Shillington: — Right. Someone says we've got to go back to the day when governments treated taxpayers' money as they treat their own.

This government took office, Mr. Speaker, and treated the

public treasury as if it were an absolute bottomless well — an absolutely bottomless well. Before the cabinet of this province was sworn in, before they were sworn in they wiped off the books some hundreds of millions of dollars of tax revenue.

Why did they do that? Ah, because the Premier tells us you can afford to mismanage the province and still come out ahead. And he set out to prove he could do it.

Well he's proved half the formula. He has proved he can mismanage the province and he has done so in a grand scale. He certainly has not proved you can come out ahead, because this province is coming out way behind, Mr. Speaker.

We have to lower our taxes, Mr. Speaker. Government has got to learn to live within its means.

I see, Mr. Speaker, looking at the clock, I gather that the clock is winding down. I just want to make one point, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this tax Bill. We have for three weeks now talked about this Bill. We have done everything conceivably possible to bring some sort of rationality to bear on this subject. We have apparently failed. The government is going to ram this tax Bill through using closure, something heretofore was never a part of this legislature. Closure is something that this government has brought to this legislature and something which was never used previously.

With the use of closure they may get the tax Bill through. But I say to members opposite, it's a Pyrrhic victory because a day of reckoning is coming. The public of this province are going to elect a party which will live within it means.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is what the New Democratic Party is pledged to do. It is pledged to live within its means, and we are going to. We say \$4.8 million is lots of money to provide a fair and reasonable range of public services. You don't need more.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — The public are saying no way to the Tory way. They are saying it is time for a change, and they're looking to the member from Riversdale and the members on this side of the House for new leadership to provide a new and hopefully a better day in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Pringle: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I waited just a couple of seconds there because I assumed that some of the government members were going to get up and speak to this Bill. I assumed, for example, that the Minister of the Family, who must be endorsing some new \$1,200 of new taxes per family, the Minister of the Family has not spoken on this Bill. The Minister of the Family has not spoken on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that this is just an incredible negligence in his duties that he could support this kind of extra burden on families when we've already got the second highest rate of family poverty in all of Canada. We got into that

position since he has become the Minister of the Family.

Mr. Speaker, and his response to that is, so what. Chuck Childers gets 740,000 a year. He designates that last year for hungry families. This year they cut 600,000 from that 740,000. The minister says, so what?

Mr. Speaker, 20 minutes. I'm angry over that, Mr. Speaker. I represent 21,000 voters in Saskatoon Eastview. Mr. Speaker, I have tabled many, many petitions in this legislature on this particular tax Bill. In Saskatoon Eastview I am proud of the fact that we have generated 7,600 petition names from our constituency opposed to this tax.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Pringle: — Mr. Speaker, we have generated 7,600 petitioners opposed to this tax, which represents over 33 per cent of the eligible voters in that constituency. Well of course that message has been echoed loud and clearly, Mr. Speaker, by over 123,000 voters from across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Think about that. That's the largest single protest, largest single message to this Legislative Assembly on any matter, Mr. Speaker. What those petitioners said is that this tax is unfair, that this government has no mandate to impose this tax increase, and that they urge the government to reverse its decision.

Mr. Speaker, I noticed yesterday that the House Leader — this is how these people feel about public opinion — that the House Leader yesterday when he spoke on this, that is the Government House Leader, what he said was that we in the opposition have been hiding behind petition names. That's what he said. That we have been hiding behind petition names to defeat this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, that speaks volumes about this government's apparent interest in democratic reform initiatives in the referendums and plebiscites. That speaks volumes in just how interested they are in the public views that he would accuse an opposition of hiding behind legitimate petition names when people of Saskatchewan are expressing their concerns on a particular matter.

Well, Mr. Speaker, for this government to say that this tax is needed to pay for GRIP and NISA programs is simply untrue. Mr. Speaker, nobody is buying that. Nobody is buying that. I've gone to hundreds of doors, knocked on hundreds of doors since this Bill was introduced. Nobody buys that this Bill is necessary for GRIP (gross revenue insurance plan) and NISA (net income stabilization account), Mr. Speaker.

What they say is what Saskatchewan requires, and which was confirmed yesterday in the poll, Mr. Speaker, is that Saskatchewan people require better management from their government. Saskatchewan people need a government as good as they are, Mr. Speaker. They need a government with different priorities, Mr. Speaker.

All of the efforts of this government in their last term at least . . . and this is again where I blame the Minister of the Family for shirking his responsibilities. He's the Minister of the Family for all Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker.

This Minister of the Family, he is buying into these divisive tactics of this government, whether it's through GRIP or NISA, this urban-rural split that they're trying to manufacture, now their knee-jerk ill-conceived plan of decentralization.

And we've made it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that we support decentralization. We've got a proud record of decentralizing services when we've been in government. What we object to is last minute political desperate attempts to pretend because they've got a political problem in rural Saskatchewan — which was again confirmed yesterday in massive numbers — what we object to is doing this when there's no mandate, at the 11th hour, without any planning, and without answering any questions, Mr. Speaker, about costs, without answering any questions about whether services will be more efficient or effective.

And I would say — again, I hold the Minister of the Family partly responsible because he's from the city of Regina — why this government is not concerned in the least about tearing families apart, whether they're families in Regina or families anywhere else in the province. And that is absolutely immoral, Mr. Speaker, absolutely immoral by this minister.

The member from Maple Creek mentioned, what about Ontario. Well what they do, what this government always does on any issue, is they attack their opponents, personal attacks on their opponents.

Now I can see why they want to talk about Ontario. As the *Star-Phoenix* said in an editorial on May 4, and I quote, Mr. Speaker. It's an editorial from the *Star-Phoenix* that says that: "Devine shouldn't point fingers." The editorial says:

He (meaning the Premier) appears to be using Ontario's projected deficit as a way of diverting attention from his government's long string of deficits.

It goes on to say that:

Devine's government has saddled this province with so much debt that it has had to join the federal Tories in taxing everything but the air in a desperate attempt to get out from under the red ink.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that explains why this government would attack some other government beyond our borders.

So I would urge the member for Maple Creek to forget about Ontario, to get down to solving our own problems here in Saskatchewan, to get their own fiscal house in order.

The best way they can do that, Mr. Speaker, is by calling an election so some other government can get the house in order, because they're not able. They've had nine years. They've demonstrated that they've not been able to get their economic house in order, their financial house in order, Mr. Speaker, and they've savaged the

infrastructure of Saskatchewan services to people.

Mr. Speaker, what this tax Bill is all about is about poor management. When I go door to door in Saskatoon Eastview, what the poll said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is about poor management by this government.

Mr. Speaker, look at it. Just take an objective look at all the indicators. We have got the highest per capita personal income taxes in all of Canada. That's an objective fact, Mr. Speaker. That's one indicator . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, well the minister's again, he's focusing on some other government and I would suggest that he focus on the problems in his government, Mr. Speaker.

The highest per capita personal income tax in all of Canada. I mean I wouldn't be proud of that either, Mr. Speaker. But to put another \$440 million on the backs of Saskatchewan taxpayers when you're already the highest taxed, I mean these people have gone mad, Mr. Speaker. These people have gone absolutely mad, Mr. Speaker.

Look at another indicator. In 1990, Mr. Speaker, we had the poorest job creation rate of any province in all of Canada. Again that's official StatsCanada information. That's not me speaking. That's another indicator. In 1991 the record is even worse. That's two indicators.

Another indicator, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of out-migration. Again over 80,000 people have left, net out-migration in the last five years, Mr. Speaker. Young people — 75 per cent of those are young people under the age of 34 looking for opportunities elsewhere. They're being driven out of the province, Mr. Speaker, because there are no jobs and there's high taxes here and there's a high debt load. So they're giving up hope. I mean after nine years, how is it possible for people to have any hope that this crew is going to be able to turn it around. They've just simply not done that.

(1630)

Let's look at another issue — bankruptcies, Mr. Speaker. The last four years, the last four years we have set new records for bankruptcies — business and personal bankruptcies. Mr. Speaker, if their economic and financial policies were working and their taxation policy was working, this wouldn't happen. They would be stemming the tide and beginning to reverse that trend, Mr. Speaker. That's an objective fact. These are not my opinions; these are objective facts.

Family poverty — second highest in all of Canada. We're almost the highest, Mr. Speaker. We're almost the highest.

So, Mr. Speaker, those are six indicators, objective indicators that give a sense of how a government is managing. And, Mr. Speaker, the indicators are all going the wrong way. They're all going the wrong way. And I haven't even mentioned over a thousand family farms being foreclosed every year for the last eight years. That's very important.

In addition to all of those indicators going the wrong way,

they've cut services like crazy. They put our education and health care systems in a crisis. That's \$740,000 for Chuck Childers; they can't fund Myers House to a few thousand dollars a year, Mr. Speaker. They can't fund properly Chrysler House in Saskatoon or Larson House. They've cut the budgets there. A three-year freeze on small NGOs (non-governmental organizations) that support family. That's why again on this account the Minister of the Families has failed in his responsibilities, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this government, on those indicators — objective, financial, social — could not have done worse had they tried. Mr. Speaker, and here they are with this Bill wanting to impose a brand-new tax, \$420 million of new taxes on Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker, per year.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've already seen the impact of this. High inflation rate for April, the highest in all of Canada. Job losses and business bankruptcies up already — that's up since April 1. I know that because I've met with, as apparently many of those members haven't, I've met with the business people in Saskatoon Eastview. We've met with the car dealers, the hoteliers, and all kinds of real estate people and many others across Saskatchewan about the impact — the restaurant owners — the impact about this tax.

Mr. Speaker, the Maidstone Chamber of Commerce, the border towns, are saying that this tax is bad for their businesses. It's killing border towns. And that's their MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly), Mr. Speaker, not standing up and opposing this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, that's their people talking this way. Mr. Speaker, I expect, because I'm the critic for families and young people, I expect the Minister of the Family to participate in this debate today and tell the families of Saskatchewan on what basis he supports this new tax of almost 1,200 per year to the average family. I expect him to stand up today and tell the families why he's supporting this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, what this Bill is — and this closure motion today is an indication, a clear indication — it's an admission by this government that they've lost the public debate over this issue. They've lost the public debate over this tax increase. They're not prepared to stand up and defend the Bill. They won't answer questions in question period which we've been asking now for three weeks. We see now why they made this decision outside the House, prior to coming in here, by press release.

Mr. Speaker, they finally produced some phoney study that nobody believes. I mean nobody believes that in the service sector I believe they say something like 7,500 new jobs will be created. They've already lost 1,500 jobs in the service sector since this announcement occurred. Nobody believes that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and not even all of these members have had the courage . . . hardly any of them had the courage to get up and speak on this Bill. Mr. Speaker, this is the first time, the very first time that closure has been used on a tax Bill in the history of this province. Think about that.

This is 1991. It became a province in 1905. This is the first time, without even debating it, that a government has brought in closure on a tax Bill. Only the second time in the history of this province.

Now that is not democratic. That is not respecting the right, the legitimate right, of members of this Assembly to come and speak on behalf of their constituents.

What does it tell us, Mr. Speaker, about the way a government operates when they're not even prepared to let the members of the Assembly who are duly elected to come and debate to the length as they see fit, as long as they stick to the issue, the Bill, to debate this as long as they want to? That's their democratic right, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we see this new tax increase coming, this massive tax increase, this largest tax grab in the history of the province, coming at a time when they're four years and eight months into their mandate, when we've got four rural constituencies with no representative in this House. Kindersley, Mr. Speaker, 18 months with no representation in this House. That's almost a half a term of a government, Mr. Speaker, with no representation.

I'm aware that the mayor of Kindersley wrote to the Premier as much as eight months ago asking for representation in the Assembly. Well that's their concern, Mr. Speaker, for democratic rights of people in this province.

Mr. Speaker, four years and eight months no voice for 45,000 voters on this tax Bill, Mr. Speaker. So they could forget about their rhetoric about democratic reform and their interest in public opinion and their interest in plebiscites and referendums, Mr. Speaker.

When the member from Melfort says that we're hiding behind petitions, that says to me he doesn't respect the right of people in Saskatchewan to petition this legislature, that they're not serious about the right of people to speak out. And that's been their record, Mr. Speaker, with regard to intimidation as well of those who've spoken out against them.

Mr. Speaker, 123,000 people have spoken out against this tax increase. They want this government to reverse the decision, Mr. Speaker, and there are more to follow. We've got a proud history in this province, Mr. Speaker, of allowing free speech, and I resent being muzzled today for 20 minutes. I resent that and my constituents resent that, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — You haven't said anything that's made any sense.

Mr. Pringle: — Well the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd says I haven't made any sense. Well I challenge him to get up and make some sense, Mr. Speaker. I'm trying to speak to the fundamental issue of the right, the freedom, to speak in this Assembly. And I'm trying to speak as well to the right of family members who aren't represented here, to have representation, where 45,000 families and voters do not have that right. And I'm trying to speak to the issue that businesses are going under, that families are unable

to cope with any more tax increases. And he says I haven't said anything worth saying.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we found out yesterday from the poll that these people are so out of touch that they can't go any lower, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday confirmed that they do not have a mandate to make any more decisions, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly, particularly decisions where they are on the wrong side of the public, which is almost every issue of government business today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, their record on fiscal mismanagement is so bad, this is why we're looking for this tax increase. And, Mr. Speaker, it's not just me. The auditor says — and I won't quote extensively what the auditor says — he wrote a special report. I think for the first time in the history of the province, any auditor writing a special report on how the government was breaking its own laws and failing to provide the information and contravening the auditor's Act — this is the first time that any auditor has done that, Mr. Speaker.

But the auditor said that he is unable to exercise his duties. He is not able to scrutinize over 50 per cent of the expenditures of this government. And, Mr. Speaker, he's saying that the government does not provide timely information and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the member from Rosetown says, what's waste and mismanagement got to do with this Bill?

An Hon. Member: — It has everything to do with this Bill.

Mr. Pringle: — I would say that it's got everything to do with this Bill, Mr. Speaker. The auditor says that the government is not co-operating by sharing information and making sure it's accountable. That's why we're in this mess, Mr. Speaker, is because this government is not accountable.

The waste and mismanagement and the patronage is rampant. And for the Minister of Finance to say we're talking about paper-clips here, is not accurate. People of Saskatchewan know we're talking about the 57,000 plus per year for 10 years that Larry Birkbeck is getting for a job he's not qualified for.

They know we're talking about 20 or so, 25 jobs of former defeated MLAs here. And the whole list of GigaText and Joytects and so on. That's what we're talking about. We're not talking about paper-clips.

The people of Saskatchewan know, Mr. Speaker. They know that there's enough money to be saved by waste and mismanagement to pay for GRIP and NISA and even make them stronger, Mr. Speaker. So that's what we're talking about. And that's what the auditor's report has to do with this tax increase.

Mr. Speaker, this government has broken every tax promise and promise it's made on taxes. 1982 — cut personal incomes taxes; they raised them 40 per cent . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1645)

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me. Mr. Speaker, this is the first occasion that I've had, the first opportunity I've had as a representative of over 15,500 voters in the constituency of Regina North West to voice the position of those individuals I represent with respect to Bill 61.

Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we are debating the Bill 61 amendment to the E&H tax (education and health tax), that the Bill not be read at this point but be read six months hence. Mr. Speaker, the reason we are doing that, the reason we oppose Bill 61 in the first place is that it is the most unfair tax grab in the history of Saskatchewan. The opposition has fought hard. We have used every conceivable, legitimate, democratic means at our disposal to prevent the passage of this Bill. But today the government has moved to end these attempts by invoking closure. And, Mr. Speaker, we have seen the legitimate attempts on behalf of the opposition go and fall on deaf ears.

We have seen, Mr. Speaker, the government opposite display anti-democratic tendencies. We have seen them over the last six years in this province and in particular display divisive policies and invoke divisive policies on the people of this province. They have been incompetent. They have been described by many as undemocratic. They've been described as unprincipled and they've proven that.

They have shown in all of their initiatives, Mr. Speaker, secretive decisions. They have proven to the people of this province that they are incredible when it comes to governing. They have shown their authoritarianism, Mr. Speaker, and they have displayed uncanny insensitivities to the people of this province. They are unbelievable. They are arrogant. They are unaccountable and irresponsible in the eyes of the taxpayers of this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, they are very — in the eyes of many people — they are very corrupt when it comes to governing the province of Saskatchewan. The government opposite, by invoking closure, have confirmed many practices that I've just talked about. They have redefined as well, Mr. Speaker — in the term of their governments — promises. They've indicated to people very clearly that whatever they say, whatever they write down on paper, doesn't really mean what they say, doesn't really mean what they write. It's always the opposite.

Whether they make promises, Mr. Speaker, to reduce personal income tax by 10 per cent, they don't mean that. They actually mean they're going to increase it by the 20 per cent they've increased it in the last number of years. When they've promised in this province in 1982 to eliminate the gas tax and the Premier stood in the front of this legislature and said as long as I am Premier of this province and as long as there is a Conservative government in the province of Saskatchewan, we will never, never, ever re-institute the gas tax. Mr. Speaker, not only re-instituted the gas tax but they've increased it by over 66 per cent.

Those are promises that they've made in the past, Mr. Speaker, and you know them well. They've also made commitments to eliminate the sales tax and of course they've promised to eliminate the 5 per cent sales tax. And you know what? They were right with that. They did eliminate the 5 per cent sales tax, but unfortunately they increased it by 40 per cent and made it a 7 per cent sales tax.

And we've seen, Mr. Speaker, the government and the party opposite in their campaign literature talk about commitment — commitment to improve the quality of rural life. And they talked about reducing all the things I've just talked about, reducing taxes.

And this Bill 61, Mr. Speaker, is not a reduction tax Bill. It's not a Bill which is going to lighten the burden of Saskatchewan residents. It is a Bill which will increase the sales tax and harmonization of the sales tax to a level that is unparalleled in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the sense in Saskatchewan is that the time of this government has run out. We have seen the people of this province exercise their ancient and historic, democratic rights by petitioning this Assembly. The opposition has tabled in the Assembly a petition signed by over 123,000 residents of this province. The petition has urged the provincial government to stop the provincial GST until the people of Saskatchewan have an opportunity to pass judgement on it in a provincial election.

And I have in my hands here, Mr. Speaker, a copy of that petition; 123,000 people signed that petition and we've tabled it in this Assembly, urging the government to make a commitment to withdraw the Bill. A democratic, ancient, historic right of the taxpayers. It's a democratic right, Mr. Speaker, that has resulted in the largest petition in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

Yet the government in their usual irresponsible and insensitive way have refused to consider the feelings and the rights and the desires of over 123,000 people in this province, in particular when we look at their mandate, Mr. Speaker, which has run out.

We have seen, Mr. Speaker, very disturbing practices by this government in the last number of years. We have seen the government being desperate in many actions they've taken. Their mandate right now does not entitle them to introduce this massive tax increase. They are now four months . . . or four years and eight months into a four-year term. They in essence, according to all Commonwealth practices, have no longer a mandate to institute a major government change, a major policy, whether it's a provincial sales tax harmonization Bill 61, or whether it's decentralization.

We have seen, Mr. Speaker, the support of the opposition's position in opposition to this harmonization and opposition to Bill 61, a petition signed by 123,000 individuals.

And thirdly we have seen, Mr. Speaker, the polls — the polls recently that have shown very clearly that the

government has no mandate, not even in terms of time, but they have no mandate in terms of public support or moral support from the people of this province on any issue, in particular the GST (goods and services tax) harmonization.

We have seen, Mr. Speaker, a number of comments made by people with respect to this Bill and with respect to the harmonization of the GST. And I quote one: instead of implementing this new tax, the PC (Progressive Conservative) government should be eliminating its own waste and examining other sources of revenue.

People are also saying that the PC government has no rights at this late stage of its term in office to impose this new tax without letting the people vote on the issue first. Saskatchewan doesn't need this new tax increase to pay for the new farm safety net programs, people are saying. They say the money for these programs could better be raised through eliminating waste and making resource companies pay their fair share of taxes. And this new tax is a direct result of the government's, the PC government's, waste and mismanagement practices.

In essence, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan people do not, simply do not believe that the new tax is necessary in view of all of the options available to them. We have had people unite in this issue, Mr. Speaker. We've had rural people and urban people signing the petition in great numbers. We have seen people in business sign the petition.

We have seen petitions put together from individuals who are opposed to the tax on reading that this Bill will provide. The booksellers of Saskatchewan in a few short weeks presented a petition with 45,000 signatures on it. So when you consider the 45,000 signatures and the 123,000 signatures, that's over 168,000 individuals in this province, Mr. Speaker, who are opposed to the harmonization of the GST and are opposed to this insidious Bill.

We have seen not only the people who are involved with the reading. I have a letter here I want to read in the record if I have some time, Mr. Speaker, that really underlines the crazy, crazy policy that this government has instituted.

The member from Maple Creek will not stand in this House and support the actions of the government. Instead she sits in her chair and she whines and squeals about what . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Members aren't to make reference to other members' presence or absence in the House. Order.

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite, Mr. Speaker, they sit in their chairs . . .

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

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — I heard you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, call the member to order. But when you look carefully at the kind of remarks the member made, and it's not the first time that particular member uses those kind of remarks

just in the normal course of his debate, I think an apology would be in order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government, Mr. Speaker, is the most undemocratic government in the history of western Canada and certainly in the history of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — We have seen example after example of questions asked to the governments that they refused to answer. With respect to Bill 61, we are trying to determine how much money can be saved in a number of areas in the government.

We've tried to ask questions of the Deputy Premier respecting Crown corporations. Crown corporations make up over 50 per cent of the government's expenditures on an annual basis. The Deputy Premier has stood in this House in the past and refused to answer those questions, but in fact has referred them to the Crown Corporations Committee for consideration. Yet we're at day 46 or 47 in this Assembly, and the Crown Corporations has not been called after repeated efforts by the opposition.

So we've seen a Deputy Premier, Mr. Speaker, in many cases who supports Bill 61, will not stand in this House and answer questions whether it pertains to Bill 61 or whether it pertains to the waste and mismanagement of his government in the Crown corporations sector.

And that, Mr. Speaker, that is an undemocratic situation. That is a very, very insensitive response on behalf of the Deputy Premier, and unbecoming of any government, in particular a man in a position of being Deputy Premier in this province.

Bill 61, Mr. Speaker, is opposed by all those people I talked about, 168,000 individuals. The used-car dealers are hurting. At least half of them, it's reported, will be out of business by January 1, 1992 if this Bill proceeds.

The impact on the public, Mr. Speaker, is very dramatic. This 7 per cent provincial harmonization will cost the family of four an additional \$740 per year in expenditures. That's \$740 per family of four that will not be spent in the economy, generating further economic activity.

We have seen, Mr. Speaker, the impact on local governments, municipalities, school boards, and hospital boards. And I can assure you these individuals are not very pleased with this Bill. School boards alone will be paying an extra \$6 million as a result of this harmonization.

The housing industry. Look at the housing industry, Mr. Speaker. Last year in 1990 the number of housing starts in Saskatchewan was at the worst level, the worst number of housing starts in this province since records were first kept a number of decades ago. And now we're 52 or 62 per cent worse in 1991 in the first quarter than we were in the first quarter of 1990.

Things are not doing very well. The economic indicators point at record bankruptcies, record out-migration, and all sorts of negative things which impacts on the province, Mr. Speaker. And this provincial GST will simply compound those problems and accelerate the hardship that many, many people in his province are now facing, in particular the business community.

(1700)

I have a letter from one of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this GST, and I want to read it to you because a lot of the members opposite don't seem to understand what some of these people are going through. And it's addressed to me:

Dear Mr. Solomon: I'm a single parent and I'm finding it very hard raising a daughter on my salary. And then when I have to buy something, I have to pay the provincial GST on top of that. But that's not all. I have to pay the federal GST as well. I'm very, very displeased with the provincial GST.

For example, she explains about a tire that she had to purchase because her car had a flat tire. And it went from 65.95 . . . by the time she paid the GST and the PST and the installation charge, it was \$95.36. And she sums up her letter the following way:

So all in all, I really got a great deal. I'm not very happy at all. How can I survive and how can my daughter survive in this world if everything is going to be taxed and taxed and taxed, and how are our children supposed to do the same?

Mr. Speaker, this is one citizen who has taken the time to write the MLA to express her frustration at this government, to express the frustration at Bill 61. And I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, whether the members opposite heard, or the Deputy Premier probably heard, but whether it went beyond his two ears, I'm not so sure.

This is a tax, Mr. Speaker, that we feel has to be rejected. And our leader has gone on record as saying that if this tax is not stopped in this legislature, if an NDP government is formed after the next election, we will withdraw the tax from the government policy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — I believe I've got a couple of minutes left. And before I sit down, Mr. Speaker, I want to just conclude my remarks by saying that the government's time has run out. They have no mandate to pass this Bill. They have no support because of the 168,000 people who have signed the petitions. And finally they have no moral support in terms of the public with respect to the recent polls.

And I have some newspaper clippings here, Mr. Speaker, recently. I believe they're June 5, *Leader-Post*, *Star-Phoenix*. And the headline on this says, Mr. Speaker, "Most believe the PCs are finished." And I quote:

The Angus Reid poll shows nearly half of the voters have written off the Tories in the next

election, with 48 per cent of respondents saying they definitely will not support the PCs.

The party is left with only one in three of the people who voted Tory in 1986, and support appears to be still falling with 63 per cent of decided voters saying their opinion of Devine's Conservatives has worsened over the past few months.

The PCs are seen as being ill-equipped to deal with most key economic and social issues, and they rate poorly with regard to issues such as fairness, competence and trustworthiness.

We have another headline which says: It's clear the Premier and his party no longer have any mandate to govern Saskatchewan. The Premier and the Tories have virtually dropped off the political map. Voters believe they are incompetent, rating them as poor managers of the economy and social programs. They also feel the Tories are the most unlikely of the three parties to follow through on their election promises.

And, Mr. Speaker, the other newspaper articles go on to say, and perhaps this one is the most damaging of all. And I quote the *Star-Phoenix*, Dale Eisler's column:

. . . the Tories cling to power as a government that has become illegitimate in the eyes of the public.

There can be no other description given to the public's opinion toward this government. In less than a decade, it seems the Tories have gone from the sublime to the ridiculous.

This time, there are no saviors waiting in the wings to rescue Devine as he leads the Tories toward oblivion.

The myth is over. It's time the Tories started facing the reality they've ignored for years. (The Tories) . . . day has come and gone.

Mr. Speaker, the final act of a desperate government was Bill 61. But the real final act was the Minister of Justice standing in the House today saying after he took the appeal on the boundaries to the Supreme Court of Canada and he wrote a letter to the effect that if the Supreme Court upheld the appeal and rejected the appeal court of Saskatchewan's decision to the boundaries, that the election would be called on the '89 boundaries.

And today he stood in this House and he said, well we're not going to do that now. We may consider the 1991 boundaries if and when they come to this House. That, Mr. Speaker, is characteristic of what they've been doing and consistent with what they've been doing the last nine years.

They make a promise and they break it. They write a commitment in writing and they break it. They do the opposite. They introduce Bills which are divisive in this House. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that when the day comes where they finally screw up their courage to call an election, the people of this province will provide them

with the answer that we believe will result in a New Democratic Party government after the next election. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — I believe that perhaps I should clarify something. And since the minister is rising, some hon. members might have the question as to whether or not he is exercising his right to close debate. He is not doing that; he is simply speaking to the amendment.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for clarifying the process here. It probably needs clarifying because we have been debating this Bill in one shape or form or another for some good long time now, in fact for several weeks. And we've had hours and hours of debate and hours of bell-ringing and hours of reading petitions and hours of obstructionism.

And quite frankly, the NDP have turned the legislature into a real circus for some good long time. But we ought not be surprised by that because I think it was Winston Churchill who some time ago said, when there is a great deal of free speech, there is always a certain amount of foolish speech, Mr. Speaker. And I think we've seen a lot of that from the opposition.

And it was also Winston Churchill, Mr. Speaker, who some time ago said — at least it's attributed to Winston Churchill, and I'm paraphrasing him — he said . . . or something to this effect, Mr. Speaker. He said this relative to taxes. And that's what we're talking about here tonight, is a Bill to expand the tax base and bring in extra revenue. He said, Mr. Speaker, that we ought to be proud to pay taxes. We ought to be proud to pay taxes. It's those tax dollars that build our schools and run our hospitals and provide for those essential services that we all want as citizens.

But he went on to add, Mr. Speaker, that: I'd be just as proud to pay half as much. And I think that sums up really the feeling of the average citizen in Saskatchewan. We all want the essential services. We all want them provided in a high quality manner. But we'd all like to pay half as much taxes.

I just want to review really quickly, Mr. Speaker, why are we harmonizing. And then the second decision was, why did we leave the rate at 7 per cent. Well we're harmonizing because people across the province, including an expert committee that advised the government, said look, the reality there is a GST, and so it doesn't make sense to have a confusion for the consumer and confusion for the business man.

People said, look, why don't you guys get your act together, have one tax, tax the same things right across the piece. As a business man, let me just send in one set of forms. Don't bother me with two sets of tax collectors and two sets of forms and two different sets of dates and one of you taxing this and the other is taxing both of these. All of that kind of confusion is eliminated under harmonization.

Consumers' Association of Canada, business groups, chambers of commerce recognize that, Mr. Speaker. Simplicity. Get rid of the duplication, the expense of duplication. Save us about \$5 million in administration alone.

But the second important reason, Mr. Speaker, is what it does for business. It makes them more competitive through the input tax credit.

And let's take the example of Intercon Packers in Saskatoon or Ipsco here, Mr. Speaker, in Regina. Today a lot of what they buy, just shipping their product via trucks, Mr. Speaker, just shipping their product, they pay a great deal of sales tax on the inputs going into just trucking their product to market, Mr. Speaker. The trucking that they, Mr. Speaker, all of the trucks that are bought, the gas that goes into those trucks, the sales tax will come back to them, decreasing one of their big input costs, Mr. Speaker. And that's the kind of thing that leads to economic expansion, Mr. Speaker.

The other reason of course, the other part of the debate was we could have harmonized, as the expert advisory committee recommended, but they also recommended drop the rate to five, five and a half per cent, so it would be revenue neutral.

Well we chose to leave it at 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And why did we leave it there? Because we needed \$125 million to pay the premiums, Mr. Speaker, on the new generation of farm programs. And by paying that 125, by making that investment, it will trigger \$1.3 billion into the entire economy, Mr. Speaker. And that's important in terms of stabilizing and revitalizing all of Saskatchewan's economy, including that of downtown Regina.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, if you just focus on the tax part of our plan, as I said earlier, I think the average citizen would maybe reflect in a manner similar to Winston Churchill. But the reality is this tax Bill is part of a six-point plan. Fair taxation is part of it. There's the family credits, as I talked about earlier; high income surtax for the high income earner. He's going to have to pay more because they've got to contribute to dealing with the debt and the deficit too.

This fundamental tax reform, Mr. Speaker, will be the kind of tax system that will carry us well into the '90s now. I see no major changes, and indeed because of that, Mr. Speaker, we were able to say on budget night, because of this change there will be no tax increases for the next three years in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — The other parts of our plan, Mr. Speaker, are wage guide-lines of 4 per cent this year, 2 per cent next year, and 2 per cent next year. That's part of our plan because a big part of the cost of running government and health care and education is wages, Mr. Speaker. And these are reasonable guide-lines we've put in place, and we've heard nothing from the NDP as to whether they support that plan or they do not support that plan.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, another part of the plan is realistic and reasonable operating grant increases for hospitals and school boards and universities — three and a half per cent this year, 3 per cent next year, and 3 per cent the next year.

Now the NDP have commented on this. When they were asked, would you spend more than three and a half per cent for hospitals and universities? They've said yes. Now they haven't told if it would be six and a half, nine and a half, twelve and a half, but they've clearly said that in those areas of government where we spent 53 per cent of all the budget moneys, they would spend more. They haven't told us where they would get it, but they have told us they would spend more.

And another element of our plan, Mr. Speaker, of course is new fiscal federalism, improved federal-provincial relations, and some new ways of looking at transfers and equalization, Mr. Speaker. The result of our six-point plan, Mr. Speaker, is to balance the books in '93-94. And of course, Mr. Speaker, that does mean that we've had to take difficult decisions. They've been tough decisions, Mr. Speaker, but we've done them in a fair and reasonable manner, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is, Mr. Speaker, this party, this Premier, this caucus does have a plan. We have a plan to shore up agriculture and the economy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — We have a plan to balance the books, Mr. Speaker, and we have a plan to diversify and stabilize and revitalize this economy. Tough choices, Mr. Speaker, but with this foundation and framework and with this plan, I say to you and I say to the people of Saskatchewan, we have turned the corner, Mr. Speaker. We have turned the corner. The difficult choices are behind us. We have turned the corner.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1715)

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — And what do the NDP say? And what do the NDP say? Well what is the NDP plan? It's got one plank, Mr. Speaker. After days and weeks and months of dilly-dallying and flip-flopping and various positions, finally because the NDP leader knew he was looking very incredible because of all these changing positions, he finally called the meeting together in Saskatoon — not in the legislative press gallery, Mr. Speaker — in Saskatoon, and announced that he will repeal the tax. He will repeal the tax. The business tax credits are gone. The family tax credits are gone. The sales tax income of \$125 million is gone.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of Linus. It reminds me of Linus in the Peanuts comic strip. And Linus was telling Charlie Brown one day when Charlie Brown was facing one of those often-faced, for Charlie Brown, big problems. You know Charlie always got these great problems. And Linus says to him: Charlie — and he could have said, Leader of the Opposition — there's no problem

too big that we can't run away from.

And really when you think about it, Mr. Speaker, what the NDP have done here is rather than face the reality, rather than face the fact that the debt and deficit has to be dealt with, rather than face the fact that we've got to make our businesses more competitive and stabilize and revitalize our economy, including our rural economy, they said, I don't want to hear it. I don't want anything to do with it. The best politics is to say we'll reduce the taxes and we'll repeal it, Mr. Speaker.

Then he did the second incredible thing that day. He said, I'm doing this — after all these position changes, Mr. Speaker — he said, I'm doing this because I have a report that says it's bad. Well what was the report? Well it was a very, very flawed report done by a couple of NDP hacks, Mr. Speaker.

Even the experts that had endorsed the report, when they saw it come out with their names on it . . . Doug Elliot was quoted in the paper saying, I support harmonization. And yet his name was on the report. And Dale Botting, the president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business here in Saskatchewan, said that the context that his name, in terms of being on that report, the NDP were being intellectually dishonest, Mr. Speaker, because he supports harmonization, Mr. Speaker.

What we saw here from the NDP by just simply saying, the best politics here is repeal it. I don't care what good government is or what responsible opposition is; let's just tell the people, take the populist position, there will be no tax under an NDP. Intellectual dishonesty — that's what someone called it. I call it sheer intellectual emptiness from the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, why he really . . . what was really his motives, Mr. Speaker, in saying, I'll repeal this tax. I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, because the true motive was found in a quotation in the newspaper from a reporter that covered the meeting that day.

He was asked about the news conference and kind of scurrying away from the press and not having them a chance to ask him questions about the repeal. One of the NDP handlers said, aw, doesn't matter, that stuff. And the quote I think went: it made great TV and that's all that counts. Repealing the tax, on this performance in front of the media, don't let them cross-examine me, he said, it made great TV and that's all that counts.

I ask hon. members of the opposition, is that what governing, is that what responsible opposition, is that what the role of a legislator in this province has come to? Never mind principles, never mind integrity, never mind honesty, never mind the larger public good; if it makes good TV, is that all that counts? Is that what the role of a legislator has come to in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — When we ran and when you ran,

is that the kind of integrity and principles that you ran on? Is that what legislating has come to in the 1990s in this province? Is that what it has come to, Mr. Speaker? Are we so shallow in our view of the world and what should be done for the public good that we put our own partisan, our own political interests, our own partisan interests ahead of the larger public good?

Mr. Speaker, I am ashamed of that kind of thing coming from the Leader of the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Let me tell you, Allan Blakeney and Tommy Douglas would not have done that. And I say to the Leader of the Opposition, he's no Allan Blakeney and he's no Tommy Douglas, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's not good enough to just hide. The issues we face are complex, Mr. Speaker. There's no sense just trying to put our heads in the sand to try and cover our eyes and say the challenges aren't out there, that the debt and deficit isn't real, that the farm problem isn't real, that businesses on Main Street aren't feeling threatened, that there aren't closures, that there isn't hardship right across the rural economy.

To try and walk away from them like Linus and Charlie Brown did, Mr. Speaker, and say the problems are too big, we'll just walk away from them, really, Mr. Speaker, is to forsake our future.

Our party has taken the approach and our Premier has taken the approach that we're going to take these challenges head-on. You're darn right it means making tough choices, Mr. Speaker. And we have made tough decisions and we've tried to do them. And I think when the acid test of election day comes, Mr. Speaker, the people will see that we have done them in a fair and reasonable way.

There was a glimpse, Mr. Speaker, a while back that the modern socialist that the NDP leader tried to portray for a while . . . that there might be something to it. He told a business crowd in Saskatoon or Regina — I think it was Regina now that I come to think of it — that, you know, I'm a changed person. We're a changed party. We're going to move beyond merely, well, a party that's good at wealth distribution to a party that can as well address the fundamental fact of life in the '90s. And that is, how do we create new wealth? He said we're going to become a party that also can focus on wealth creation.

Well I say to you, Mr. Speaker, in this harmonization with the business input tax credit, here was, for the first time, a chance for the Leader of the Opposition to show that he really had changed and that he had become a man and a leader of the '90s because it's the biggest tax break that business has ever had. It's the biggest tool they've ever had in terms of increasing their competitiveness, probably in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker.

Now he could have said, I disagree with the Premier and the Minister of Finance in leaving the rate at 7 per cent. I would have understood that. But to deny harmonization, to deny business the biggest opportunity of

competitiveness that they've ever had in this province, Mr. Speaker, clearly showed me that the polls — which way the political winds were blowing — was more important to him than the public good and in making our businesses more competitive and what that means for our economy in terms of new jobs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Now there's no question, Mr. Speaker, there's no question that there are some sectors that face a challenge — the restaurateur collecting two new taxes in the space of three or four months. There's no question some sectors. And I know who speaks for the restaurateur, the used car salesperson, the bookseller, and all of those who feel the challenges. But all of those other sectors, Mr. Speaker, are going to see economic expansion, economic expansion. And all of those special interests and those sectorial interests are legitimate, Mr. Speaker.

But at the end of the day, what this Bill and what this plan — the plan that we have to balance the books, Mr. Speaker, the real plan with real decisions in it and real meat on the bones, Mr. Speaker — the interest that this plan speaks to, Mr. Speaker, and who this speaks for is the children. That's what this is all about, Mr. Speaker.

We can't continue to operate government on some kind of credit card, Mr. Speaker. To just merely say, I'll roll back the tax. I don't know where I'll get the 125 million; I'll borrow some more. I don't know where the money will come for the farmers. I don't know how we'll reduce the deficit.

The issue becomes, Mr. Speaker, in the lack of a plan from the opposition, unlike the government. The issue becomes: who speaks for the children? It is the children that will face the debt and deficit unless our generation faces up to the reality and makes the tough decisions, Mr. Speaker. And they are tough. There is no question about it. But they can be done in a fair and reasonable way. The world is changing.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? What I find is that the young people — high school children, young adults, university students — are perhaps the most fiscally conservative in society today. They are very intelligent; they're very well educated, and they know what our generation is up to. And they do want us, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the debt and deficit.

And that's why it's important, Mr. Speaker, to have a long-term plan. That's why it is important, Mr. Speaker, to be intellectually honest in every sense of the word with the public. That is why there is no place for sheer intellectual emptiness, Mr. Speaker. That is why it's not good enough to abandon the public good just for your own narrow, political agenda, Mr. Speaker, because to do so is to forsake our future and to do so, Mr. Speaker, is to forsake our children.

Our Premier, Mr. Speaker, believes in our young people. He believes in the future of this province. And he has faced, as Premier, year in and year out some of the most major challenges that our economy has seen since the

1930s — wheat at a 61-year low, Mr. Speaker. And through all of this, he has kept a steady chorus of backing up and protecting our citizens, diversifying and stabilizing our economy, supporting those sectors when they needed to it, maintaining health care and essential programming in that area, and education, Mr. Speaker.

We have a long-term plan to balance the books, Mr. Speaker. We see no plan from the NDP, Mr. Speaker. This party, this Premier, Mr. Speaker, believes in our children's future. We believe in our province's future.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, I say to you, I say that every one of the NDP members examine your principles; examine what the party that Allan Blakeney and Tommy Douglas left you, Mr. Speaker. Examine what they stood for as people. Examine what they stood for when they made the decisions in opposition, outside of opposition, in parliament, in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, knowing full well that they had a role as opposition to as well be responsible.

That's what I ask, Mr. Speaker. This empty debate of just checking which way the political winds are blowing and if it makes great TV — if that's all that counts, Mr. Speaker, I say they have to look into their souls and ask themselves why are they here. Is it for the bigger public good, Mr. Speaker, or for their own political, narrow interest?

I say they are forsaking their party's roots. They are forsaking principles. They are forsaking our children, and they are forsaking our province, Mr. Speaker. I say to them, come up with a real plan. And because of that, Mr. Speaker, I'll be voting against the amendment and for the Bill, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, I've never heard anything more hypocritical in my life as that last statement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — He talked about families and working people and jobs, all of which this and he and his government have destroyed in the province of Saskatchewan. And I find it quite amusing that he is the only one that had the guts to stand up and defend this tax. Where's all his buddies? They're so scared, shaking in their boots, because they know the result of this tax is going to mean the decimation and the destruction of the Tory government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — The previous speaker had a quote from Churchill. Well I too have one that I would like to share with the members opposite. And when asked what he considered the most essential qualification for a politician, Winston Churchill said, and I quote: It's the ability to foretell what will happen tomorrow, next month, and next year, and to explain afterward why it did not happen.

And that's exactly the position that this government is in.

They have tried time and time again to deceive the people of this province with their untruths. They have tried time and time again to buy people's votes, to buy credibility. But they forgot one element; they forgot people.

They forgot the lives. They forgot the homes. And they forgot the society in which we live because they were greedy and wanted more for themselves and their Tory friends. They give Chuck Childers of the Potash Corporation \$740,000 a year. I know that example's been used many times. But there's a reason. A five-year, no-cut contract — better than any player in any professional sport, and more money in many cases. They used the same amount of money for one minister, the Minister of the Family's budget for feeding hungry kids — same amount of money. Then they cut it.

Now this year they put the tax on. And you know what people in the restaurants are talking about, these people who work in restaurants? They're saying their tips are drying up. They're saying they're losing the money that they're living on, because most of them work on minimum wage. The people in the restaurant industry are suffering. The workers in the restaurant industry are suffering.

But let's ask about Dome. Let's talk about Dome and see if Dome is suffering. Let's see if Decima Research is suffering. Well let's see if WESTBRIDGE Computers are suffering. All of those I just mentioned are being fed and stuffed with taxpayers' money by this decrepit government while people in restaurants and working people in our society are having to leave or go on social services to exist.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1730)

Mr. Upshall: — This, Mr. Speaker, is exactly how this government operates.

And let's ask ourselves . . . I mean, most of the time we talk about mismanagement, and everybody in the country says, these guys, it's mismanagement, it's mismanagement. Well I ask myself, for some it's mismanagement, but for some others, it's very good management.

Dome, I think, thinks this is good management as they have their pockets stuffed by taxpayers' dollars by the Tory government. Roberts & Poole thinks it's good management as they're having their pockets stuffed by the Tory government with taxpayers' hard-earned dollars.

But I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the management for the rich and the greedy and the Tories has destroyed this province. Because the people who are paying the bills are the people who are out building the roads, working in the hospitals and the stores and teaching, and they're paying the bill.

And what services are they getting in return? They're seeing their services cut. And at the same time they're seeing their services cut, after they pay their taxes; that

this government lines the pockets of their Tory friends.

I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, that is almost unbearable, and that is why . . . And besides that they go on and on and on and they won't call an election. They first want to ram through the biggest tax increase in the history of the province. They want to use closure so that we can't debate because they know the public will be listening. They don't have the guts to stand up and debate themselves and tell us why it's good — except for the minister, and I give him credit for that at least. Anybody that can stand up and defend the biggest tax increase in the history of this province, while the people who are paying those taxes are losing their services, and while other people are gorging themselves with taxpayers' dollars, I think running them out of this province is simply too good — simply too good.

They're destroying this province. We see a province in which the seniors in the province have built services; they've built social functions; they've built a society in which we are very happy to have lived in. And along came the blue machine and just ploughed down — ploughed down — many of the resources and the establishments that we have built in this province by our seniors, all because they are governing for the greedy and the few. That's why.

They had a mandate to govern the province, but they're not doing it. And, Mr. Speaker, even some of the old Tories in rural Saskatchewan, I've talked to them in my constituency of Humboldt, and they say to me: well, I'm a Tory but I'm not voting for these Tories. Because, they say, these guys aren't Tories. But I think what they're thinking about is the old Tories who maybe had some credibility, I'm not sure. I wasn't around — long time ago before there was a Tory government in Saskatchewan.

But these guys have no credibility even with their own people, because they don't like to see the shenanigans that are going on. They don't like to see the falsehoods that are being put forth and then nothing happening. They don't like to see the tax dollars being pumped into the pockets of the Cargills and the Weyerhaeusers of the world. These people aren't dumb.

And that's why they say these guys aren't Tories. But these guys are Tories. They're the new breed. The new breed, driven-by-greed Tories, and that's exactly, exactly why this province has been ripped apart. Because it's the "you first after me" attitude of this government and their friends, that have caused this province to be in such great, huge deficit.

Mr. Speaker, this all brings me to one point, and this is the reason that this, I believe, that these people will not be governing if they have the courage to call an election, and that is trust. If I've heard that once in rural Saskatchewan, I've heard it a thousand times — you can't trust them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — And the Tories say to themselves, well that doesn't matter, we have the money. We've got the purse strings; we can buy it. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell members opposite, there's some things

that money can't buy, and trust and integrity are two of them.

You can take all the taxpayers' money in Saskatchewan and borrow all the money you can get your hands on around the world, and you can't buy trust. You can't buy trust because when you deceive people, you have to re-earn that trust. And it's hard to keep believing when you know you've been deceived, I'll tell you, and the people of Saskatchewan know that. They don't believe it and they don't trust them, and money will simply not buy them again.

Why no trust, Mr. Speaker? Well just ask working people. Ask working people why they don't trust this government. They don't trust this government because they came in with privatization and said: this is the best thing since sliced bread, we're going to privatize all the corporations and we're going to have a great industry here and we're going to have people working and everything's going to be great. And what happened? What happened?

They tried. They privatized a number of things. But ask the workers who lost their jobs after the privatization if they believe that privatization was going to be the be-all to end all the problems in Saskatchewan. I don't think they'll agree with it. And yet they heard the words, they heard the words and they unfortunately experienced the results. Many of them lost their jobs.

Ask the civil service, ask the civil service if they trust these people. I'll tell you, I have people telling me, out of the civil service, that if you lower your voice to talk to somebody, you've got 10 people around you. It's an impossible working situation. Because they know that if anybody says anything against this government, they're going to get fired, just like the transition team, the blue-box team.

Unconscionable destruction, unconscionable actions against people's lives — people who all they want to do is simply work, earn their money and pay their bills and keep their family in goods and services. And these people threaten them. They threaten people's lives . . . their livelihoods, rather. And that's why the civil service won't work for them any more. So ask them if they trust their words. I don't think so.

Ask the professionals, Mr. Speaker. Ask professionals in education and health care. I mean we hear time and time again, we've built the best health care system and the best education system and we've put so much money into it. Well just ask the people if that's what they think, who work in those industries. Well they say no, and that's why they don't trust these birds. I'll tell you, you can't trust them because of what they say is for the most part exactly opposite to what they do. They deceive and destroy and destruct people's lives.

Mr. Speaker, ask small business. Ask the small-business person who . . . I'll tell you, anybody in small business today who is surviving in this province, whether it be in northern, southern or wherever they are, are good business people because they have defied the odds against them. They have defied the odds of a Tory government, not working for the people, not planning an

economy that can help small business survive, but planning the economy around Tory greed and friends, planning the economy around how to get re-elected again. It doesn't matter what we do, just got to get re-elected. Again they forgot about the people.

But the small-business person, Mr. Speaker, looks at this government. They've heard what they say. We're going to have a factory in every town. Oh, we're going to be able to mismanage this province and still break even. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, small-business men, every one of them will say, if I managed my business like these Tories manage government, I would have been gone a long time ago.

So they don't trust them, because they've heard what they said they were going to do for small business and they've experienced, sadly experienced, the results. Hanging on, how's business? — well we're still here. And these are good business people, and I'll tell you I would say they're the best in this world if they survive this Tory government.

Ask farm families, Mr. Speaker, if they trust this government. And they say no. And ask them why? And again they've heard the words. The members over there from the northern part of this province has told people in his constituency, well look at all the money we've given you. And they start rolling out the list of money.

And that worked for a little while. But gradually people realized that we're spinning our wheels. They're spinning their wheels; they're not improving their situations. The farm economy is getting worse and certainly there is a problem with the grain prices.

But, Mr. Speaker, the reason that farmers in this province are not being able to hang on, not stabilize themselves, is because this government has taken away many of the programs. For every dollar they give the farmer they take one away. And farmers know that. They've seen and experienced the words and they have sadly experienced the reality because many of them have had to leave their homes. And they don't trust them, because as they're loading their last possessions onto their vehicles if they have to leave, I can just hear the ministers over there on the radio saying, well there's so much more we can be and things are going to be great. We're going to diversify our economy and we're going to make jobs in every corner and factories in every town, as they load their farm truck up and take their belongings off to the city or out of the province.

I'm sure they really believe it. And for everyone who does that, there's a whole community affected. And the communities talk to each other. And in those communities, Mr. Speaker, they know that Tories are Tories are Tories and they eviscerate, they decapitate, and they destroy this economy and the lives of people in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Hypocritical. Hypocritical. Totally hypocritical in their actions. And that is why people don't trust them. And what do they do? They can't talk about anything but their wonderful decentralization programs, Fair Share Saskatchewan.

And just let me tell you, the member for Kelvington-Wadena . . . he's so insignificant I forget his title once in awhile. He wants me to talk about Fair Share. Well let's talk about Fair Share. And again just when we're talking about trust, when we're talking about trust, the trust that people have is the problem that you have, because you can't get away with deceiving them. They don't believe anything you say. They don't believe that Fair Share is a serious attempt to revitalize rural Saskatchewan.

First of all they know that in the short term the people in rural Saskatchewan need jobs, they need economy built. With Fair Share there's no economic game plan. And they hear the Tory words coming out saying, well we're going to save rural Saskatchewan, we're going to decentralize with Fair Share Saskatchewan. Well the only decentralization that should occur at this precise moment, Mr. Speaker, is decentralizing the Tory caucus over there out to rural Saskatchewan. Send them all home.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — And if they had the courage to call an election I think you'd see that result.

Mr. Speaker, that is why these people simply are scared to go to the polls. I'll tell you, they're running and running and they'll go as long as they can without calling an election because they know, they know, that the attempts they've made to try to get re-elected are not going to work. Because they're hypocrites. And people aren't going to elect another government of hypocrites. So these Tories are going to be gone. They have no mandate.

We've presented over 120,000 petitions in this province saying stop this tax. And what does the Premier say? This is the biggest tax break for small business in the history of the province. How many believe it? And they don't believe it because they know it's not true. And if the member for Kelvington-Wadena or any one of them over there had enough courage, enough guts, they'd get up and say to the Premier, you're wrong, Mr. Minister of Finance, you're wrong.

And I'll tell you. They say there's going to be 180 to \$200 million of income generated from this tax, but what happens? People in rural Saskatchewan say, well if I don't have any money to spend, how am I going to generate the tax? How are they going to generate revenue?

(1745)

And as the tax increases, we've already seen it. People quit spending money. And you know, my friend, that's exactly what's happening. It's false, false assumptions. False assumptions. And that's why they don't trust this government. They have no economic game plan. No economic game plan.

This is a government that is run by people who themselves have very little integrity. We have from gravel pits to land flips and everything in between. And in those communities, whether it be in Nipawin where they had

some things or in Hudson Bay where there was some questions asked and some rumours were rolling around, people know that that's the way they run the government too. Favouritism. Trickery. Trying to increase their own status at the expense of others.

Mr. Speaker, this is a desperate government. Desperate government tries desperate measures. This is a government in chaos — a government in chaos who simply don't have the gall to stand up and say, we were wrong. A government who instead of standing up and saying we were wrong and defending their record, just as the Minister of Finance did as he spoke last, he takes personal attacks at the Leader of the Opposition. For 20 minutes he spoke and for over 10 minutes, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance didn't tell us about his tax. He took a personal, vicious attack at the Leader of the Opposition. And that's the Tory game plan.

But you see, people have caught on to that as well. Because they know that the Tory lines are not true. It's just like everything else. I'll tell you, they could pave the streets gold and people would be saying, well it probably is pyrite, because they don't believe them. And for all the reasons that I've quoted.

This government's tried many things to sacrifice. They say the tax is going to be used for GRIP and NISA. GRIP and NISA was going to be their salvation to win the election. Well farmers can see through it. And they don't believe them.

They have privatization, as I said, was going to be the salvation for the economy. People don't believe it, and it's gone. They have community bonds. They said, oh we're going to have all this community bonds money, and you can work for your own community, and everything was going to be great in rural Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — Did it work?

Mr. Upshall: — It flopped.

They have now decentralization. And I'll tell you, as I said, Mr. Speaker, the people simply don't believe them, don't believe them because they won't put up . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The division bells rang from 5:49 p.m. until 7:32 p.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 20

Romanow	Simard
Rolfes	Kowalsky
Shillington	Atkinson
Lingenfelter	Anguish
Tchorzewski	Pringle
Koskie	Calvert
Thompson	Lautermilch
Brockelbank	Trew

Mitchell
Upshall

Van Mulligen
Koenker

Nays — 29

Devine	Gerich
Muller	Swenson
Klein	Britton
Hodgins	Pickering
McLeod	Sauder
Lane	Toth
Hepworth	Duncan
Hardy	Gleim
Kopelchuk	McLaren
Petersen	Baker
Wolfe	Swan
Martens	Muirhead
Hopfner	Johnson
Martin	Gardner
Neudorf	

Mr. Shillington: — I want to raise a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I think the question of privilege which I want to raise is known to all members. I think I can tell that by the rather sober looks on the faces of members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, this institution is the safeguard of the Saskatchewan public; it's their institution. They pay for it; it's their building. We are here doing their bidding.

Tonight we had the spectacle of a government which hasn't . . . far from having the courage to meet the public, didn't even have the courage to meet its own employees, which was who was out front. We have a government which is hiding from the public. That is their right to do so if they think that appropriate. It is not their right to lock the doors of this legislature against the public.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, it is most certainly not their right or anyone else's right to decide who comes in this building by what they believe.

Mr. Speaker, when I left there were people in the gallery. When the House resumed there are people in the gallery, but somehow or other somebody decided that the people who are good enough to work for this government are not good enough to sit in the gallery, and that is an absolute outrage.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — And just before anyone rises to their feet to tell me that there's a practice of not allowing demonstrators in the building, I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that is of recent origin. In the years when I was a member, prior to 1982, I have seen thousands of demonstrators out in that rotunda. I have seen the place full. I have seen the place full.

Then someone decided that somehow or other that wasn't consistent with democracy. Demonstrators have been allowed in this building and they have been allowed

in this Chamber. In recent times we've had the nurses, we've had the dental technicians, but someone decided tonight they didn't want to meet the people who work for them.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that's wrong. This institution belongs to the people of Saskatchewan. They have a right to be here and they have a right to be inside this Chamber.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — The public do not exist for this government's benefit. We are here doing their business; we are their servants. This was not a dangerous group of radicals outside the building. My heavens, it was women and children. What did the government think the people were going to do, throw the children down the galleries on top of you? There was peaceful demonstrators; they were families. The overwhelming number of people who are being transferred and who are being savaged by your decentralization program is women, and the overwhelming number of people out there were women and children.

What did you think the women and children were going to do to you besides complain? And it's their perfect right to complain. I say to members opposite who are grinning — I'll do you a favour and not name you — but to members opposite who are grinning, you have completely lost track of what you're supposed to be doing. You're here to serve the public, and that includes the women who work for this government. I say, Mr. Speaker, the privileges of this House were grossly affronted tonight.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak to this point of privilege. And I don't know specifically who the member is expressing his point of privilege towards, but I would just like for . . . the members opposite will point fingers at the government. I want to make it clear, make it very clear, just so that the public of Saskatchewan through this televised broadcast is not mistaken by member's comments, the responsibility for orderly conduct of this Legislative building is today and always has been the responsibility of the Speaker and/or the Sergeant-at-Arms. There is no political involvement in this whatsoever, Mr. Speaker. I say only general common sense that the public of Saskatchewan would full well recognize when people — whoever they are — force their way by a security guard with punches thrown — with punches thrown, Mr. Speaker.

And secondly, Mr. Speaker, if the members want to talk about politics I will allege right now this evening that it was . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order, order, order, order, order. Order, order, order, order, order, order, order, order. Deputy Premier, order. Member for Regina Lakeview could I call your attention. I ask all members to . . . I know this is an emotional time; I recognize that. However I think that even in emotional times we must respect each other, and I'd just ask for your co-operation

in that.

Order, order. Order, order. Order, order, order.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, on this point of privilege, I know, Mr. Speaker, that I, under the rules of this House, can't accuse the minister opposite of lying, and I won't do that.

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order, order, order. Order, order. Member for Regina Elphinstone and Regina Centre. Order, order. Now I know the member for Regina North East wants to make some comments. I also realize that no doubt he knows that the remark he has just made is unparliamentary, even given the circumstances. Therefore, I would ask him to withdraw that remark and then continue his remarks.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw that remark and I'm going to get on to talk about the people who were out there trying to get into the building to whom they elect members of the legislature that represent them. And the people, Mr. Speaker, who were there have every right in the world to come to this legislature to talk to their members, to sit in the gallery and listen to the debates, or come into this Chamber . . . or come into these hallways and demonstrate and tell the government what they think, as well as tell the opposition, and they were denied it today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — They were denied it today, Mr. Speaker, because of a government that is so frightened of the people who run this province they won't even let them in their legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — That, Mr. Speaker, is a breach of privilege. There is no doubt that's a breach of privilege. All of us. It's a breach of privilege of this legislature; it's a breach of privilege against every member of this House. It's a breach of privilege against the citizens of Saskatchewan who own this legislature. You don't own it; they own it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, on this motion of privilege, I have been in this legislature, fortunately and felt honoured for now almost 18 years. I have never in those 18 years seen such a black day as we have seen here today because of the actions of somebody who gave the order that this should not happen. And the only places where that kind of a policy is established and the orders directly or indirectly come from, are from that Premier sitting over there, the member from Estevan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1945)

Mr. Tchorzewski: — This point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, goes deeper. Mr. Speaker, this point of privilege involves the refusal of the right of this members opposite and that

Premier to allow the appropriate debate on the Bill which we are debating in this House and will be when this motion is finished. This point of privilege deals with the right of people to be able to have freedom of expression and demonstration. This point of privilege deals with a government that is so frightened of the people that it has not called an election way past it's due and then goes so far as to lock the doors.

It was this government, Mr. Speaker, who set up the security system here a long time ago in anticipation of the day when they would not be able to face up to the public.

The only answer I know, Mr. Speaker, to all of this is a provincial election so that the people can throw out these political gangsters and get a government that will run this province the way it ought to be run.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. I must once more ask the hon. member to withdraw a remark he has just made, calling the government members “political gangsters”. And I would, with respect, ask you to withdraw that remark.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I will withdraw. Mr. Speaker, I rise and I will conclude my remarks. I am speaking to this point of privilege and I apologize if I am being fairly emotional but that's the way I feel, that's the way I feel.

I think it's incumbent now, Mr. Speaker, to have a ruling. And I think that the ruling should be carefully considered. We should have a ruling on this point on privileges . . . on privilege, on why the privileges of all of the members of this House were so offended here in these actions that took place when these people came to this legislature, Mr. Speaker.

It isn't good enough for the member from Melfort, whose role as the House Leader ought to be to protect the integrity of this legislature and the right of the people, to rise and try to slough it off on somebody else as he tried to do on you, Mr. Speaker.

But I'm simply wanting to close by saying I think we need this ruling. We need to know why this privilege was breached, Mr. Speaker, why it was taken away, and who brought it about, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I will listen to the Deputy Premier. Then I will respond.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the remarks of the member from Regina North East. He's been a member here for a long time as he said. Mr. Speaker, I want to make a point very clear and I want it to be clarified by your office. Mr. Speaker, no one in this government . . . these accusations from that member, that the member well knows — I submit that he well knows — that the government had nothing to do with closing of the doors or whatever else went on there. That's the fact, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that that member who talks about his length of service here knows that full well.

He's making those accusations because he thinks he's going to make some political points, but it is absolutely inaccurate, Mr. Speaker. And he well knows it and any member over there who's been here for any time knows it very well. The accusations are wrong. They're despicable accusations.

Mr. Speaker, the point needs to be clarified about how it is that the galleries are not . . . that the folks that he's speaking of are not in the galleries. They were not closed by members of this government. That needs to be clarified, Mr. Speaker, by the office that had them closed so that we can have it very, very clear to our citizens.

The Speaker: — I have listened to hon. members on both sides of the House and I have listened carefully to the hon. member's point of privilege which he has raised. This point of privilege pertains to incidents which have just occurred inside the Legislative Assembly building. First of all may I point out to hon. members that there is an established policy that we follow since 1982.

Order, order, order, order.

The responsibility for security does fall under the office of the Speaker; however I am guided by the established policy which I have just indicated. I believe that to help clarify matters it would be useful if I read the established policy to members which is part of the *Security Manual*.

Now let me just read the policy regarding demonstrations and I think it would help hon. members to understand what has happened here tonight. And it reads as follows:

A demonstration is any organized gathering planned to make the general public aware of the organizing groups' opinion on any issue.

(a)The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be responsible for coordinating action taken during demonstrations at the Legislative Building

(b)The Sergeant-at-Arms shall work with demonstrators, elected officials, and other building occupants to ensure an orderly assembly

(c)(And)The purpose of said involvement shall not be to stop or impede a demonstration from taking place nor to minimize the extent of the demonstration, but rather to:

- i preserve the safety of public officials, government employees, and other building occupants
- ii protect the Legislature from damage
- iii allow a demonstrating group to present their opinions quickly, directly, and in an orderly manner, without disrupting day-to-day activities occurring in the building.

(d)(Further)Demonstrating groups shall not be permitted access to the building. Delegations to Ministerial offices, Gallery visitations, and individual restroom privileges may be granted

by the Sergeant-at-Arms, providing representatives of a demonstrating group have discussed their proposed course of action with the Sergeant-at-Arms in advance and have agreed to comply with guidelines as established in policy (e) of this directive.

Which is as follows:

- (e) The following guidelines must be adhered to by groups demonstrating at the Legislative Building:
 - i A demonstrating group must appoint marshals and establish a method by which they can be identified e.g. armbands (or something else which they . . .)
 - ii Representatives of a demonstrating group must provide assurances that their marshals will enforce guidelines set down by the Sergeant-at-Arms.
 - iii Demonstrators must not attempt to touch, block, or in any way interfere with the actions of elected officials or staff employed in the building.
 - iv Fire safety regulations regarding the maximum number of persons present in fire entry and exit corridors must be complied with.
 - v No bullhorns, portable microphones or other voice enhancements are to be brought into the building.
 - vi No picket signs, placards, pamphlets, or such like materials will be displayed inside the building.
 - vii Speeches will not be made inside the Legislative Building by any members of the demonstrating group.
- (f) Following consultation with the representatives of the organizing group the Sergeant-at-Arms will contact both the Regina and Wascana Authority Police and:
 - i Communicate any information which may be helpful for security services during the demonstration.
 - ii Inform them whether an agreement concerning adherence to the guidelines has been reached.
 - iii Inform them what access if any to the Legislative Building will be permitted.
- (g) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall, during the demonstration:
 - i Observe and ensure order is maintained.
 - ii Identify any unruly demonstrators to the rally marshalls.
 - iii Consult, as necessary, with attending police forces.
 - iv Remain visible to organizers of the demonstration in case they wish to communicate.

That is a very, very . . . not broad, but point-by-point

outline of the policy regarding demonstrations. All the guide-lines as indicated there may not have been breached. In this case, however, it was felt that the guide-lines as established were breached. The demonstrators forced their way into the building; they punched security officials.

Order, order, order. I also wish to inform the hon. members that no injury took place, but that incident did take place. They punched security officials and came into the building. In the building they chanted and they brought their signs and pickets and, as a consequence of all that, the demonstrators were breaching the policy as established in 1982 and it was my responsibility to react to the policy and put it in force.

The hon. member has raised a point of privilege. Of course, the point of privilege, in his argument he must demonstrate or establish that his conduct as a member has been interfered with. In this instance I don't believe that he has established that and therefore I find that no prima facie case of breach of privilege has been established.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for having read the security document. I don't recall having been supplied with a copy of that as a member. I'm also curious about the origin of that document. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if you would table it, if it is not a parliamentary document, or give us a copy of it, if it is. I, for my part, have never seen it and I'm curious about its origin . . . (inaudible) . . . conduct of this place.

The Speaker: — I'll provide you with a copy and you will have an opportunity to . . .

Mr. Shillington: — May I ask you the origin of the document as well? Was it something passed by a committee of this legislature and approved by a committee of this legislature?

The Speaker: — I will provide all the information to you with the document.

Mr. Shillington: — As a general rule, Mr. Speaker, when these criminal conduct, as I hear being alleged, takes place within the rules of a Legislative Assembly, those matters are under the general guidance of the Speaker. Do I take it you'll be reporting to us with respect to any criminal charges which are laid as a result of conduct inside this building?

The Speaker: — I will take the hon. member's question under advisement and do what is proper under the circumstances. Order, order. The member for Regina South, order.

I believe that we should put this case to rest as far as the debate — order — far as the debate is concerned — order; as far as the debate is concerned here which will take place, and during that time I would ask hon. members to conduct the debate — the member for Cut Knife-Lloyd — to conduct the debate and perhaps move on from this issue which will be handled as I indicated.

The debate continues on Bill No. 61, the motion

proposed by the Minister of Finance, An Act to amend the Education and Health Tax Act, be now read a second time.

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, as I begin my remarks I would like to indicate to you that I intend to move an amendment, and I'll read the amendment into the record, sir:

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

Bill 61, An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act (No. 2) not now be read a second time as it is being imposed by the government without a mandate from the people of Saskatchewan, and it constitutes the largest and most unfair tax increase in Saskatchewan's history.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2000)

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to members of this House and the people of Saskatchewan, if there was ever an indication that there is a need for an election to be called it's the actions of this government this evening with respect to the people who came here to oppose the imposition of this PST (provincial sales tax) as well as the imposition of Fair Share Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, this is a government that is so far out of touch with the people of this province that it's afraid to listen to its employees, it's afraid to listen to young women and their children, it's afraid to listen to small business people.

Mr. Speaker, this government is a disgrace. It's time for an election and the people of this province are demanding one now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I say to you and I say to members on the other side of this House that this legislature has seen demonstrations since this building's been standing. We've seen lots of them and we're going to see lots more of them.

But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's rare that we have a government in this province that's afraid to face the people of Saskatchewan because of the kind of government they've been living, and locks the doors so that they can't enter this place — their own building.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — I say to you, Mr. Speaker, this government can run and they can try and hide, but it's not going to happen because the people of this province are going to have the opportunity to pass judgement on them and that is not going to be long from now, Mr. Speaker.

This Premier, this master of incompetence who has driven this province into a 14-plus billion dollar debt and now goes to the people for another \$440 million that they can't afford, is a disgrace. He's a disgrace to politicians all over this nation, and I say to you, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province know full well that he's got to be removed from office and they're only too happy to do it if he'll call an election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — And, Mr. Speaker, if you can imagine closure invoked by this Premier and his cabinet on the biggest tax grab that this province has ever seen. Closure on a major tax Bill, not allowing the members of this legislature to fully debate this, including themselves, who won't stand up and debate in this place.

We've presented petitions on behalf of over 120,000 people, people who have said that this tax is unfair. It's going to destroy their businesses, it's going to destroy their families, and this government doesn't listen.

Mr. Speaker, this government doesn't have a mandate. The people of this province know it and that's why they're asking for an election call and they're asking for that election call now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I say to this Premier, I say to this Premier and this cabinet, you may be able to lock them out of this legislature, but you're not going to lock them out of the polling booths. And they're going to be in there in droves telling you where they stand.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, this evening over 1,000 people on the steps of this legislature — families, young families, children, business people — bringing their children here, asking this government not to tear their families apart, not to move them from their homes, the places where they've chosen to live. They were here to protest the excessive taxes, and what does this government do? This government locks the doors of the legislature, locks the people out of their own building, Mr. Speaker. It's a disgrace.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, just to confirm the fact that this government is afraid of the people that work for them, and the families that live in this area, when these people were demonstrating, there were two MLAs from Regina absent, and I'm going to name them both. The member from Regina South wouldn't go out and talk to them and nor would the member from Regina Wascana.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that's a disgrace when the people of this province can't even talk and can't even lobby their own MLAs. Their own constituents standing in front of this building asking them to drop this nonsense with respect to the goods and services tax, and call an election. They don't even have the decency to walk out in

front of the legislature. They lock the doors to the legislature so they don't have to see them. And that's what we saw in this legislature this evening, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are reasons why this government is not listening. There are reasons why people are calling for an election. And there's reasons, I believe, why they've gone with this massive tax grab. And it all stems back to the waste and mismanagement that this Premier has been responsible for since 1982.

It's the patronage that they've displayed to defeated cabinet ministers and retired MLAs. Those are the reasons that people, sir, want an election because they don't believe they have to pay this tax. They feel that four and a half billion dollars is plenty to run a province of our size, and they want this government defeated. And I say to you, Mr. Premier, if you've got any courage, why don't you call an election and go to the people of this province and ask them for a mandate for this tax?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, if you had any decency, if this government had any decency and if this Premier had any respect for the people of Saskatchewan, he wouldn't be trying to circumvent the procedures in this legislature by invoking closure. This Bill, sir, is about some \$440 million of revenue that people of this province can't afford to pay.

And what does this government do? Instead of facing the people and saying, well we think it should be there, we're going to call an election and we'll base this election on this tax, what does this Premier do? He embarks upon some political posturing with respect to Fair Share Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, one last-ditch attempt to try and win the favour of the people of Saskatchewan.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, it's not going to work any more than the used-car tax worked. It's not going to work any more than this provincial goods and services tax is working that they're trying to impose. The people are fed up with this government; they're fed up with waste and mismanagement; they're fed up with excessive taxes, and they're fed up with a government that is closed to the people of this province.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, when they see their cabinet ministers travelling to Dublin and Minneapolis and New York and Ottawa and Hong Kong and Rapid City, and when they see their minister of Highways sitting over in Honolulu in the middle of the winter on a publicly funded holiday, I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that's the reason they're not willing to pay any more taxes, because this government does nothing but waste and squander it. That's the problem.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, when I look through the list of businesses that have given up and closed their doors and those that have been forced into bankruptcy, it makes me ill — men and women who have chosen to make their livings operating small businesses in Saskatchewan, and because of the corruption and the

waste and the mismanagement of this government they've been forced out of business. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, the members on that side of the House are going to pay when an election comes. And I suggest to you, they'll pay dearly.

Mr. Speaker, you can look through every economic indicator there is with respect to our economy in Saskatchewan and it clearly indicates that this government is a disaster. We've seen increased taxes; we've seen losses of jobs; we've seen massive out-migration from this province.

And what do we have? We have a government that won't listen to the people of this province and locks the doors of the legislature. That's what we have in this province, Mr. Speaker, and I say it's a shame.

Mr. Speaker, if I go through the list of the tax-paid holidays that members of this government have been on, from the Premier on down, it gives me good reason to believe that that's where a lot of the new PST tax will go if it's introduced.

When I look at the fact that Ted Urness, the chairman of the Liquor Board, is paid \$119,600 a year in salary, when by legislative authority he's only allowed to be paid 60, it's another good reason why people don't want to pay this tax, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I look through the list of the cabinet ministers and their travel, starting with the Premier — one year, \$39,762. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, it's a shame. It's a shame the way they've squandered money. I've looked through some of the lists of expenditures of travel of these ministers, and my goodness, I can come up with \$300,000 so quick it makes your eyes blink.

And what does this government do? Mr. Speaker, instead of being accountable, instead of being open and honest with the people of this province and saying yes, we've made some mistakes, and we're going to look internally with respect to the expenditures that we've made, and we're going to cut back our own spending . . . Is that what happened in this province, Mr. Speaker? It is not.

What they did was they went to the middle and lower income people of this province and said give me more taxes. Give me more taxes because we need to squander more money you see because we still have our friends at the political trough. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that's coming to an end. I say to you that within the next weeks when this Premier finally goes to the electorate he's going to find that the people will no longer support that kind of mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the money this government has invested in failed business deals, when I look at the way they squandered \$5.5 million on the GigaText affair, is it any wonder people won't pay any more taxes, or are refusing to pay any more taxes, and why there's been one of the most massive revolts against taxation right here in our province where you have 120,000-plus people who have signed petitions asking this government not to impose this tax before they call an election and let the people decide through that election.

But, Mr. Speaker, this government is so out of touch, they're so far removed from reality that they won't even listen to the people of the province any more. We're just months away, short months away from the five years, at which time the Lieutenant Governor will call an election if this Premier won't. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, it's a shameful, shameful situation when this Premier closets himself in this legislature and refuses to listen to the people of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated that this government doesn't deserve another mandate, and I say to you that this government doesn't deserve any more taxes. I've got before me a list of orders for return dating back to 1986, '87, and '88. And these, for the viewing audience that may not understand, sir, are lists of expenditures that are listed in the government's own records that no details have been given for.

And we've asked for these in '86 and '87. D-Mail Services contracts from April 1, 1986; we've asked what those are about and how much they were spent and what they were doing them for. And I want to tell you, for the information, who the owner of D-Mail is — David Tkachuk who used to work in the Premier's office, sir.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, we've asked for an order for return of the contracts in '85 and '86 and we haven't received those. And from the same person, Mr. Speaker, D-Mail, and we're asking how many dollars of taxpayers' dollars did he get.

But we haven't got an answer, Mr. Speaker, and that's the reason, sir, that's the reason we are asking this government to call an election. We say that there's money been wasted in government expenditures, and we'd like to know how much we could save by cutting the D-Mail contracts, because that's what the people of the province are asking us to do, sir.

And I'll go through another list; there's more yet. We see D-Mail from the '88 . . . or pardon me, from the '89-90 session. We've asked how much those contracts to David Tkachuk, how much they cost the taxpayers of this province. And we've asked what these contracts were for, but, Mr. Speaker, this government refuses to give us that information.

And that's another reason, sir, why people of this province are no longer willing to give yet more and more taxes to this Premier and this cabinet and to this government.

Mr. Speaker, I see another one here from 1989-90 to a fellow by the name of Ken Waschuk who you might recall during the days of the GigaText debate. Mr. Waschuk was instrumental in setting, as we understand it, Guy Montpetit, the fellow that bilked us out of five and a half million dollars, setting him up with representatives of this government, sir. The same guy who got an interest-free \$150,000 loan. Well we see him popping up in another place here. And we're asking how much he got and what he got it for, Mr. Speaker, but this government refuses to come forth with that information. And that's another reason why people are not willing to give him any more tax dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we go through another order for return. This is from this session; this is from the 1990-91 session. And we've asked again — D-Mail Services Inc., the amount paid from July 11, 1989 to '91.

But you see, Mr. Speaker, we haven't had that information returned to us. And that's why the people of Saskatchewan are refusing to allow you to impose this unfair goods and services tax, sir. And that's why the people of this province want an election. That's why the people of this province are going to defeat this Premier and every one of his cabinet colleagues and every one of his back-benchers, in my mind, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2015)

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, to confirm what I'm saying with respect to people's feelings, I just want to read a little bit from a letter. And I don't want to table it because I don't want this lady's name raised but I want to quote from a letter to me: I just don't think it's fair. We're being taxed to death. How much more do they think people can take? People can only take so much. I think we're at the limit now — and this might interest the member from Redberry because this lady lives in his riding — I've voted PC since I was 18 years old, and I will no longer vote PC. I've had it with them. They no longer have my vote. My whole family is PC and they are no longer voting PC. They're fed up too. Please do your best to stop this tax. I'm so sick of hearing the word "tax" that I could just spit. Do they think people are made out of money or money grows on trees?

Mr. Member from Redberry, that's what people think of your provincial goods and services tax, and that's what people think of the increased taxes that you've been thrusting on them since 1982. And I say to you, sir, you, along with the rest of your colleagues, are going to pay in an election. You're going to pay in an election. It's going to mean your defeat.

Instead of being honest and open and decent with the people and delivering a fair, responsible government, you people have turned inside yourselves. You've squandered, you've mismanaged, and you go to the people to support it and they're fed up with it and it's not going to happen any more, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I can go through a list of orders for return that haven't been brought back to this legislature. I can go through a list of cabinet ministers who are on the government dole. But I'm not going to bother with that tonight, sir, because of time limitations. I've only got 20 minutes to address this issue tonight because of the closure that's been enforced by these people.

So what I want to do, Mr. Speaker, is in ending my remarks say that I will not, nor will I ever, support the kind of an unfair tax that this government wants to impose upon the people. I'll be voting against this. And I would want to move the amendment, sir, that after the words . . .

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

Bill 61, An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act No. 2, not now be read a second time as it is being imposed by the government without a mandate from the people of Saskatchewan and it constitutes the largest and most unfair tax increase in Saskatchewan history.

And this is seconded, sir, by the member from Quill Lakes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to enter into a debate, a debate which affects so many people in this province. This is . . . we're debating here the greatest tax grab in the history of this province — \$440 million is what this government is taking from the people of this province. And they're saying to them, we're doing it to help you out, to make the economy better.

I want to take a look, Mr. Speaker, at the history of this government. This government has progressively forgotten the rights of the people of this province. And let us take a look at some of the history of how they have deserted the rights of the people of this province and have gone on their old way for selfish ends of power.

It started with . . . not necessarily in this order, but we saw the appointment of a public servant, the auditor, Provincial Auditor, who brought in a report which was critical of this government and what did they do? The former Justice minister, Bob Andrew, came in here, commissioned and supported by the Premier of this province and slandered the Provincial Auditor to destroy. What is more, they say they're putting this tax in to help people, just like they did against the will of the people when it came to the privatization of SaskPower. And it took a hundred thousand signatures to stop them. And the Premier of this province gave to the people of this province his commitment, and this is what he said: As long as I am Premier I will not privatize, he said, a public utility. That was his promise. And then he separated the two — SaskPower, SaskEnergy — and he proceeded. We stopped him and he still continued.

Similarly with SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), the will of the people is that it should not be privatized. This government knowingly tried to privatize SGI knowing that they did not even have the legal right to proceed.

And what is the further actions of this government? We have, first of all, the first time in the history of this province under this administration, closure. The first time that closure's ever been used in the history of this province is by this government. And tonight, as has been indicated by my colleague, we saw another slam in the face of the people of this province when they locked the doors and prevented them from entering the galleries.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this government has no

credibility left whatsoever — absolutely no credibility. They're unable to call an election because they know they're going to be defeated. And I say what they're doing is proceeding with a scorch earth policy to destroy this province even more than they have already.

Let's take a look and see why they have no credibility. Let's take a look at the basic promises that they made to the people of this province when they were first elected. They said that the E&H tax, which was at 5 per cent with some exemptions, would be eliminated in the first term of office. And that's what the Premier of this province gave the commitment to the people of Saskatchewan.

And what did they do? What they did is not only retain it but they increased it to 7 per cent — a 40 per cent increase. And then they go on today and to increase it to establish it as a GST provincial-style — \$440 million is the total take in the GST that they have imposed here on the people of Saskatchewan.

Why would anybody believe this government? What else did they promise? They promised that the income tax would be cut. Hon. members over there should realize that they got elected on those bases, income tax cut by 10 per cent. And today we have the highest personal income tax in all of Canada.

And I remember sitting in this legislature and the Premier of this province saying, as long as I am Premier there will be no reinstatement of the gas tax — that's what he said. And today we have 46 cents a gallon, and when he removed it, it was 26 cents.

Credibility I say, great credibility. And what they say, we're going to now help you out again. We're going to put in a GST, 7 per cent covering everything — \$440 million of taxes — and they say this is good for business, this is good for debt reduction, this is going to put in farm programs. Ladies and gentlemen, people of Saskatchewan, I'll tell you, don't believe you. They don't believe a word you say. No credibility.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, harmonization of the tax to help the people of this province. Can you imagine? Those people that have created 10 consecutive deficits, who have ran the deficit up to \$5.2 billion. These same incompetent individuals are now suddenly going to cure all of the problems in respect to the deficit.

What a joke. Yes, what a joke. And that's what the people of this province are saying. We don't believe them; why should we believe them? And they say also further, that we're going to reduce the debt; we're going to put in farm programs; we're going to help rural Saskatchewan.

And today what they are doing is entering upon a decentralization program. But I tell you, the people of Saskatchewan are concerned in respect to any Tory plan in the future. The Tory plan of decentralization in Manitoba, they ran it during the last provincial election; immediately following the election, decentralization dissolved. Too expensive. Dauphin is still waiting. Most of the people that were decentralized are commuting out of Winnipeg to the surrounding areas.

Millions of dollars were spent for an election ploy, not to assist in the development and stabilization of rural Saskatchewan. The other day I talked to an individual that said to me, he said, I regret to say that I voted Tory in 1982. He said it's so bad in this province, he said, what they're doing and the way in which they're handling decentralization. He said they're actually playing, toying with the very lives of people.

And I've gone to some of these decentralization meetings. And I'll tell you I've watched ministers piously look at the crowd sitting out there and saying, oh the most concern that we have, the most concern we have is the individual employees. We have to accommodate the individual employees. You didn't even discuss it with the employees. That's the truth of the matter.

I'll tell you you can't put in an effective decentralization without the support of the people that are going to be decentralized. You have to have the support of the people that you're going to move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — No, decentralization Tory-style is nothing more than a total, desperate attempt by desperate men trying to get elected to power through phoney advertising like share Saskatchewan.

You didn't invent decentralization. What you did, my friends, is destroy the decentralization that was there when you got into office. We had the water corporation over at Watrous and you closed it out. We had a whole Department of Northern Saskatchewan located in Prince Albert and La Ronge and you closed it out. We had dental therapists throughout the province and you got rid of them. You fired workers, the highway workers.

Ha! You're going to now put together a program called decentralization. People of Saskatchewan, in fact in rural Saskatchewan, are laughing at you. They think you . . . they know that you can't be trusted. How can you be trusted? How can you possibly be trusted on the record of this government?

My friends, I want to say that every time about election time the Premier and the party opposite formulate through their public relations — the best that money can buy, paid for by taxpayers' money — and suddenly they're concerned with the people.

In 1986, after they had lost massively in a by-election when the member from Regina North East got elected, then the Premier said, we've got to cut cabinet ministers, we've got to listen to the people. And they got elected again — narrowly mind you — in 1986. And then immediately they went to work and on an agenda, not an agenda which they campaigned on, but on their own, secret, hidden agenda representing a few of their friends and the rich, and not representing the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2030)

Mr. Koskie: — You know this outfit comes before this legislature, Mr. Speaker, and they said we're going to introduce democratic reforms. Yes they are introducing democratic reform. We're going to elect the first Speaker in this House ever. Now that's going to really make a significant difference when the government can decide, in any event, who's going to be the Speaker. Now that's going to really change a lot.

Secondly, they say what we want is this: we want to set up a Bill which provides for the people of the province the right to petition the government, and also for referendums. That's what they said. And when we came forward with 120,000 petitions to stop this vicious tax, which you have no mandate to put into place, what do they say? You are wasting the time of the legislature in filing those petitions of the people of this province.

I mean that's how much credibility you have, bringing in a Bill pretending that you're going to provide for petitions, and when we bring petitions forward under the existing rules you tried to stop us. That's what you did. Yes I say this government has run its course — has run its course. And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the smart ones, they're quitting. And that leaves only the cripples left behind to be running in the next election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan are going to tell you, member from Kelvington-Wadena, what they think of. You can't go around this province deceiving the people of this province. Nor can you, if you have the nerve, member from Kelsey-Tisdale, if you have the nerve to run again — and I'm not sure that you do — but the people of Kelsey-Tisdale, you won't fool them by a transfer of decentralization after your economic policies destroyed 600 jobs that were in that community.

I'll tell you, there's nothing wrong with decentralization except the Tories are administering it. That's the problem. And they can't administer the problems and the people of this province know they can't administer it.

And the member from Kelvington-Wadena — now there is a bright star. I'll tell you, once they get wiped out and if he were lucky enough, I think the Tories would pick him for leader because they have no future in the next 50 years. That's what I think.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Because I'll tell you when the people of Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The hon. member is breaching the rules of the House by referring to the presence of a member.

Mr. Koskie: — I didn't refer to the member.

The Speaker: — You referred to the presence of a

member, sir. Now you can carry on with your remarks.

Mr. Koskie: — Well the member may be here physically, but there's not much here mentally. That's what I was really referring to.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — I want to say to that member way back there that's wagging his mouth with no wisdom coming forward that your term is coming tomb. I'll tell you — the people of Cut Knife-Lloyd.

I'll tell you the worse thing that happened to most of you is when the Leader of the Opposition and the New Democrats decided to get rid of severance, because you no longer are going to get a severance pay. And a lot of you are going to kick the dust. And you know what? And you know what? And the member from Cut Knife . . .

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

Mr. Koskie: — As I say . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I'm going to ask the member for Kelvington-Wadena to refrain from interfering with the hon. member's remarks.

Mr. Koskie: — As I was saying, the people of Saskatchewan were saved a lot of money.

And the Tories are continuously asking how we are going to finance the operation when we form government. But the people of Saskatchewan have had a lot of years of experience with a New Democratic government. They had 11 years with Allan Blakeney. And I'll tell you, not one year did they have a deficit, and services were provided which you people destroyed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — I want to tell you that Tommy Douglas took over this province that was in the greatest debt of any province in Canada and he managed and he built a province that the people of this province were proud of.

And what we're going to do when we get elected is to get rid of the waste and the corruption because you can't have Tories in the trough chewing away, eating, helping themselves to the money. You can't have paying 740,000 bucks to Chuck Childers and cutting off the assistance to the poor. Those are the priorities.

It's not hard to govern for the rich and the powerful, but it's stupid because the people of this province don't want that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — The people of this province want a government with integrity, with honesty, and above all, to eliminate the waste, the mismanagement, and the corruption as set by this Premier and this government.

The people of this province who used to say we had a wonderful province, we were very proud of it, wanted to

come back. And do you know what they're saying today? With eight years of this Tory mismanagement . . . nine years, there is such little future for our children except this massive debt that is left behind. That's the legacy that you birds left to the people of this province — debt, incompetence, mismanagement, waste, corruption, and patronage. That's your legacy and the people of Saskatchewan will speak come the next election if you ever have the nerve to call one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Petersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take a few moments to make a few points about Bill 61 and why we need it. I would also like to take a few moments to perhaps reflect on some of the comments made by the member for Quill Lakes and some of the things that he attempted to do in his speech. He referred to me several times, which was fine. I don't mind that at all because I intend to refer to him several times in my comments, Mr. Speaker.

As regards Fair Share . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We'll leave his relatives out of it for tonight. As regards Fair Share Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in Wynyard when the announcement of the Beef Stabilization Board, as part of the Agriculture department of the province of Saskatchewan being moved into those communities was made, I was the minister that made the announcement in Wynyard.

And the member for Quill Lakes was present at that time and was recognized in the crowd, and I think it was very, very brave of that member to be there especially since he attempted to take credit for the move of the Beef Stabilization Board to Wynyard and indeed tried to take credit for the move of the other agencies in the Department of Agriculture to the other communities in the constituency of Quill Lakes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I find it passing strange . . . passing marvellous that such a change can come about in the member from what I saw that day in Wynyard to the exhibition and the grandstanding that I just witnessed in the House. But he said it, Mr. Speaker: desperate people do desperate things. And, Mr. Speaker, if you go out through the riding of Quill Lakes and talk to the people, as I have, you will find out that indeed the present member is desperate, very desperate, Mr. Speaker.

In Wynyard he said Fair Share is a great thing; it's going to be good for the community. When he was asked point blank by one of the people in the crowd what he thought of it and if indeed would he continue the moves if they form government, he said, most certainly, absolutely. It's a good thing; it's great for the community. And he said as a matter of fact, I think I've done a great job as an MLA to get these things into this constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I had to point out to him though, Mr. Speaker, that it had a lot more to do with the geography involved than his performance as a member for Quill Lakes that those sites were chosen. He may have had a hard time accepting that, Mr. Speaker, but the rest of the crowd knew exactly what I was talking about. They didn't have a problem at all.

When he went to Lanigan, Mr. Speaker, for the rest of the announcements that day, he went to Lanigan, in the front row by himself. And he was extremely quiet, and left in a hurry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not too sure of what the idea that the member from Quill Lakes is trying to put forward here tonight, or what kind of a charade he's trying to pass off on the people of Saskatchewan, but, Mr. Speaker, you cannot, in this day and age of instant information exchange, say one thing in Wynyard and another thing in Regina and think that the folks won't find out about it. They will.

Now maybe he's betting that tonight the cable television coverage that we have won't get out to his constituency, or people won't be watching. But, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to make sure that people in his constituency hear what he said here tonight. I'm going to make sure that people understand the two positions that that member took — one out in the country and one when he's safely in the arms of the legislature, hiding here in Regina.

Mr. Speaker, tonight we saw another attempt by members opposite . . . and actually, Mr. Speaker, it was a reversion to some old radical tactics that the NDP and the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) have engaged in in years past. And I really, really, really feel sorry for the people who have been used by the party opposite as pawns tonight, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order, order. We have dealt with that issue earlier on. Please sit down. It's not on the topic of Bill 61 (No. 2). I would appreciate it if hon. members on both sides of the House would not bring that particular incident into their respective debates.

Hon. Mr. Petersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that. And I know that as regards Bill 61, the members opposite will revert to any tactics possible to try to stir up the emotions, to try to stir up the emotions of people, to try to gain some short-term political coverage on the media of this province, to try to forward their political argument, Mr. Speaker. And as regards any action that they can possibly take to try to stop or back up or obstruct Bill 61 from passing, they will engage in it. And they've admitted it themselves, Mr. Speaker. They said they will do anything possible to stop this Bill from passing. And, Mr. Speaker, I contend that part of the reasons that we saw some things happen here tonight was because of that.

Mr. Speaker, members opposite say, why are you passing this Bill? Why do you need this Bill? Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has pointed it out loud and clear, time and time and time again. Mr. Speaker, if we are going to have a balanced budget, if we are going to control deficits, we are going to have to find the tax dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we've been questioned as to where the money went. And time and again in this House I have stood and I have listed off all of the billions of dollars that have gone into the pockets of the people of the province of Saskatchewan in the agriculture programs, in business programs, in tourism programs. And, Mr. Speaker, I could

list them off again tonight. But suffice to say that there have been billions of dollars that have been provided by this government to the people in the province of Saskatchewan in a sector that is hurting very, very badly at this time — the agriculture sector.

(2045)

And, Mr. Speaker, today in question period, the member for Regina North East displayed his ignorance of agriculture. Now, Mr. Speaker, Bill 61 is designed to aid agriculture, to provide the money necessary for the farm safety net programs, and the member for north-east Regina . . . Regina North East, pardon me, tried to stand up and tell us that it was a terrible thing to see decentralization because it was going to cost too much money and that's why we needed Bill 61, and besides that, when a farmer came to Regina to fill out his crop insurance and see ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan) and do a bunch of other things, he wouldn't be able to. Well, Mr. Speaker, the member for Regina North East has been living inside the boundaries of this city for far too long if he thinks that's how it operates.

True centralization, Mr. Speaker, is all he knows. He thinks that every farmer comes to Regina to fill out their crop insurance. He thinks that every farmer comes to Regina to get an ACS loan. Well, Mr. Speaker, we instituted rural service centres in the province of Saskatchewan, 52 centres around the province of Saskatchewan. There was barely 35 previous to that.

And, Mr. Speaker, what we did was we opened more doors for the people in rural Saskatchewan to obtain information on agriculture programs, rural development programs, business programs that are available all over the province of Saskatchewan. Through our business resource centres we provide that information. We provide information on . . . not only on how to grow crops and how to produce them but how to market, Mr. Speaker. Under the NDP of the '70s people were not even allowed to find out the information on how to market things. And you ask why we need Bill 61?

Well, Mr. Speaker, for 10 long years during the '70s under an NDP administration, the farmers and business people of the province of Saskatchewan were kept in the veritable Dark Ages. The province to the west of us, Alberta, went forward and put together a Heritage Fund of some \$12 billion during that time period, Mr. Speaker. So when the hard times came, they do have a reserve fund. They do have a reserve fund.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when we got into office in 1982, as I pointed out, there was hidden deficits. But at the very least, we didn't have a \$12 billion Heritage Fund to work with because of the policies of the NDP during the '70s.

Mr. Speaker, they're great at wealth distribution, great at wealth distribution. Rob from the rich, give to the poor. I mean that's their theory. It's a nice theory, Mr. Speaker, a very simple theory. A very simple theory, Mr. Speaker. But today, Mr. Speaker, people are not buying those simple arguments. People are informed. People have been educated. People understand. At the push of a

button you can have world events in your living room, Mr. Speaker. You get to see the analysis of political actions in countries and the entire world instantaneously and as it happens.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP are somehow hoping that the people of Saskatchewan are still living in 1948 when it took three weeks for a letter to come from Europe to Saskatchewan; when it took that much longer again, Mr. Speaker, for the information to be spread throughout the province of Saskatchewan. And Mr. Speaker, the NDP are wrong. They're very wrong. I've talked to people all over my constituency about Bill 61. I met with many of the communities, the chambers of commerce, and I explained to them Bill 61 — the changes in the tax, the E&H tax, harmonization. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't have a hue and cry from any of those communities.

Mr. Speaker, I have some politically motivated people that at the urging of the NDP have stepped forward and said, well, we may not like this tax. But, Mr. Speaker, I took the time to talk to those people, and they understood why we need that tax. And the Leader of the Opposition understands it too. He does. He does, Mr. Speaker. But for political reasons he cannot stand up and accept that. He has not been able to stand up and accept any action of this government, even though he knows that the things that we have done have had to be done.

He stood up and said that our farm safety net program was not good enough. It wasn't done right. It's not what they'd do. When asked what he'd do, well he'd think about it. He might tell us during the election.

Community bonds, community development bonds, Mr. Speaker — obviously a political tactic, a ploy. Mind you, Mr. Speaker, there are many, many communities in the province today who now have hundreds and hundreds of jobs that weren't there before because of community development bonds. But at the time we announced them they were a political ploy.

And, Mr. Speaker, the type of information that we've put out to the people in the province of Saskatchewan through the media outlets, members opposite called political advertising. Well I suppose you could put a tag to it like that if that was your point of view. But people are looking for that information on how to access community bonds, Mr. Speaker; on how the GRIP and NISA programs work, Mr. Speaker; on how our business information centres, business resource centres ... what information is provided for them.

People want information. People need it and we're providing it. And members opposite say it's political advertising. Mr. Speaker, I say it isn't.

Mr. Speaker, when you're dealing with Bill 61, a Bill to expand the base, to broaden the base of the E&H tax; a Bill to harmonize with GST, the federal GST, and provide \$260 million worth of benefits to the business sector — small business, big business — across Saskatchewan, upgraders, co-ops, community development bond corporations, Mr. Speaker, members opposite say they're against it. I have a hard time believing that, Mr. Speaker. I have a hard time understanding how they can stand in

their places and say they're against it. Except, Mr. Speaker, we know that they will do anything, anything to try to prey upon the emotions of people for political reasons and political reasons only.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I could go on for some time tonight, but I just want to say that I will be supporting Bill 61, and I will not be supporting the present amendment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't say that I'm pleased to be involved in this debate this evening. It's a black day for the province of Saskatchewan. We find today in this Legislative Assembly, in the first time in the history of the province of Saskatchewan, a government that's so desperate to cling on to power, to waste more money of the people of the province of Saskatchewan that they've introduced closure on a tax Bill, Mr. Speaker. Never before in the history of the province has that happened — never before.

People in Saskatchewan are saying, enough is enough. With all their waste and mismanagement why would we want to give them more money to waste? Why would we want to give them more money to waste?

I noticed earlier today, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Finance, in defence of his position, used some quotes from Winston Churchill, and I'd like to use some quotes of Winston Churchill also to put forward my arguments against closure here this evening, Mr. Speaker. Churchill once said, while referring to affairs of government, to a friend. He said:

there's no plan of any kind for anything. It's no good. They walk in a fog. Everything is very black, very black.

Well that speaks highly of this government, Mr. Speaker, because there is no plan, they are walking in a fog, and things certainly are very, very black in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — It's also a black day of closure in another way, Mr. Speaker. It's a black day when this Assembly is locked to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, as it was earlier this evening. That's another first for closure in the province of Saskatchewan, that the government would lock the doors of the legislative buildings to deny access to the employees of government who want to come and meet with their employer.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill also said, and I quote:

The House of Commons still survives as the arena of free debate. We must feel sure that the leader we are about to choose will, as a distinguished Parliamentarian and a House of Commons man, not resent honest differences of opinion arising between those who mean the same thing, and that party opinion will not be denied its subordinate

but still rightful place in his mind.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the back-benchers of the Conservative party are so afraid of the Executive Council of this government they won't even stand up for their constituents who say, enough is enough.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — People all over Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, say, why are they doing this? Why are they doing this to us?

They've run astray, Mr. Speaker. They've lost the confidence of the people in the province of Saskatchewan. The people of Saskatchewan want no more of this government. They want no more of a government that has gone beyond its traditional mandate — a government that won't listen to 120,000-plus petitions presented against the provincial goods and services tax.

They won't listen to the opposition. They won't listen to their own employees of government. They won't listen to anyone, Mr. Speaker, because of their blind, wasteful management. They won't listen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Churchill also said, he stressed throughout British history: The true facts have been put before the country. Whenever the true facts have been put before the country, the electorate has never yet failed to do its duty.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Winston Churchill said that, Mr. Speaker. So I think the Minister of Finance should pay close attention to the words of Winston Churchill, because the people have the true facts in the province of Saskatchewan and they'll not fail to do their duty when it comes election time. They'll defeat this government of waste and mismanagement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill said: I say there is a state of emergency. We are in danger as we have never been in danger before. That could well apply to the province of Saskatchewan. Never before has this state of community feeling and spirit been in such danger because they're ravaged. It has been inflicted upon them by a government that is heartless and hopelessly on an agenda that has not been thought out.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — An agenda of waste and mismanagement is never good for the population of the province of Saskatchewan. It's only those that are at the trough and want the largess of government — their own friends and their retiring members who go on and waste more of the taxpayers' dollars in the province of Saskatchewan.

This is a government, Mr. Speaker, that said, we need the money for farm programs. They need the money to reduce the debt, even one of those members said just

recently. Well they've raised their revenue by 69 per cent since 1982, Mr. Speaker; 69 per cent they've raised their revenue since 1982. But they've increased their expenditures by 90 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Why does it cost so much to run government? Because they can't manage the state of affairs for the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They can spend money on their friends, Mr. Speaker. There's \$369 million for Cargill. There's money to send employees — wreck their families, destroy their careers — to all corners of the province, when it doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker. There's money for that.

Not one new job created by it, but they can find money for that. They can find money for Graham Taylor in Hong Kong, and they can find money for Bob Andrew in Minneapolis, and they can find money for Paul Rousseau in London, but they can't find money for the people of the province of Saskatchewan in the small businesses, and the hungry families of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Winston Churchill even said more, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Listen, he was a Tory.

Mr. Anguish: — Winston Churchill was a Tory, that's correct. The member from Moose Jaw North tells me he was a Tory.

I do not mind confessing to you . . . that I sustained a very evil impression of the treatment I received.

I hope some day to nail up this bad behaviour as the stoats and the weasels are nailed up by gamekeepers. They are dirty dogs and their day will come, though I thank God I am not a vindictive man.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — That's another quote from Winston Churchill, Mr. Speaker, and I say to you, Mr. Speaker, if the comment and the quote was true of the Minister of Finance, that comment and quote of Winston Churchill is true because that's what the people of Saskatchewan will do to these stoats and weasels come election day, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2100)

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. I'm going to have to ask the hon. member to withdraw his unparliamentary remark. I think, I believe calling among other things, the hon. members weasels is not appropriate. I would ask you to withdraw that remark.

Mr. Anguish: — I withdraw, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw those unparliamentary comments. Some language was good enough for Winston Churchill, but that's even been closed on in this legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — And I quote Winston Churchill again, he said: “. . . thank God I am not a vindictive man.” I don’t know if I can say the same for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

The final quote I’d like to use from Winston Churchill, just as the member, the Minister of Finance used quoting Winston Churchill. Winston Churchill was talking about his political life, Mr. Speaker, and he said, I quote: “I should quit the dreary field for pastures new.”

And that’s what the people of Saskatchewan think about this government, Mr. Speaker. They should either quit or call an election so the people of the province can decide the fair disposition of this cruel and ruthless government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Too long, Mr. Speaker, too long have the people of Saskatchewan suffered under this government. They want to raise \$440 million in extra taxation on the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

And they talk about rebates; tax credit rebates for their input costs to small business. Ask any restaurant owner how much they’ll get in input tax credits back, Mr. Speaker, or used-car dealers. In the case of restaurants, Mr. Speaker, this government . . . I guess they don’t know that all the input costs to restaurants are not taxable; it’s food.

The member from Moose Jaw North says, don’t tell them, they’ll tax it. Well, that may be true because they’ve taxed everything else, Mr. Speaker. They even tax you now when you die in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

They learned well from their cousins in Ottawa. When Brian Mulroney said, I’m introducing a goods and services tax because it’ll be good for you, they learned in Saskatchewan because now Saskatchewan Tories are saying, we’re going to impose another goods and services tax because it’s good for you.

The oldest lie told by people used to be, the cheque is in the mail. Do you know what it is now, Mr. Speaker? When a member of the government goes out in public and says, I’m from the government; I’m here to help you.

The Speaker: — I am going to have to ask the hon. member to withdraw the remark he insinuated.

An Hon. Member: — Geez, you’re getting touchy.

The Speaker: — No, no, no. I’m not getting touchy, sir. No, no. The hon. member said words to the effect about the oldest lie told and directed it to the government members. That’s unparliamentary. So I’d ask the hon. member for The Battlefords to withdraw that remark.

Mr. Anguish: — Well I withdraw the remark. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, I would not want to offend the rules of the House. I suppose I got carried away somewhat with the emotion of the debate.

There are so many firsts that have happened in Saskatchewan. We’ve become number one in so many negative things, that it just disgusts people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — For this government to limit debate on the biggest tax grab in the history of the province of Saskatchewan is unconscionable. People in the province of Saskatchewan have lost total faith in their government. They’ve lost faith in the members of the Progressive Conservative Party, because they have no plan for the province of Saskatchewan. All they have is a plan to line the pockets of their friends. All they have is a plan to wreak havoc in the province of Saskatchewan.

You can talk to anyone in the province of Saskatchewan today, Mr. Speaker, regardless of where they are in the socio-economic scale. It doesn’t matter if it’s the poorest of the poor, or those in the upper class, Mr. Speaker. They all have a hate for something the government has done to affect them in a negative way. And that means that it’s time for this government to leave. It’s time for this government to leave, but maybe they won’t go.

Are they really going to create another first in the province of Saskatchewan where when their total mandate runs out, their legal mandate runs out on November 12, that they’ll force the Lieutenant Governor in to call the election for them? Is that what they’re going to do, Mr. Speaker? This government is deceitful and deceptive in what they’ve inflicted on people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — You can look at the electoral boundaries issue, Mr. Speaker, is another example of that. They wrote a letter to the Leader of the Opposition, and in that letter they said that if the Supreme Court rules that the 1989 boundaries are okay, the Archer Commission will be dismantled and we’ll go on the ’89 boundaries.

Well the ruling came today and do you know what, Mr. Speaker? People in Saskatchewan still don’t know what boundaries the election is going to be held on because the government flip-flopped, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — That same Minister of Justice, who sent the letter about the Supreme Court ruling stating unequivocally what would happen, said this morning that well, the Supreme Court did rule in our favour, but now we’re not sure whether we’re going to use the Archer Commission boundaries or the boundaries that the Supreme Court said were okay. Another flip-flop by this government, Mr. Speaker.

People don’t want to give them more tax dollars, Mr. Speaker, because they can’t make a decision and stick with it. They can’t make a commitment. They don’t know what a commitment is. You would think that these people have made a commitment to destroy the province of Saskatchewan, not to help the people in the province, Mr.

Speaker.

There's all kinds of evidence that they've set out to do that. Election promises — you can't find an election promise around that they made that they kept. They promised my grandmother a free telephone back in 1982. And God bless her soul, she passed away and still didn't have her free telephone. And there's lots of seniors still waiting out there for their free telephones, Mr. Speaker.

What did they say they'd do with the sales tax? They've told people in the province of Saskatchewan they'd eliminate the provincial sales tax — eliminate the provincial sales tax. And do you know what, Mr. Speaker? There's a flip-flop there because what they did is that they didn't eliminate it, they increased it by 40 per cent; from 5 per cent to 7 per cent — a 40 per cent increase in one shot.

But do you know what their interpretation would be, Mr. Speaker, what they've done on the provincial sales tax? They would argue that well, we have eliminated it now because we have a provincial goods and services tax which is even worse for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, they were going to reduce income tax by 10 per cent, I believe it was, 10 per cent reduction on income tax for the people of the province of Saskatchewan. Vote for us and you'll be taxed less. People in Saskatchewan now pay the highest rate of income tax for the \$40,000-a-year family group of anywhere in Canada, and what did they do? They flip-flopped on it, Mr. Speaker. They brought in a flat tax at 2 per cent that now people in Saskatchewan have to pay.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, if I seem disgusted here this evening, I'm just reflecting what people in Saskatchewan feel.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — The demonstrators showed that tonight as well, Mr. Speaker. People in Saskatchewan can't stand this government any more. This government won't even listen to their own polling. Their own polling tells them they'll be decimated across the province, but they're so bent up in their own egos that they won't even listen to their own polling. Decima's the poll; it's a decimating poll is what it is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder, that people in the province of Saskatchewan have lost confidence in each and every one of you over there — each and every one of you. I don't want you people totally wiped out. I think one or two of you should be back here to answer for what you've done in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — And what's happened, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, what's happened on questions to this government when they're asked questions? Do you know what the most common answers are? I don't have that answer at my fingertips; it's under investigation by the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police); it's before the courts.

Mr. Speaker, if any historian, when we're all dead and gone, checks back on the verbatim transcript of this House, they won't believe the number of times that it's under investigation by the RCMP, it's not at my fingertips, and it's in the courts, Mr. Speaker. It will be another first for the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

They don't answer; they hide in secrecy. When the auditor points out a problem they attack the auditor. When the Legislative Law Clerk gives an opinion to the Legislative Assembly and therefore the people, they shoot the messenger.

Mr. Speaker, what a pathetic state of affairs this Tory government has brought this hallowed institution to — what a sorry state of affairs. And you know they must learn something from their federal cousins, or maybe they taught their federal cousins because they were here first.

I remember in the House of Commons, Mr. Speaker, where I had the privilege to serve as a member from The Battlefords-Meadow Lake and the Speaker said an unpopular thing to the Tories who were in opposition at the time. What did they do? They stormed the Speaker's chair and shook their fists in the Speaker's face, Mr. Speaker, that's what they did.

And did the Sergeant-at-Arms lock those Tory members out of the legislature for threatening the Speaker? No, they weren't locked out. Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you that they have destroyed tradition of the British parliamentary system to such a large extent that I fear for future legislators and parliamentarians.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — I fear for democracy in my province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I fear for the sense of community in my Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, because of what this government has done to destroy the province of Saskatchewan and I condemn them for that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2115)

Hon. Mr. Swenson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can't say it's a pleasure to enter the debate tonight because after the last two members of the opposition speaking, it's clear that there are people in this Chamber that don't have a whole lot of respect for this institution.

Mr. Speaker, these people have clearly demonstrated that they are suited for opposition and opposition only. After the display of the member from Quill Lakes and the

member from North Battleford, it's very, very clear to me, Mr. Speaker, that this particular political party could never be trusted with managing the economy and the life of the people of this province.

My colleague from Kelvington-Wadena pointed out to the Assembly tonight about . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order, order. Order, order. Order, order, order. Obviously many hon. members wish to get into the debate and I'm sure you'll all get your opportunity. Allow the Minister of Energy and Mines to continue.

Hon. Mr. Swenson: — It's very obvious, Mr. Speaker, given the comments of the member from Quill Lakes, as told to this Assembly tonight by the member from Kelvington-Wadena — and I was in Watson last week — where we get the member telling one story in rural Saskatchewan and another in Regina in this Chamber, knowing full well that there are people around tonight watching this legislature on TV, knowing full well that we're here debating whether harmonization is a good thing for the province of Saskatchewan. In Watson that member clearly was in agreement with decentralization. There was a large smile on his face and he took a great deal of pleasure in visiting with all the people in that hall that day about how wonderful it was that these 18 jobs in the Department of Agriculture were coming to Watson.

And I think that was brave of the member from Quill Lakes to come to Watson and admit that that was good for that town, that that policy made sense for that part of rural Saskatchewan. And I shook his hand and I agreed with him. Because I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that as part of a plan that will work to save a great part of this province, decentralization makes sense.

And I'd like to say to the member opposite who just challenged members here to come back, well I'm having my nomination tomorrow night, Mr. Speaker. And I'm going to run in the next election and I plan on being back in this legislature after the next election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swenson: — And one of the reasons that I'm going to come back is that I do have a long memory, Mr. Speaker, about things that have happened in this Chamber, that have happened around this province in years gone by. And I remember about the NDP when they were in government. And I remember the 1978 election when there were lies told all over this province, Mr. Speaker. And I'm not accusing anyone opposite of doing that . . . talking about the then leader of the PC Party of Saskatchewan, Dick Collver. And I remember the Build All Construction case as brought forward by SGI, which, Mr. Speaker, was conveniently dropped at the appropriate time once the NDP Party had achieved its narrow political aims.

And I remember that campaign where people around this province were told that Dick Collver and the PCs would take away medicare. And once again, Mr. Speaker, it was conveniently forgotten once the NDP had forgotten their narrow political agenda.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I remember a lot of things about that party in this province during my lifetime. And that's one reason why I'm going to seek the nomination in Thunder Creek tomorrow night and why I'll be back in this legislature to make darn good and sure that party doesn't do that again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swenson: — Now, Mr. Speaker, we have gone through many weeks of debate on this particular Bill. We have talked about harmonization, the benefits that can attribute to this province, for over six weeks. We have had tens of hours of debate in all different forums, whether it was interim supply, whether it was in the presenting of petitions. All the forums that were available to this legislature, Mr. Speaker, members talked about Bill 61. There have been amendments proposed and we have another one on the floor tonight.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, this government, this Premier, that Minister of Finance, have laid out a plan to the people of this province that, taken in its totality, will stabilize farms and villages and towns and cities in this province so that this province who, Mr. Speaker, has been beset by things like Mother Nature, international prices — things that were beyond the control of the men and women who work and live in this province . . . a plan that as presented to this legislature and this province that will see us not only weather those storms, Mr. Speaker, it will provide farming families with the opportunity to insure themselves, with their hard-earned money in conjunction with their two senior levels of government, to ensure that this province will have a minimum farm income. That is what Bill 61 is about.

We have the ability, Mr. Speaker, through some of the industrialization initiatives of this government, to mesh in with GRIP and NISA through community bonds so that people in this province can take their hard-earned savings and put them forward to help their communities, and know that the government of Saskatchewan will stand behind them four-square in that investment.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have said that the tax base of this province — the people in my constituency; the people in the other 65 constituencies of this province who pay taxes — should have the opportunity to share fairly in how those taxes are spent.

And along with the people that serve us as electors and as taxpayers in this province, will also come some economic benefits to many communities. And, Mr. Speaker, when you tie those altogether, you have a plan that will balance the budget; that will protect and will allow this province to take the natural God-given resources that are here and build upon them so that the future of this province going into the next century is secure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swenson: — And, Mr. Speaker, that is diametrically opposed to what we have heard through all of these weeks from the members opposite. The job of the

opposition is to oppose, and the job of the opposition is to present alternatives to existing policies. And not once in this debate and certainly tonight, have I heard one member on the opposition say one concrete thing about where they would take this province as a government over the next four or five years.

Mr. Speaker, we clearly have a party that is either totally bankrupt of new ideas, or a political party that is scared to divulge to the people of this province the policies and the thoughts that they would initiate as a government to take us down the road into the next century.

Mr. Speaker, I tend to think that it is probably the latter. Because, think about it, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, your hon. member from Riversdale, who aspires to be the premier of the province of Saskatchewan — except for four and a half years — has sat in this legislature since 1967. Now you would think, Mr. Speaker, since 1967, that a person who aspired to be premier of the province of Saskatchewan would come along with some original thoughts, that when a province such as ours is faced with difficult times, is faced with commodity prices that are beyond our control, when it's faced with certain climatic conditions that are beyond our control, when a province such as ours, who is based on primary resources, comes into difficulty, that a member who sat in this Chamber for that long, would have some thoughts and ideas that were newer than 1967.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have some evidence that backs up my argument. And I'm glad to see that the member from Riversdale is in the Chamber tonight, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it seems that when he's . . . My apology, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. Members are not to make reference to members' absence or presence in the legislature.

Hon. Mr. Swenson: — My apologies, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But it does seem to me that when the Leader of the Opposition is not riding herd on his troops, they tend to waiver from some of the policies that we hear espoused at various functions around the province. The Leader of the Opposition has said lately to groups of men and women who have paid money to go and hear him speak at functions sponsored by the New Democratic Party, that it's time that this province turned its mind to wealth generation. And this government heartily agrees, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And there are people there from the oil and gas industry and people there from the mining industry and people there from the manufacturing industries, because obviously they've gone around and canvassed the business community and said come out and hear what our leader has to say. And it has been reported in the papers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that our leader says it's time to turn our mind to wealth generation, that we will not repeat the mistakes of the 1970s; we will not drive business men and women out of this province because of our foolish, ideological beliefs. And that is fair, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But in this debate in this legislature, when the member from Riversdale is not riding herd on his troops, we hear an entirely different story. And I would like to quote from the member from Saskatoon University, page 3702 in *Hansard*, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

. . . that Saskatchewan taxpayers have lost hundreds of millions of dollars as a result of the changes in resource policies in the province.

. . . The decline of our resource industries has been just as dramatic and it has . . . much more . . . impact (than) the provincial treasury than . . . agriculture.

And that is because of the way the taxes and royalties are structured and because of government policy. And that this government has given away \$4 billion to these resource companies.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is a fairly one to . . . problem to solve. This is fairly easy. And I think the Leader of the Opposition has done a little problem solving on this particular issue, because in the oil and gas business it's simple. You have X millions of barrels of reserves; you have X number of wells drilled; you have X number of wells proposed to be drilled, and you have a production average for all of those wells. And those trend lines go up and down like this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you bring new fields on in production.

If the trend lines that had been there under the NDP government from 1971 to 1982 had continued on, this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would have faced an unmitigated disaster in that particular sector. And I would like to lay some figures out, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that prove the point.

If those trend lines established over those 11 years had continued, this province would be short \$960 million in net revenue. An additional \$2.4 billion of investment wouldn't have occurred; 7,500 wells would not have been drilled, and 52,000 person-years of direct and indirect employment not happen. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's 5,000 jobs a year over the mandate of this government, and that is an additional production of 240 million barrels of oil.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, those trend lines are known to the industry and they are known to the member from Riversdale and they are known to the member from Regina North West, because the member from Regina North West has gone around and canvassed all of those companies and said, believe me, we won't repeat the mistakes that we made in the '70s. And yet other members here make remarks totally opposite. And it's interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, always during these arguments as presented, and the member from Saskatoon University presented it the other evening, he quotes from the *Sask Trends Monitor*.

(2130)

Well isn't it interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the gentleman who wrote the article, who is quoted, happened to have been appointed to CIC (Crown

Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan) by the previous NDP government. And needless to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that after this party formed power, that individual no longer worked for us because with that kind of advice you can see why the oil and gas industry was in the state that it was.

Another one of the myths, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the resource industry — Saskoil doesn't pay any tax. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskoil never did pay any tax when it was a Crown corporation, nor would it have. It's four times the size that it was under the NDP; it has a brand-new headquarters in downtown Regina; it employs hundreds, indeed hundreds, of people. It has basically been one of the driving forces behind the gas industry in this province, an industry which members opposite even admit to themselves, has generated millions of dollars of revenue to the provincial treasury; thousands of jobs, and is potentially poised to be the fuel of the future. And Saskatchewan will do a tremendous part in not only providing it to our citizens, but to the rest of Canada.

And yet statements made by members opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker, during this debate on the harmonization of taxes, fly diametrically opposed to those truths. And certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our resource industry will benefit from harmonization. The fact that the uranium industry, that the member from Athabasca knows well and supports, will benefit from not having to eat the provincial sales tax. Our gas fields, which have been developed from the U.S. border to the Primrose weapon range, will benefit and Saskatchewan people will benefit by enabling those companies to not have to eat the PST.

And it goes into the manufacturing sector; it goes all through our society, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the farming sector, all of the primary and secondary producers that this province so desperately needs. Because if you're going to become a generator of wealth, if wealth creation is on the agenda for the '90s instead of wealth distribution, then you have to be competitive.

When you sit in the middle of the North American continent and you are a thousand miles from tide water, you need every advantage at your disposal. And companies in Saskatchewan, for the very first time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will be on an equal footing for the companies in Alberta. No longer where gas and oil companies have to run across the border to buy their tires and their batteries and all those things because there is a GST in Alberta. And whether we like it or not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a GST in Saskatchewan and there is a GST all over Canada.

And if we are going to compete on an equal footing all across this great nation and indeed through North America and into the Pacific Rim we need those advantages. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is what the Minister of Finance has proposed to this legislature and proposed to the people of this province.

And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it were not for the narrow, political agenda of the NDP Party, who seem throughout their history to want to achieve political success at the expense of this province, I don't think this

debate would go on near as long. I don't think we would have had the silliness that we saw through the last six weeks in this legislature.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today has been a most symbolic day for the Government of Saskatchewan. There are three events that have occurred today, and the government's reaction to those three events are symbolic of everything that is wrong with this government.

Mr. Speaker, nine years ago the Premier of Saskatchewan and this government came to power — nine years ago. And this government came to power, I am sure, with lots of vim and vigour. They were going to set the world on fire. And there's nine years later, Mr. Speaker. Nine years later there is something that we've all learned. And the thing that we've learned is that when people become influenced by power, we learn that power becomes absolutely corrupting. And I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that power has corrupted this government.

The first event of today: at 7:45 this morning the Supreme Court of Canada brought down its decision on the boundaries. And soon thereafter did the government of the day say that we would be going on the 1989 boundaries, which they had taken before the Supreme Court of Canada, arguing that the boundaries that they had put forward in this legislature were constitutional?

And the Minister of Justice began the delaying tactics, and he began to leave the impression that maybe the 1991 boundaries would be the boundaries that this government would have its election on. And instead of clearing up what has become a confusing situation for the people of this province in terms of where people are going to run, the government of the day has continued to delay because they do not want to face the electorate. That's event number one. They do not have the courage.

Event number two: civil servants came to this Legislative Assembly tonight. They are the people that work on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. They are the people that work for the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Agriculture and the Associate Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education and the Minister of Rural Affairs and the minister of Consumer Affairs.

They are the people that work for the government and the people, and they came to the legislature. And they wanted to come into this building which is their building. This building belongs to all of the citizens of Saskatchewan. And what were they met with? They were met with a government that has become so arrogant, so arrogant that they locked the doors to the civil servants of this province and they locked the doors to the members of this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — And the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster said — he quipped over here to us, the members of the opposition, he said to us — you are no better than the people out there. And I want to tell the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster that I am proud to be no better than the people out there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — The third event of tonight is this government's decision to invoke closure on the only tax Bill in this province. The only time a tax Bill has ever had closure invoked and this government has decided that they are going to muzzle the opposition.

And that too, Mr. Speaker, is symbolic of the arrogance that has gripped this government, has made them afraid to allow their own employees into this building, has made them afraid to call an election, and has made them afraid to hear the words coming from the members of the opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, before I came into the building tonight I was called by someone. And this woman said to me: I'm sure that you're going to be speaking on this Bill tonight and I want you to speak on behalf of the women of this province.

And tonight, Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak on behalf of the women of this province. I am going to speak on behalf of the women that go to the food banks to get food for their children. I am going to speak on behalf of the women that work in the Department of Agriculture that are being transferred to communities away from their children and their husbands.

I am going to speak on behalf of the women that work in the Liquor Board. And one of them was outside tonight with her two small children that look to be three years old and two years old, and I asked her, Mr. Speaker, I asked her if her husband was a government employee or where her husband worked. And she told me that her husband had a job in the city of Regina and that if she were going to keep her home and family together, then she was going to move to Hudson Bay and that she didn't know what was going to happen to her children.

I am going to speak on behalf of the 400 dental workers that have lost their jobs because of the insanity of this government — and all of those people are women. I'm going to speak on behalf of the nursing-home workers and the nurses who have been laid off this spring because of government underfunding to health care institutions. I'm going to speak on behalf of the restaurant workers who have lost their jobs because of the government's implementation of the provincial goods and services tax on April 1, and people simply aren't going to restaurants — and those women have lost their jobs. I'm going to speak on behalf of women who work in retail outlets, and because people are not shopping because of the economy and because of the taxes, they have lost their jobs. And I'm going to speak on behalf of the women who work in their homes, with their children, who are finding

it increasingly more difficult to keep family and home together because of the taxes that they are paying out and their family income. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak on behalf of senior citizens in this province on fixed incomes, who aren't entitled to any kind of child tax credit because of the provincial goods and services tax.

And there is one woman in particular, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to speak on behalf of a 63-year-old woman who has nine children, whose husband left her for whatever reason. She is on social assistance, Mr. Speaker, because she always worked in her home; and she was left by her husband much later in life and she's ill and she cannot get a job. And, Mr. Speaker, she lives on less than \$300 a month, Mr. Speaker. She lives on less than \$300 a month and she's not entitled to a tax credit. And I see the Minister of Finance is upset, and he should be upset.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I've been listening very closely to the member's remarks in the debate, and I would like her to make her remarks on the amendment.

An Hon. Member: — Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Speaker is on his feet. I've listened very closely and I've left her a lot of latitude, but I'd ask her to relate her remarks to the Bill. Order.

Mr. Shillington: — Point of order. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's got to be some sort of passing attempt at equality of treatment. The member from Thunder Creek talked for a good 15 minutes about oil and gas and the member's speech . . . and it was related only in the most distant fashion. There's got to be some equality of treatment. Surely if the member from Thunder Creek can wander all over the gas fields of Saskatchewan, she can talk about how the tax affects women and children.

The Deputy Speaker: — I find the point of order not well taken but I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to continue my remarks on behalf of the women and children of this province and the kind of effect that this tax and this government's policies have had upon women and children.

And I note that the members over there are a bit sensitive when I talk about fired dental workers and displaced workers and fired nurses and teachers and nursing-home workers. But I will submit to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the government of Saskatchewan's policies have had a negative impact upon the women and children of this province and I think that these people need to be reminded of that fact.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2145)

Ms. Atkinson: — Now the member from Thunder Creek talked about the members of the opposition having no respect for this institution and he said we could never be trusted with the management of this province.

And I want to say to the member from Thunder Creek that I believe the people of this province are ready to put their trust in the members opposite. They want a government that will give them fair taxation. They want a government that will give them services in their communities. They want a government that will make sure that their children have access to schools in their communities, that their children have access to health care and that their mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers have access to health care.

They want a government that will ensure that it doesn't matter where you live in this province, Mr. Speaker, you will not be discriminated against; that you will be treated with equality and fairness and that you will be given the opportunity to make a living in the province of Saskatchewan. And I want to speak on behalf of those people tonight as well, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, 120,000 citizens of this province have signed a petition. They have signed a petition saying they are opposed to the provincial goods and services tax and many of the people who have signed the petition, Mr. Speaker, are women. Mr. Speaker, when governments decide to cut back because of their own fiscal waste and mismanagement, who is affected? Who is impacted upon?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want the members of the government to know who is affected. The people that are affected are women and the people that are affected are children. When you don't have money, Mr. Speaker, when you don't have money for education, who is impacted upon? The people who have the greatest impact placed on them are kids, are children.

This government has money for some people. They have money for Cargill Grain; they have money for Rafferty-Alameda; they have money for Peter Pocklington; they have money for all of their bigwig friends, but they don't have money for education, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — This government has failed to provide a fair taxation policy in this province. There were four promises that this government made in 1982. They promised to cut personal income tax by 10 per cent; they promised to get rid of the sales tax; they promised to get rid of the fuel tax; and they promised to cut resource royalties to the resource companies.

Now which promises did they keep? Which promises did they keep? They did not keep the promise to cut personal income taxes. In fact, they have increased personal income taxes by some 10 per cent, and the middle income people of this province pay the highest personal income taxes in the country.

They promised to eliminate the sales tax. Not only have they not eliminated the sales tax, they have increased it from 5 to 7 per cent and they have now expanded it to

cover many more goods. And we shall probably see the other half of this Bill, which will mean the 7 per cent applies to all services that are delivered in this province. Another broken promise.

They promised to eliminate the fuel tax, Mr. Speaker, and in fact we've got the fuel tax back on. But is it as low as it was in 1982? The answer is no, the fuel tax is much higher.

But when it comes to the resource royalties of this province — a promise they did make in 1982, Mr. Speaker — I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that's one promise they kept. They kept the promise to reduce royalties to the resource companies, but they didn't keep their promises to the ordinary men and women of this province to cut taxes. And the ordinary men and women of this province will not forget. And on election day — whenever you people shall call it — they will remind you of your failure to keep your promises.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — This is a government that has failed to control waste and mismanagement. This is a government that has had money simply bleeding out of this building and out of this city to all of its corporate friends and all of its political buddies. They have money for the Bob Andrew, some retired PC MLA; they have money for Graham Taylor, some retired PC MLA; they have money for Paul Rousseau, some retired PC MLA; they have money for Eric Berntson so that he can run down to Ottawa and be Senator Eric for the next 25 or 30 years; they've got money for them.

But they don't have money — they don't have money — for the 63-year-old woman that lives in my riding who lives on less than \$300 a month, who's raised nine children, who gets no money from her husband, living on social assistance, and she has to go to the food bank. You've got no money for her, but you've got money for Eric Berntson and Paul Rousseau and Bob Andrew, and I find that disgusting.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Now this government has failed to provide any kind of improvements in basic services to rural Saskatchewan. They talk about moving 6 jobs here and 7 jobs there and 10 jobs there, but I want to talk about the jobs that have been in rural Saskatchewan that these people have cut.

There were over 400 dental workers that worked in rural Saskatchewan, and in the summer of 1987 you people eliminated the school-based dental program. Those jobs were filled by women. Those jobs provided a vital, important public service to the people of this province, to the children of this province. Those jobs ensured that our children had the very best dental care in all of North America. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, people from all across the world came to look at our dental program. The program that we had in this province was recognized as one of the finest in the world, but those jobs were cut.

And then we had highways workers, highway workers

that were located all across Saskatchewan who did maintenance on our highways. And all you have to do, Mr. Speaker, is drive down any highway in this province and you will know the condition and the state of our highways. Well, Mr. Speaker, the people that used to look after those highways were located in our small rural communities. The people who worked on those highways contributed to the communities, put money into the communities, and helped support Main Street, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And then I want to talk about the post offices. The post offices . . . Now the member from Gravelbourg, the member from Gravelbourg talks about the post offices. Well I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that most little communities in this province used to have a rural post office. And there was one person that worked in those post offices, or two people that worked in those post offices that had fairly good jobs. And those people lived in those communities; they worked in those communities; they paid taxes in those communities, and they spent their money in those communities. And those jobs have been eliminated, Mr. Speaker.

And then we have other jobs, other federal jobs like the CNR (Canadian National Railway) jobs that used to be located in some of our small towns along the line. And those jobs have been done in, particularly out in Melville.

We have had literally thousands of jobs, both provincial jobs and federal jobs, Mr. Speaker, that have been eliminated because of misguided priorities of the members of the PC Party, not only in Saskatchewan but in Ottawa. And when those jobs have been cut by Ottawa, have these people ever stood up and protested? Not once, Mr. Speaker, not once.

And I will say to you, Mr. Speaker, that we can transfer a job here and a job there and everywhere a job. But basically, Mr. Speaker, all they are doing is replacing the jobs that have been cut over the last nine years because of their waste and mismanagement. And I want to clarify that — not even replacing them because there have been over 1,000 provincial jobs have been cut in rural Saskatchewan, over 1,000 that we know of. And there are over 1,000 federal jobs that have been cut in rural Saskatchewan. And I haven't heard the members opposite talking about 2,000 jobs being located out in rural communities.

Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity in this province. We have an opportunity to rebuild our communities, our neighbourhoods, our towns, our villages, and our cities. The people of this province, because of today's Supreme Court announcement, they have called for an election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — There are no more excuses, Mr. Speaker. There are no more excuses. You have the boundaries. You'll soon have your Bill passed. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are tired of you. They are tired of you. They have lost their faith in you. They believe that you are a worn out old crew with no new ideas. You are the negative people. You have lost your ability to be positive. You have lost the trust and faith

of the people of this province.

And if you had any courage, if you had any courage whatsoever, the Premier of our province would do the right thing, put his record to the test, and call a provincial election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise tonight to speak in opposition to Bill 61. And I speak in favour of the amendment that has been presented here tonight by the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

And I want to start off tonight by indicating just how we have got into this mess and why we are here tonight discussing Bill 61 — Bill 61, which is one of the largest tax grabs in the history of this province, a tax that will extract \$440 million from the taxpayers of this province.

We have indicated to you in this House, through our speeches and by presenting and tabling 120,000 petitions in this legislature of citizens from all corners of this province who have indicated quite clearly that they are opposed to the provincial sales tax, completely opposed . . . When you can table 120,000 names in this legislature, and let me tell you there are a lot more names that are coming in, I think that's a good example of what the citizens of this province are saying to us, and I'm sure they're saying to the members opposite when they go into their home riding.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Well how did we get into this mess, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We got into this mess because when the government took over in 1982 — and I say they took over a government that had a . . . They took over the province; they had \$139 million in the bank. And now we see where we have over \$5 billion in debt.

But they started off quite early in their term, in the first year as a matter of fact, selling off the assets of the province. They started off by selling the drag-line down in Estevan to Manalta Coal. Then they proceeded to sell the coal-mine. And when they sold off those assets — they started to sell them off — they were assets that were generating income to the province.

And now we see here today, nine years later, we're debating a tax Bill that's going to extract another \$440 billion from the taxpayers of this province.

They sold off potash mines, another asset I might add, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was bringing money into this province . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right.

And then we come to the bigger ones. And we get into the forestry industry and we go into Weyerhaeuser. And Weyerhaeuser, this government sold off 8 million acres of the prime forest in this province — 8 million acres, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And that's why we're in here tonight debating this tax Bill. Because they signed a promissory note to Weyerhaeuser

of Tacoma, Washington. And they sold the assets — \$236 million were the assets, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And to date — to date, five years later — not 1 cent has been paid on the principal of that loan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2200)

Mr. Thompson: — Not one cent has been paid. And if Weyerhaeuser would have carried out their commitments, and if they would have paid on the principal of the loans, we wouldn't be here tonight debating this tax grab that we're debating tonight.

An Hon. Member: — And they still owe the principal.

Mr. Thompson: — That's right. Weyerhaeuser has access to 800 million acres of prime forest land, the pulp mill in Prince Albert, a saw mill in Big River, and a chemical plant in Saskatoon, and of the \$236 million in principal, they haven't paid 1 cent to this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — That's the type of business deals that this government opposite has carried out through the nine years of their mandate, and that's why we're here tonight debating this Bill.

And they just continue. They took the highways equipment — \$40 million worth of highway equipment — and sold it for less than \$5 million. They got rid of 230-some highways workers in one night. Come to work in the morning . . . just got rid of them, transferred them out to the private sector. And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they're going to have to answer for that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And they're going to have to answer for it fairly quickly now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And when you look at the polls and you see what's happening in the polls and what the citizens of this province are saying, I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that history is going to repeat itself. History is going to repeat itself — 1929-34 all over again. There's a strong possibility that there won't be one member on that side of the House that will come back into this legislature.

And that's because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the types of programs and the way this government has administered this province. Nobody is listening to anybody on that side of the House. I know that there's back-benchers over there and there's cabinet ministers who are sincere people. And I know that they're going back to their constituencies and they're getting the same arguments that we get when we go out into the constituencies and around this province. I know that.

But they're all falling into line. And I say, why are you

letting a couple of ministers on the front benches destroy each and every one of you, destroy the whole party? It happened in 1934 and I say it's going to happen again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — We're here debating a tax Bill that's going to extract another \$440 million from the citizens of this province. And I say to the member that's chattering from his seat, it's time that you got out into your constituency and look after your constituency because you fall into the same category as the rest of the members. And I tell you, it is coming and it's coming fast.

The dental equipment. We had dental equipment in all the rural areas. And what did this government do? Some of it's still stored, but a lot of it has been sold off for next to nothing. And in the process they destroyed and they got rid of in one night over 400 dental nurses, therapists, and dental assistants.

And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they literally destroyed the lives of those individuals. And most of them were young women, young women from rural Saskatchewan who had worked hard all their lives to achieve the goals that they had, and this government, uncompassionate government, literally destroyed them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — It's a human disaster, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's a human disaster that was . . . not only was it created with the highways workers and the dental nurses and the therapists; it's happening right today again in this province. It has continued right through the nine years that this government has been in power and it's got to come to an end. And I sincerely wish that this government would come to its senses and stop the tremendous waste of our human resources in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — The destruction of the family units — and we witnessed that tonight, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There was hundreds and hundreds of individuals, civil servants out here who are concerned. They wanted to come in here tonight and listen to us debate, to debate this tax Bill that we're debating tonight. And what did they find? They found the doors locked.

And you didn't see any Conservative members out there talking to the individuals. Individuals who were concerned; they're concerned for the families, for the children. And I just say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and through you to the Premier and the rest of that government over there, I think it was a disgrace that took place here tonight to not let those individuals in here to express their freedom of speech that we have in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And the waste, the waste and mismanagement, it is just continuing. There's a litany of destruction in this province.

I want to now turn to the Silver Lake farm. And you want to talk about waste and mismanagement of the taxpayers' money and that's why we're in here tonight discussing a tax Bill that's going to take another \$440 million out of the pockets of Saskatchewan citizens.

Because in the Silver Lake farm in Green Lake, that is a farm that was sold to a consortium in Prince Albert, destroyed the lives of 19 individuals who had worked on that farm for . . . some of them for up to 20 years — 19 families. Close to 2,000 head of cattle and they sold that and they won't disclose the price. We don't know what they sold it . . . they sold it to three individuals from Prince Albert. We don't know who they are; they won't indicate who they are. But let me tell you, we don't know what the sale price is and now today all the cattle have been sold, all the machinery, all the tools have been sold, and now we find out that they did not have the right to sell; they didn't own the land; they don't even have a lease on the land. And that's the type of waste and mismanagement that we have.

And every time we look at a situation like that where there's waste and mismanagement, there's always a human disaster involved. The families that worked on the Silver Lake farm — there's no jobs. There's not one of them are working today — not one of them. And now the farm, and now the farm what they're doing. You know what they're doing on the farm now? They're leasing it out to some of their friends to plant the crop and share-crop it. And they've turned it into a community pasture for some of their friends who have cattle and they don't even have title or a lease to the land. That's the type of waste and mismanagement and that's why we're here tonight discussing Bill 61.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — All the citizens in Green Lake, they had put in a bid and they wanted to buy the Silver Lake farm, but no, this government would not allow that. They wouldn't sign a promissory note for Green Lake, but they don't mind guaranteeing loans, I'll tell you, for Weyerhaeuser and for Millar Western and for Cargill and for Peter Pocklington — no problem with that. But when it comes to signing a promissory note for the citizens of Green Lake to take over a farm that was right in Green Lake — no way. They chose to sell it to their friends, Conservative friends in Prince Albert. That is the type of mismanagement and waste that we have in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — That's right, that's what we're paying for today. And that's why we're paying over \$500 million a year just to pay the interest on the loan that the Conservative Party has run up in the last nine years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — That is why we're in that mess today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Patronage; patronage and mismanagement. GigaText is a good example.

I want to turn to some of the other waste and

mismanagement that I see here too, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you see, this type of waste and mismanagement that I want to indicate to you now is why we're here again debating this Bill.

Bob Andrew, former attorney general, former Finance minister, \$97,000 a year — that's what he's getting.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — No problem. Five years, no-cut contract. I say to the minister from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg that he better look after his own constituency because you've got problems down there, let me tell you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, and now we have the senator, Mr. Berntson, paying him \$71,000 a year. And everybody got it, everybody got it over there. Larry Birkbeck, \$48,000 a year. And then they give him a 10-year contract, no-cut contract. Now I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's not fair. That's not fair at all when you can take a defeated PC member and give him a job at that wage and then guarantee him it for 10 years.

Gordon Dirks, Louis Domotor — you could just go down the list and they're all here. They're all there. But my time is limited, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But when we see what's happening today to the families in this province, and they talk about Fair Share Saskatchewan, I say to the members opposite, this is one of the most destructive, most destructive things that has ever taken place in this province.

You are now administering to this citizens of this province a jolt that they're never going to get over. There are many families tonight in this province and this city who don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. They don't know if it's their turn. And you have created a mess that you'll never able to forgive.

And you've seen the demonstration you had here tonight in opposition to what you are doing, to Fair Share Saskatchewan, and what you're doing to the families and the family units, the break-up of the families, to the young children who are getting ready for their exams, getting ready for the exams and they're told that their parents . . . one parent has to go to one part of Saskatchewan, another parent has to go to another part; one parent working for the government, another parent working in the city.

Now what do think it's like for that family, for those families, and the children that are getting ready for their exams? You are literally destroying . . . (inaudible) . . . You are the most uncompassionate government that's ever been in this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — You show no compassion whatsoever, but you have no problem paying \$740,000 a year to an individual like Chuck Childers to be the chairman of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's why we're in here discussing

this tax Bill tonight, because they need the extra \$440 million because of mismanagement and waste like this right here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — They brought Chuck Childers into this province, paid him \$740,000 a year, and what did they bring him in here for? They brought him in here for a reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They brought him in here to sell off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. They paid him that kind of money to be the president of the corporation and to sell it off. And that's exactly what they did; that's exactly what they did to the Silver Lake farm. They brought a manager in to manage that farm, and what did he do? He come in and he sold it off. That's exactly how they operate. That's exactly how they operate.

And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this government's time has run out.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2215)

Mr. Thompson: — I think you have created enough damage and enough destruction. It's time now to get on and let somebody take over this government that can run it properly. Give them some hope — call an election. And I say that it's time to do it.

And as I indicated when I first started speaking tonight, I feel that history is going to repeat itself again — 1929 to 1934 all over again when the Anderson government was defeated. They never got one seat back — not one seat. And the way you are going here you're going to end up . . . history will repeat itself.

But I just ask you now . . . the time has run out; it's time to get on with governing this province properly. Let's have an election and get it over with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to join in this debate, and I'm going to try and draw some points to what we are actually supposedly suppose to be talking about here tonight and that's Bill 61.

Mr. Speaker, since we've come to government in 1982, when the NDP were swept out of office because of their failure to work with the people, Mr. Speaker, our government has done just that: we've worked with the people from one day through the next and the people of this province very much knows that.

I think probably if we would be analysing what has been coming from members of the opposition, the NDP opposition here, Mr. Speaker, is really of some type of a belief of the Angus Reid poll that has come out here in the last day or so that has indicated that they are enjoying some 63 per cent in the polls.

Well I don't want to take a whole lot of time to dwell on that so much, Mr. Speaker, but I will say this, Mr. Speaker,

that that is probably the most laughable poll that I've ever heard of in my entirety. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that if I take into consideration — and just speaking from my . . . with my president earlier this evening, they are doing a little bit of a recruitment in my constituency just in getting the readiness for the upcoming election here this year.

And I want to indicate to the members opposite — and I challenge the Leader of the Opposition or in fact any member of the NDP to come into my riding and prove me wrong — I indicate to you that we are phoning at random through our telephone books, Mr. Speaker, and the support there is phenomenal. In fact I'm going to say, let's just switch the Angus Reid poll, and I indicate to you that my campaign chairman and my president in my riding have indicated that, in fact they're arguing between 5 per cent. My president says I'm running at 55 per cent and my constituency campaign manager, she's saying I'm running at 60 per cent.

So I want to indicate to the members opposite that I have been challenging them for some time now to come into my riding and discuss Bill 61 and the great things that this Bill means for the province of Saskatchewan.

I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that I can remember back in 1982, I can remember very well back in 1982 when the farmers were pleading with the now Leader of the Opposition to help them maintain their farm, to help them with their farm debt and the high interest rates. And, Mr. Speaker, I have heard over and over again how the opposition leader, the now opposition leader, the then attorney general of the NDP, but the Leader of the NDP Party today, how he had turned his back on all the farmers in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it was that man that had indicated . . . it was the Leader of the NDP Opposition that had indicated that there was nothing that he was prepared to do or their party was prepared to do, let alone their government was prepared to do, because, Mr. Speaker, he said it was a problem for Ottawa. It was an Ottawa problem. And he, Mr. Speaker, today . . . to this day he says that if he forms government, well he's just going to pound on Ottawa to do more for the farmers in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, he had that opportunity in '82. He had that opportunity in 1982 when he was in government. Did he go to Ottawa and pound on the desk in Ottawa and say, bring down those interest rates? No, Mr. Speaker, he did not, he did not. And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, he as well had told the farmers of Saskatchewan that they were on their own. And when he told the farmers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that they were on their own, when the NDP leader had told the farmers that they were on their own, he was not only telling the farmers but he was telling every small-business man in those communities, he was telling every man, woman and child in those small communities, in those rural communities, that he was not with them. He had turned his back on those people.

And now he righteously stands in the floor of this legislature saying how much he's going to do for these

folks, what he's going to do for all these folks. Well I'm going to tell you what he's going to do for all these folks, Mr. Speaker. He is going to do exactly that much — nothing. Because that man has not had the gall or the guts to come out forth, to come front and forth before this legislature and tell the people of Saskatchewan what he stands for, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — He's never come forth to tell the people of this province what he stands for. Oh yes, and members . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order please. I'd ask the member from Moose Jaw . . . is it Moose Jaw North or Moose Jaw South? From Moose Jaw North. Order, order, order.

I'm going to ask the member from Moose Jaw North; I'm going to ask the member from Regina Centre; I'm going to ask the member from Regina North West; I'm going to ask these members to come to order. I'm going to ask them to allow the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster to continue with his remarks. And if the member . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. And particularly the member from Moose Jaw North, if he refuses to come to order, I'll ask him to leave the legislature.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that members of the opposition don't like to hear a lot of what I'm saying but, Mr. Speaker, but I've sat here and I have let the members opposite do their speaking and I would wish that they would allow me that same right.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying earlier, that the NDP opposition leader and his band have not come forth to the people of this province. They have not given their ideas through the people of this province and they refuse to until there is some sort of a recall. Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe for a moment that that is — I do not believe for a moment, Mr. Speaker — that that is a proper forum for the members of the opposition to take. It's not fair to the people of this province and they know that.

And, Mr. Speaker, they'll heckle, they'll heckle. But I want to indicate to you, sir, that the Bill that's before this Assembly . . . And members want to hear about the Bill before this Assembly; I will tell you about the tax.

This tax, Mr. Speaker, is going to be very positive for the agricultural community here in the province of Saskatchewan. And I would hope that the Leader of the Opposition would listen to the benefits of Bill 61 and what it's going to do for the agricultural community in this province. It's going to, Mr. Speaker, allow us to enable to fund the GRIP and NISA program for the farmers of Saskatchewan that has been taken up in approximately 80 per cent of the farming community.

And members opposite laugh and joke about it. And I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that members may think that it's a joke. Members opposite might think, members

of the NDP may think it's a joke, Mr. Speaker, but it is never easy for any administration to have to extend a . . . put a tax on anything.

We all know that people don't like taxes; I don't like taxes. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a sense though when one has to be responsible. One has to be responsible to the fact that if there is a need for programs in the province of Saskatchewan then it has to be delivered by the Government of Saskatchewan, that the taxes have got to come from the people and to be disbursed out fairly.

And I want to indicate to you, sir, that this is exactly what we've been doing since 1982. I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the taxes that have been collected in this province . . . and many of the NDP members have been asking: where's the money gone? They've been contributing it to bad mismanagement and wasteful spending.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when I look at what I've been able to accomplish for the constituency of Cut Knife-Lloydminster, as other members here have been able to contribute to their constituencies, I would say, Mr. Speaker, again, that we have taken the moratoriums off the hospitals and nursing homes; we have taken moratoriums off of building new schools and additions to schools. I want to indicate to you, sir, that we have brought new industrial diversification into this province. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, we have brought jobs into this province that have been second to none across this country.

And I'm going to get into just a few specifics. I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that when I took office — and I'm only going to speak in regard to my riding — I want to indicate to you the then minister of Highways, Bob Long, had come into our communities and had indicated to us that we could not have natural gas in our communities. There was no natural gas in this province to deliver to the communities in my riding let alone a lot of other people's rural ridings.

Well, Mr. Speaker, he was right to this point. There was no natural gas development in this province. There was no oil development in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you that through our government, when we formed government, we had brought this kind of diversification in and it did have a whole lot of impact in my riding. Every rural community in almost every farming farmer's yard now has natural gas delivered to their farm yards or into their communities, into their households.

Mr. Speaker, that was a program under the Progressive Conservative government. Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you as well, that individual line service — telephone line service — has come to almost every individual's household in my riding. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you, we have a 40-40 plan. We have all sorts of niceties and conveniences now for the people in the riding.

When I listen to the members opposite, what have they been saying? What have they been saying? They've been saying tax this and tax on that and tax on this and tax on

that. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, the members of the NDP said yes, they will repeal the PST.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2230)

Mr. Hopfner: — And they have that right, Mr. Speaker, if they would be ever fortunate enough to form a government in this province in any future time. They would have that right. But I will tell you this, Mr. Speaker, that right will not be given to them in this year's election.

And I'll say this and I'll tell you why. It's because of the lack of information that the public have, it's the lack of information the public have of the NDP Party. It is the lack of information of what those people stand for. And I want to indicate to you, sir, that when they said, that when they said they would repeal that tax, they had promised, the member from Regina Centre had promised the public and the people of this province that their income tax was going to rise, Mr. Speaker, that that is where they were going to find the new money for their promises, for their empty promises, because they didn't tell us any promises. And member opposite from Saskatoon says that's garbage. Ask the association, the accounting association here in Regina what the member from Regina Centre said. And the member from Regina Centre said that they would get their new-found dollars from income tax.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what does that say? That say is to raise the same amount of money that the member opposite has just announced on the NDP Party that he was going to raise the income tax, there for every individual man, woman, and working person in this province, to 23 per cent. He has to raise it to 23 per cent, Mr. Speaker, to raise the equivalent amount of dollars that this government is committed to or they will be running one of the largest deficits in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker, in the history of this province. They will be second to Ontario, Mr. Speaker, and maybe, maybe not, maybe not, because of the things that they were saying that this government wasn't doing enough of.

This government, the NDP have said, has not put enough money into health care; has not put enough money into education; has not put enough money into social programs; has not put enough money into agriculture; has not put enough money into this and that, the next thing, and they'd do so much more. With what, Mr. Speaker? With what? Where are they going to get the money? Do you think, and I'm asking the NDP, do they think the people of this province are fools? Do they really think that the people in this province are fools to believe what they are saying? No, Mr. Speaker, they are not fools. The people in this province, Mr. Speaker, have the intelligence to see through the member from Riversdale. They have the intelligence to see through every man and woman sitting across in the NDP Party.

Mr. Speaker, I would be totally ashamed of those individuals. I would be totally ashamed of them individuals if I would be in any way, shape, or form, in any way, shape, or form, I guess in any way, shape, or form . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . What's that . . . If I was with the NDP Party . . . I would say that if I had anything to

do with the NDP Party.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the members opposite have a lot to come clean with. They have to come clean with the people in this province. They have to tell the people of the province what their mandate is. If they do not have a mandate, they do not deserve one vote from any of those people in this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, what we've seen here tonight was probably . . . is guttered as a political party could ever stoop. Mr. Speaker, when those people outside, when those people outside were possibly . . . there could have been possibly some involvement from members of the opposition there because, Mr. Speaker, I saw at least five of their members walking with those people out front and walking through the doors with those people. And, Mr. Speaker, and, Mr. Speaker, that I say is gutter politics, to get people like that upset enough to come in here and carry on the way they have carried on tonight.

And the NDP members know exactly what I'm talking about. And yes, Mr. Speaker, the truth hurts. The truth hurts. The truth hurts and the members know it. And I want to tell you . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Order, please. I'd ask the member from Saskatoon Fairview to please apologize to the House and withdraw the unparliamentary remarks.

Mr. Mitchell: — I withdraw the remark, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I know that the NDP . . .

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a question for the member. Does the member have any evidence whatsoever that he can lay before this legislature to prove his remarks that have just been spoken in the last couple minutes? Does he have any evidence to verify his remarks?

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

The member has not expressed a point of order. Order, please. I am addressing the member from Saskatoon Nutana. I'd appreciate if the rest of the members would kindly wait until that is dispensed with. The member did not specifically ask for leave. Order, please. One more outburst and I am going to ask you to leave. I won't ask for an apology — I'll ask you to leave if there's any more outbursts.

The member from Saskatoon Nutana did not . . . the Speaker's on his feet. The member from Saskatoon Nutana did not ask . . . Order, please. I won't accept anything else from the member for Humboldt either. Okay?

The member from Saskatoon Nutana did not ask the member for leave . . . the member from Saskatoon — Or just a minute, the member from Humboldt, I would ask

the member from Humboldt to please rise and apologize to the Assembly and the Chair.

Mr. Upshall: — I apologize, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, have I been recognized? Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would ask the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster leave to ask a question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has asked the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd for leave to ask a question. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the member to prove to this House and give evidence that the members of the opposition organized the civil servants who were outside of this Legislative Assembly tonight — the people who are their employees; the people who are very concerned about their futures; the women, the children, the mothers, the grandmothers who are outside of the legislature tonight, who were denied access to this building by the people that employ them — the government of Saskatchewan, who employ them on behalf of all the people of this province. I would ask that member if he is going to make statements, in this legislature, that the opposition organized that demonstration on behalf of the people out there who are concerned about their futures, could you please bring one shred of evidence to this legislature proving your statements?

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the members would listen and maybe I would answer in this way, Mr. Speaker. I did, yes, see at least five of their members walking and marching with those people.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that the member that has just asked me the question was speaking or supposedly had suggested to us in this Assembly that she is speaking on behalf of all those ladies out that were here marching in front of the Legislative Assembly. I ask the member opposite . . . I ask the member opposite, are you not speaking on behalf of the young lady security that got punched? Does she not have any rights? Do you not believe that the security of this building have no rights? I ask, Mr. Speaker . . . I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I tell the member opposite, do those people not have any rights? Do all people . . . Do all people in this Assembly . . .

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

Mr. Shillington: — I wonder if the member will permit a further question.

Mr. Hopfner: — Mr. Speaker, I'll respond to that question. And they're just playing silly here so I'll just continue on with my speech.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I do believe in the rights of people and I do believe in the rights of this Legislative Assembly and the rules of it. And I have the right to speak on Bill 61 here, Mr. Speaker. And I'm going to say to you

that with Bill 61 at hand here, Mr. Speaker, the positive things that this Bill is going to mean for the province of Saskatchewan: it's going to mean, sir, it's going to mean great programs for agriculture; it's going to mean the carry-on of our great health care programs in the province; the education programs in the province, sir; the social programs of this province, sir; it's going to help . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have here a copy of a newspaper article that appeared in yesterday's *Leader-Post*. It indicates that the public support for this group of men and women opposite, that are still the Government of Saskatchewan, has disintegrated to the point of being at 19 per cent. Mr. Speaker, that's at a level which might describe the operations of a fringe party in this country.

Mr. Speaker, what we have here is a province with the fringe on top.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, but the fringe, Mr. Speaker, but the fringe continues to inflict the pain and the punishment on the people of Saskatchewan as if, Mr. Speaker, they had a mandate left — as if they had a mandate left.

Do they have a mandate? The answer, Mr. Speaker, from across this province, from every corner of this province, from urban Saskatchewan, from rural Saskatchewan, from the North, from the South, from the East, and from the West is that this government no longer has a mandate to govern the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — And we've come, Mr. Speaker, to the situation of being a province with the fringe on top.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read into the record, and I know that you will appreciate this quote, and I hope that members opposite will pay attention to this quote; a quote from a very distinguished Canadian. Mr. Speaker, I quote:

This parliament, this institution should be a temple of freedom, not a place where frustration becomes the means whereby rights are swept aside . . .

Mr. Speaker, that's a quote from the Right Hon. John George Diefenbaker. Mr. Speaker, the former leader of the federal Conservative Party, the prime minister from Prince Albert, the man whose bust is here in the rotunda of the legislature said:

This parliament . . . should be a temple of freedom, not a place where frustration becomes the means whereby rights are swept aside . . .

What did we see in this building tonight? A frustrated government — a frustrated government — who swept

aside the rights of Saskatchewan people. That's what we saw here tonight, Mr. Speaker. A thousand people came to this legislature tonight — a thousand residents of this province, people, Mr. Speaker, who come here in opposition to this government's policies, in opposition to what this government is doing to their lives and the lives of other people in this province. They come, Mr. Speaker, to their Legislative Assembly, and what do they find? They find the doors of their Legislative Assembly locked.

(2245)

The Speaker: — Order. As I indicated earlier, I'm going to have to ask the hon. members to stick to the debate on Bill No. 61, An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act (No. 2). That is what the debate is about.

The incident you referred to was handled earlier tonight and I would ask you to refer your remarks to the debate under question.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the right Honourable John George Diefenbaker said, and I quote: “. . . this institution should be a temple of freedom . . .”

Mr. Speaker, when citizens of this province come to their legislature and wish to sit in these public galleries to listen to their members debate this tax — this Bill — and the policies of this government, they should not find the doors of this building locked in their face.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, we have a government that has reached in the history of this province the height of arrogance. Never in the history of Saskatchewan have we seen a government reach this height of arrogance where you will use closure to ram through a tax Bill. This has never happened before in the province of Saskatchewan, and I'm not sure it's ever happened before in the province of Saskatchewan that the doors to this Legislative Assembly in the public galleries were locked; Ross Thatcher, someone says Ross Thatcher did it, Mr. Speaker.

Ever since this government was elected, Mr. Speaker, in 1982, they have shown a disregard for this legislature and the institution of parliament. And now the member wants me to talk about the Bill. Closure on a tax Bill is a total disregard for the traditions of this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Since, Mr. Speaker, since they came into this place they have shown disregard. At best, they have treated this legislature with indifference, with disdain and indifference, that's its best. At worst, these people have attacked the officers of this legislature. They've done their best to remove the powers of this legislature into their own cabinet behind closed cabinet doors, and now they seek and have rammed through closure on a tax Bill, denying the most fundamental right of the parliament, the right of debate, Mr. Speaker.

And this, Mr. Speaker, is not the tradition of the Conservative party. This is not the tradition of John A.

Macdonald; this is not the tradition of John Diefenbaker; these are not in the tradition of Winston Churchill. This is not in the tradition of Saskatchewan; it's not in the tradition of this legislature, and it's not in the tradition of their very own party. They are some kind of new breed of arrogance, Mr. Speaker.

We've come now to the end of their rope. They've come completely to the end of their rope, Mr. Speaker, and the only way they know how to react is the way they always react and that's with arrogance, with arrogance, Mr. Speaker.

Now I want to say a few words tonight because I listened very carefully, very carefully to the Minister of Finance in this House as he spoke on this debate today and defended his tax. Now what did the Minister of Finance say in defence of his tax? He said we have to make some tough choices. That's what he said. We have to make some tough choices.

Now I ask you, Mr. Speaker, I ask members opposite. The choice that he makes to introduce this tax, who is it tough on? Who is it tough on? Is it tough on that minister? Is it tough on that Premier? Is it tough on Chuck Childers? Is this tax tough on Dome Advertising? Is it tough on Cargill Grain? Is it tough on Weyerhaeuser? Is it tough on Peter Pocklington? Is it tough on Bob Andrew? Is it tough on Graham Taylor? Is it tough on Eric Berntson?

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on the subject of Mr. Berntson, let me just go on this aside if you will permit, Mr. Speaker. This is the kind of thing that causes the need for this kind of tax, why we're in the mess.

Mr. Speaker, let me refer specifically to the former deputy premier of this province, Senator Eric Berntson, resigned his seat in this House. What for? To go to work for the Canadian Senate. Took with him his pension out of this House — fair enough, he earned it. Took with him a great big severance package. Goes down to the Senate of Canada and goes on the public trough on the Senate of Canada. For what reason? To ram through the goods and services tax — that's why he went there. Then, Mr. Speaker, get this, this morning on national television there is that same Senator Eric Berntson and what's he saying? He's the campaign manager for the Progressive Conservative Party in Saskatchewan. And who's paying him, Mr. Speaker? Who's paying him? The taxpayers of Saskatchewan, to put the tax on here.

Mr. Speaker, is there any wonder that this government has completely lost the trust of Saskatchewan people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — So, Mr. Speaker, this minister says we have to make some tough choices. Now has this tax been tough on Senator Eric Berntson? No, it's not tough on Senator Eric Berntson.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you who it's tough on. I'll tell you it's tough on the seniors living in the constituency of Moose Jaw South. That's who it's tough on.

It's tough on the young students who are going to the

Caronport Bible school this fall. That's who it's going to be tough on because they're going to be paying tax on their books. It's tough on the kids, the young people that will be going to STI (Saskatchewan Technical Institute) in Moose Jaw this fall. It's going to be tough on the kids that are going to Aldersgate College in Moose Jaw. That's who it's going to be tough on.

It's tough on the seniors who want to go out for a cup of coffee. They have a limited income, Mr. Speaker. They have fixed incomes. They have contributed to this nation and the building of this province. And what do they do? They get a government that comes along that tax their cup of coffee.

An Hon. Member: — And makes them pay to get into the park.

Mr. Calvert: — And makes them to pay to get into the provincial parks.

Is this tax tough on the friends of the government? No it's not, Mr. Speaker. I'll tell you who it's tough on. It's tough on the young family in Moose Jaw who go down to the Army & Navy and try and buy some running shoes for their kids. It's tough on the families here in Regina that go down to the Hudson Bay store and try and buy some clothes for their kids.

Interesting, interesting, Mr. Speaker, that that great Hudson Bay Company — 1987, I believe it was 1987 — paid not a dime in corporate taxes to the nation of Canada. And yet the young families in Saskatchewan who will go to that same Hudson Bay store right here in downtown Regina will have to pay 14 per cent. That's where the choice is tough, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Who's it tough on, Mr. Speaker? It's tough on workers. It's tough on workers. It's tough on small farmers. It's tough on single parents. And, Mr. Speaker, it's particularly tough on small-business people — small-business people in towns, villages and cities across this province. It's tough on the border communities. They're seeing their main streets dying. It's tough.

But is it tough on the friends of this government? No. Tough choices, he talks about tough choices. They don't understand what tough is, Mr. Speaker.

And then, Mr. Speaker, what does this Minister of Finance do in defence of his tax? Well he says to us, where would you get the money from? You see, where would you get the money from? That's what's wrong here. It's the mentality over there. All they think you need to do is go somewhere and get more money. That's their mentality. We run up a great big debt. Well no problem. We just more tax. We go somewhere and get some more money. So their question always is: where are you going to go and get the money?

Mr. Speaker, the question they should be answering is where are you going to save the money?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, this government, since they

came to power in 1982, has more than doubled their intake of revenue. And they haven't doubled it by taxing the oil companies. No, no. They haven't doubled by taxing their corporate friends. Oh, no. What they've done is more than doubled their revenues by taxing the ordinary people of Saskatchewan. That's how they've got this doubling in revenue.

Now they say — because this is their mind set — well, we need some more money, so we'll go back to those same taxpayers and pull out some more. And then they've got the gall to say, well where would you get the money?

Mr. Speaker, it's time these people started viewing the treasury as a trust and not as a trough, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — And, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me, it just seems to me in the year 1991, in a province with now less than a million people, it should be possible to provide the services that this province needs and deserves for a budget of \$4.5 billion.

Mr. Speaker, there is a question that is being asked . . . I attended a luncheon today in my home community of Moose Jaw. About 200 people who came out today at lunch to show support for our community, many of them small-business people in the downtown sector. I was asked two or three times at that luncheon today, why does this government think it has a mandate to impose this kind of tax at this stage in its life?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to quote the *Star-Phoenix* of yesterday, the editorial, and I quote:

. . . it's clear (says the editor of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*) it's clear Grant Devine and his party no longer have any mandate to govern Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I am not of the view that because a poll is bad a party has lost its mandate. That's not my view. My view is a party has lost its mandate to govern when it has so completely betrayed the trust of those who elected it to govern.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — That's when a party has lost its mandate. This government, like no other government that I can think of, has betrayed the mandate and the trust it was given.

Mr. Speaker, this government was elected in 1982 with a wide popular support. They were elected on promises of tax fairness, tax reduction. They have broken every tax promise they ever made. Mr. Speaker, they promised to cut our income taxes by 10 per cent. What's happened? Up the income tax and gave us the flat tax. Mr. Speaker, they promised — not to reduce — to eliminate the provincial sales tax. Now what's happened? They upped it to seven and now they want to expand it to every good and service that we purchase. Mr. Speaker, well someone

here says it's another flip-flop. It's a complete flop — that's what it is — it's a complete flop.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, they have so completely betrayed not only the trust of the voters of Saskatchewan, they have betrayed the trust of their own people. They've betrayed the trust of their own party members because they have so betrayed the trust given to this government, they have lost the mandate to govern in this province, Mr. Speaker.

But again, it's not just on trust. A government must continue to earn its mandate. It's not enough to just win it at an election. It must be earned continually and you earn that trust and you earn your mandate to govern by listening to the people of your province, Mr. Speaker. They have turned deaf, deaf to the people of Saskatchewan. They turned them away; they locked the doors of the legislature. They will not listen to the petitions. They shut them out.

And, Mr. Speaker, they have become, in my view, like a little island of arrogance, island of arrogance here under the legislative dome. They no longer listen; they no longer hear. They will not listen; they will not hear, and there are none so deaf as those who will not hear.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — They have betrayed the trust of the people of Saskatchewan. They have forgotten that it's necessary to earn the trust of the people of Saskatchewan. But worst of all, Mr. Speaker, worst of all — and this is where in my view they have so completely lost their mandate — they have chosen, Mr. Speaker, this government has chosen, through policies like decentralization, through this tax Bill, they have chosen for their own political advantage to attempt to divide this province.

That is their attempt, Mr. Speaker. It's as obvious, it's as obvious as can be to any observer, any passing observer of political realities in Saskatchewan. This government thinks that the only way it can be re-elected is to divide this province and set person against person, rural against urban, urban against rural, worker against farmer, farmer against worker, senior against young people, young people against senior, white against native, and on and on it goes. They think their route to re-election success is by dividing this province, Mr. Speaker, and that is a shame. That's a disgrace.

(2300)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I bring to your attention again, as I did some days ago in this House, a front cover of the *Presbyterian Record*, church magazine of the Presbyterian Church in Canada some years ago had a front cover that pictured a little lifeboat afloat on a very stormy sea and in that boat were a handful of people, each with their hands to the oars. And, Mr. Speaker, that cover was captioned with these words: We are all afloat on a stormy sea and we owe each other a terrible loyalty.

Mr. Speaker, in this province we are afloat on a stormy sea — there is no question about it — and we owe each other a terrible loyalty. Mr. Speaker, what this province needs is a government that understands that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — What this province needs, Mr. Speaker, is a government and a Premier who will unite the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, my time has nearly elapsed. Let me just say this. This government can lock the doors of this legislature. This government can lock the doors, if they so choose, to these public galleries. But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, they can't lock the doors to the election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I won't be saying much tonight. Let me rephrase that. I can't say much tonight because the government has introduced closure which means that the members of the opposition and the people in the legislature can't really say very much on this Bill.

And it's kind of a strange situation that we have — probably 80, 90 per cent of the people in the province that don't like this tax Bill that we're talking about. We've obviously made it very clear in the legislature; we don't like the tax Bill and we're critical of it. And it's like the government doesn't want to hear or doesn't want to listen to what it is that the people are saying on this, and so that they're closing off the people by introducing this closure and limiting debate.

They're saying to the people of Saskatchewan that we really don't want to listen to you. We really don't care what it is that you think. We really don't care what it is that you feel about this tax. We don't want to listen to you. No matter what you say, no matter what you do, we're going to put this tax Bill through. And that's what they want to do, Mr. Speaker.

It's very unusual to do that in Saskatchewan. This is the first time it's ever been done on a tax Bill as I understand it. People may not understand all the details of closure and so on in these parliamentary procedures, but the discussion that I've had with people is that they don't very much care for governments doing this kind of thing. It leaves a very bad impression about the state of democracy in Saskatchewan. They feel that if enough people, and certainly a strong majority are opposed to something that the government is doing, then there should be lots of opportunity for people to express that.

And so they don't much care for the government acting the way that they did. And they're saying that this is not the way that things should be done, that it's heavy-handed, that it's dictatorial. And they point out to me . . . and many of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, come from countries in eastern Europe and so on where they're gladdened to see a rebirth of democracy and democratic institutions. And they find it ironic and more than strange

that, at a time that this is happening in their places of birth, that we in Saskatchewan seem to be going the other way. And they don't very much care for it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I'm opposed to this Bill, as are all members of this side of the House. And I would venture to say there's probably a few on the other side that are not too happy with this Bill either. We're opposed on this side because we think it's the wrong type of tax to be putting on the people of Saskatchewan at this time. We think it's the wrong tax at the wrong time by the wrong government.

And we say it's the wrong tax because everyone knows that a tax like this hits people with lower incomes and middle incomes the hardest. Senior citizens, as an example, are hit especially hard by this kind of a tax. That's one of the reasons why, you know, an NDP government in the past has never really moved to increase this kind of tax and have sought to limit this kind of tax, because of the impact that it has on people. And that's why we don't want it.

The Conservatives, as we know, both in Ottawa and here, have a different idea about taxes. They believe that the thing that you should do is give tax breaks to the large corporations and because the large corporations — or at least their theory goes — will create lots of jobs and lots of wealth and opportunities for people, when they get tax breaks they're going to pass that along as opportunities for working people.

Well it just never seems to work out that way, Mr. Speaker. They get the breaks but they never pass along the opportunities. And we'd prefer those kinds of taxes, or at least fairness in taxes, where the big corporations pay their fair share as opposed to taxes like this which hits poorer people the hardest. And that's why we say that this kind of tax shouldn't be extended and that it's the wrong tax to have, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Let me just say one thing, that I'm not the only one that's saying that. The government, in their own documents about this sales tax, Mr. Speaker, said, and I quote the Minister of Finance:

Harmonization of the provincial sales tax, by itself, would increase the taxes paid by lower income families. This is contrary to the government's perception of fairness.

Now they've got some rather ineffective way of dealing with that, but at least they recognize that this kind of tax is unfair, as we do. It's just that they don't go with it. Their tax, their increase in taxes doesn't sort of correspond to what they say about this tax. If they really wanted to have a fair taxation system, Mr. Speaker, there's lots of alternatives they could look at, and I'll talk about that in a minute.

But, you know, if they really need money, why don't they cut out some of the waste that's taking place in

Saskatchewan. We estimate that, by our estimates that, you know, the government could save about a hundred million dollars a year, which would go a long way to eliminating the need for any tax such as this.

Just the other day an example came up where the government is going to be spending probably about \$400,000 — and that's a lot of money — \$400,000 to send letters and books to people who signed petitions opposed to the tax, people who don't want this tax. Now the government's going to send them all this propaganda to try and convince them that you shouldn't have signed the petition, you were wrong to do that, and you should really like this tax. They're going to send them all this propaganda. We estimate it's going to cost about \$400,000.

Well that's a waste of money in anybody's books, Mr. Speaker, and that's the kind of thing that we talk about that they should cut out. They should cut out that kind of waste. That way they wouldn't need to tax. And it's like, you know, it's like they've never heard, Mr. Speaker, of that saying that I think a lot of us heard from our parents and grandparents, and that is waste not, want not, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — You know, they're like a bunch of little kids that just don't listen to their parents, that always leave the lights on and just can't get it through their heads that you shouldn't waste things, and that leave the water running, that you shouldn't waste things, Mr. Speaker, because if you waste things, at some point it comes back on you.

And compounded with that, they get elected and they all think they're big shots and that, boy, they don't have to worry about the money because it's someone else's money. And they're just acting like big shots with the ordinary people's money, Mr. Speaker. And they should change their attitudes, and if they changed their attitudes then we wouldn't need these kinds of terrible taxes that they're putting on people. Like, I bet you today, I bet you today . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I bet you today, Mr. Speaker, out of the 18 cabinet ministers, at least 15 of them had their lunch paid for by the taxpayers, you know, because they're such big shots they're going to have the taxpayers pay for their lunch instead of paying for their own lunch. Well I think, Mr. Speaker, that kind of waste and that kind of attitude has got to stop. And I tell you, if my leader were the premier of Saskatchewan, cabinet ministers would be bringing their lunch to work in brown paper bags, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — There's one way of . . . there's one way, Mr. Speaker, of putting an end to some of this waste in government. And, you know, they yell a lot, but again it's what my parents said and a lot of parents and grandparents have said to us, and that is that, waste not,

want not, Mr. Speaker — and they should look at that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And, Mr. Speaker, you know, even if they were to eliminate waste — or if they didn't want to do that but they felt that they needed the money to pay for programs and so on — why don't they look at some other things? And I'm not suggesting that they look at the personal income tax, which is already the highest in Saskatchewan; and I'm not suggesting that they look at the gas tax, which is almost double what it was 10 years ago; and I'm not suggesting that they look at the tobacco taxes because, you know, people know that there's a revolt going on by smokers and so on. I'm not a smoker myself, but people kind of feel that they've reached the limit on that kind of tax.

But they could look, for example, at this Weyerhaeuser corporation that they gave a \$236 million facility to and, you know, this company, they gave them this plant and they said, well you don't have to pay back for 30 years and then you only have to pay back if your profits are a certain level, and you got a really reduced interest rate. And this company hasn't paid us 1 cent.

Why don't they go after this company? But I tell you, the PC government won't do that, Mr. Speaker. But at least that's one avenue that could be pursued by our government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And that's not the only place, Mr. Speaker, that's not the only place. Oil companies, their taxes this year, their royalties, are supposed to be \$252 million. Well that sounds like a lot of money except when you compare it to what the NDP government got 10 years ago when we got \$532 million — twice as much. So the oil companies are paying one-half in royalties what they were paying 10 years ago.

Well big deal, Mr. Speaker. They're about the only group I can think of in society who's paying one-half of taxes this year as compared to 10 years ago. Everybody else seems to be paying twice as much. So I think it's time that they paid a little bit more too, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And finally, they could stand up to Ottawa and have Ottawa pay its fair share for health and education programs, instead of having Ottawa dump more of those costs on the province. And if they just quit sort of supporting everything that Brian Mulroney did and said to him, look, don't do that; you in Ottawa got to pay your fair share — well maybe we'd have more money coming here too, Mr. Speaker. And that way we wouldn't have to have this tax, Mr. Speaker.

And I tell you just on that, you know, they should get after Brian Mulroney to get some of those major corporations that just aren't paying any taxes at all. We've heard stories here about corporations that have got hundreds of millions of dollars in profits and somehow never managed to pay 1 cent in taxes. Well that's wrong; that's

got to stop. And if they did that, or if some government did that, well we wouldn't need this sales tax here, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And if they needed more money, you know you could stop your Fair Share program which nobody seems to really like because it's upsetting a lot of families in Regina, and people in the rest of Saskatchewan don't like it. You could save another \$50 million. Well maybe you wouldn't save it, but at least you would cut out the need for a Fair Share tax next year to pay for this program, Mr. Speaker. But that's another way that they could save some money, by looking at that program again.

If they did some of those things, Mr. Speaker, then there would be enough money to pay for the programs that we need in Saskatchewan, programs such as health care. I just had a call tonight . . . or today, from a constituent. She tells me that her husband had to go to Regina General Hospital and he had to spend a day in emergency because of the long waiting list and the long line-ups at the hospital. He's a 79-year-old man, had to spend a whole day and a night in the emergency ward with six other people in a room, and that's wrong. We need to find money so that that kind of stuff just doesn't happen any more in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And to find money so that there's jobs for young people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2315)

Mr. Van Mulligen: — We say that it's the wrong tax and that they need to cut out some of their waste and look to other ways to raise some of the money. That way we wouldn't need this tax. And even if they believed that somehow they've got to have this tax because of their Progressive Conservative ideas, well we think, and everybody thinks, this is the wrong time to have such a tax.

And I'm not the only one that's saying it. Everybody's saying that this is not the right time to be putting this tax, so not only the wrong tax, but it's the wrong time for the tax. Saskatchewan economy, as everybody knows, is in a big mess and is in serious trouble, and to ask consumers in Saskatchewan to pay another \$445 million is going to create serious problems for the economy. Everybody knows that, Mr. Speaker. And they should listen to people, and especially to business groups that have experience about that, who are saying those kinds of things.

In fact, there's one group in Saskatoon. It's called the Saskatchewan Business Coalition to STOP the PST and it's headed up by a person by the name of Les Dubé, who's sort of a real big Conservative supporter. And he doesn't like it and he says:

This huge new tax is very detrimental to the Saskatchewan economy, especially at this time, because it takes hundreds of millions of dollars of

disposable income out of the pockets of consumers. Less disposable income for low and middle income families means they will have less to spend at local businesses. Lower sales of local businesses will mean lower profits and lost jobs. The consequences of this huge new tax are widespread and severe.

And that's not my words, Mr. Speaker, those are the words of this Mr. Dubé, who is as I understand it, a strong supporter of the government, and he thinks it's the wrong time for a tax like this. But everybody, you know, people I talk to know that this is the wrong time for this kind of tax, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — So I don't think that the government should really go ahead with this, and it should stop it now. Not only is it that people are going to have less money to spend, but they're going to spend more across the border and take even more money out of Saskatchewan, create even more problems for businesses here, make it even tougher for businesses to hire people, so I think that they should stop.

When they come out with some phoney boloney study and say, well, the tax is going to be good for us because we're going to get big breaks, or breaks to the big companies and they're going to create jobs, well we've all heard that kind of stuff before. They just take the money and run. They don't necessarily provide jobs, but what happens is, you know, the money's gone. And we don't get any benefit. And we're not going to get 5,000 new jobs like they say, Mr. Speaker, so I think that it's just the wrong time for this kind of tax, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, I just want to say that . . . and something that a lot of my constituents point out is that, you know, they don't really have the right any more to have a large tax like this because even though they're legally elected for five years, the tradition in history in Saskatchewan is that after four years you go to the people and you ask for their vote to carry on, for their mandate to carry on. And you don't sort of institute major new programs or taxes, sort of in the last minute like they're doing.

You know, Tommy Douglas, and Ross Thatcher, and Allan Blakeney and all those premiers, they always used to go just about every four years. The last time we had anybody go this long was the same Conservative government in 1986, and then during the war years once, and then the PC government in the '30s went for five years. And well, it's not right, Mr. Speaker. It's just not right, and especially when there's already four or five constituencies that don't have any members at all and aren't represented, and their people really don't have a voice here.

So they really have no business doing this. It should be up to the people to do this. And you know, one of the members there, I believe it was the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster, said earlier tonight he doesn't like taxes. Well if he doesn't like taxes, Mr. Speaker, all I can say that he's got a very funny way of showing it. If he doesn't like taxes this is a real, real strange way of

showing it by supporting the largest tax hike in Saskatchewan history. If he really doesn't like the taxes and if other members on that side don't like taxes, why don't they just vote against this Bill and give the people what they want?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — If you're not prepared to vote it down then I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan will support us in the next election so that we can get rid of this tax. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to take a few moments tonight to enter into the debate on the Bill before the Assembly — Bill No. 61 — a Bill calling for the harmonization and the expansion of the E&H tax in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by adding that I don't believe there's anyone in this province, indeed in Canada or anywhere in the world, who enjoys having taxes increased or indeed enjoys paying taxes at all. But however, Mr. Speaker, we all enjoy deriving many services from government. Individuals over the years have become used to receiving services. And, Mr. Speaker, there are many individuals out in this province who believe that services have to be paid for, including seniors.

The expansion of the E&H tax and the Bill 61 we are discussing — have been discussing for the last number of weeks, Mr. Speaker — allows for the E&H tax to be expanded to bring in extra revenues so that the government can indeed meet the requests and meet the demands of education and health, and also meet the responsibilities to strengthen our rural economy through our contribution to GRIP and NISA.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at our province and look at Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan over the years and into the future will continue to depend on a large part on agriculture. Agriculture has been and will continue to be the major industry in this province. However, Mr. Speaker, we're all aware of the difficulties that the agricultural community has been facing over the past number of years. And many difficulties not due in part to individuals or to farmers themselves, but to other factors beyond our control like support for farm products and prices and subsidizing prices in other parts of the world. As well, we've had natural disasters, the natural elements that have played a major role in some of the problems that we in the agriculture community have faced.

Now when you look at agriculture in this province, Mr. Speaker, and you look at the Premier — the member from Estevan — and since 1982, I think you will have to admit that the Premier of this province has had a very significant role in the support agriculture has received over the past number of years through many dollars that have come into the province; dollars that have come into the hands of farmers, farm families. And they haven't just stayed there, Mr. Speaker, but they have been passed on to small businesses and families in our rural communities, and not

just our small communities and rural communities, but also our large, major centres such as Regina and Saskatoon.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the expansion of the E&H tax, we certainly have realized that we have a responsibility to strengthen the rural economy and to, through the GRIP and NISA programs, Mr. Speaker . . . yes we would have many people argue that well, they're not good enough or they could be better. But let me add, Mr. Speaker, I believe GRIP and NISA are true programs that are much better than anything we've ever had before.

And certainly what they do to the rural community, what they do to the farmer, what they do in agriculture is give a sense of stability that gives the farm producer an opportunity when he goes to put his crop in the ground of knowing what he will have at the end of the day; that he will have at least a minimum amount to operate with and to work with.

And certainly I've talked to a number of individuals over the past few months who maybe didn't care totally for the GRIP program but have had to admit and have said that it certainly has been a major factor in their ability to put the crop in the ground this year, and looking forward to some stability in their farm economy. And it's also created a better rapport between themselves and their lender.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the E&H expansion and Bill No. 61 as well, we can relate it to agriculture; we can relate it to strengthening our rural resource; we can relate it to diversifying our province, stabilizing and rejuvenating Saskatchewan's communities. But as well, I think, we must remember that the significant increases in Health and Education in the recent budget presented by my colleague from Weyburn have to be covered as well.

People in the province of Saskatchewan, I believe, have one of the best health plans anywhere in the world. In fact recently, just watching the news, many residents of the United States of America have been also looking at ways of addressing the problems they face with their health programs. And, Mr. Speaker, they don't have a government-funded program such as we have.

Mr. Speaker, in the United States and indeed in many provinces of Saskatchewan, people pay for . . . pay premiums or buy insurance to cover health costs. We in Saskatchewan — dare I say? — don't pay anything.

But let me rephrase that. We can't say we don't pay anything. We pay through our tax dollars.

And, Mr. Speaker, so many of the goods and services that we pay extra on, I would suggest that if we were paying the premium up front, as many people have suggested to me, and even seniors in my community have come up . . . I think back to the program that was given . . . some funding was given out to the seniors to help fund the regional games or the provincial winter . . . their provincial senior over 55 . . . plus 55 games. Two days later I had a half a dozen seniors come into my office and they said: now why in the world would the government give us any money? We don't need it. We have enough and we can operate and we can fund our own programs.

And, Mr. Speaker, then they went on . . . proceeded to tell me, you know, why doesn't the government charge that yearly premium or that yearly health fee that we used to have that I believe members opposite took away a number of years ago — decided that, no, we don't need to pay the \$72 or whatever it was per family, I just don't remember.

But you know there are many people out in Saskatchewan, rural Saskatchewan, who believe that it costs us to have our health care services. It has to be paid for; 3.5 per cent increase in Health doesn't sound like a lot of money when you say 3.5 per cent increase, but you look at 3.5 per cent over \$1.6 billion and what does that add up to, Mr. Speaker? It adds up to almost \$40 million or better.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know I've had many farmers and many people in the agriculture community suggest that when we tie the expansion of the E&H directly to agriculture that it affects them and people despise them. But the reality is, the expansion of the E&H tax is there not only to fund agricultural programs but to support our health and to maintain our education programs as well.

Let me break it down this way, Mr. Speaker. In the province of Saskatchewan there are approximately 50 million acres, cultivated acres. If you took \$1.6 billion — 1.6 billion or a third of the provincial budget — and divided it by 50 million acres, you would have \$32 an acre; \$32 an acre paid by the taxpayers by the province of Saskatchewan for health services for every individual.

If you take the provincial contribution to education at over \$900 million and divide that by the 50 million acres, that's almost \$20 an acre that the province puts in for education. Then you take the 200 million that is being presently put up front by the province for agriculture, that's \$4 an acre.

So I would ask you and I would ask all the members of the province of Saskatchewan, where is all the money going? Is the money going all into agriculture? I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that every resident in the province of Saskatchewan benefits from the E&H tax, benefits from the fuel tax, benefits from personal income tax. All the taxes — the royalty taxes that are paid on our oil royalties, Mr. Speaker, all of these taxes lumped together go to support every individual in this province from the youngest person in the province to the oldest person.

Certainly the expansion of Bill 61 has been something that many people have indicated a displeasure with. But as well, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the fact that the GST has now become a reality . . . and I have talked to many business people who have indicated, now why don't you just simplify the whole process? Why must we continue to process two taxes? And harmonization of the E&H tax with the GST, Mr. Speaker, will give the community . . . simplify the taxation process so the business community themselves will only have one tax they have to figure out or have to produce, Mr. Speaker. It saves them a lot of paperwork.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan-based businesses

must compete in a highly competitive environment that demands a competitive tax system. And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance, when he presented his budget — and also in February when he released some of the details of the budget — when he presented his budget, he presented it on the basis of consultation with people across Saskatchewan. And these consultations have clearly demonstrated that people wanted a provincial deficit and provincial debt reduced in a responsible way.

(2330)

So, Mr. Speaker, if you're going to increase spending in health, if you're going to increase spending in education, if you're going to support the rural economy by strengthening the farm community, without increasing the provincial debt, you need some more funding. And, Mr. Speaker, one of the members opposite suggests, cut waste and mismanagement. Well I believe, Mr. Speaker, waste and mismanagement is a nice cliché. We've heard it for many years. We've heard it for a number of years and it appears to me that over the past 10 years, waste and mismanagement has become one of the favourite terms of the Leader of the Opposition, the members opposite. And what's waste and mismanagement?

Talk about cutting spending or cutting government advertising. Well members of the printing association, members of our local small papers — you talk to them about government advertising and they will tell you that even today the fact is the government advertising in their papers has dropped off, and that the dollars that have been suggested by the Leader of the Opposition as being spent in government advertising certainly aren't . . . If they were at that level, they would certainly appreciate it.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, if we were to follow the example or the suggestion of the members opposite regarding waste and mismanagement, there's every possibility that every local newspaper in this province, including my communities, would not be in business in the near future. So I would suggest to the small community newspapers, maybe they should take a look; maybe they should be asking questions.

Mr. Speaker, a dual sales tax environment caused confusion for both businesses and consumers. So in response, the government of Saskatchewan did what it could to remove the confusion by having two sales tax systems operating in tandem. Removing confusion at the cash register is important enough, but it is not the only reason to harmonize the E&H with the GST. Harmonization would reduce administrative costs for both government and business. It will also remove the provincial sales tax from business input costs through the provision of provincial input tax credits for taxes paid on these costs, and this will improve the competitiveness of the province's economy.

And, Mr. Speaker, as well, when I talk about the competitiveness of the provincial economy, I'm also reminded of the fact that the member from Melville was fortunate enough today to have an expansion announced at a manufacturing plant in his community. And from what I hear, the owner of the plant, who happens to hail from Ontario, suggested that Saskatchewan certainly at

the present time is providing an excellent environment, much better than the one he's receiving in Ontario, and that's the reason he chose to expand his plant here. So, Mr. Speaker, there are many benefits to harmonizing our sales tax.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I believe our province has so much to offer to this world. Mr. Speaker, when we look at Saskatchewan . . . and I have had the privilege of the past year and a half of chairing the minister's advisory board on rural development, a board that's been nominated by and appointed by some two SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) members, two members from SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), a member representing women's groups, and a member from the ADD (agriculture development and diversification district) boards.

Today as we were meeting, Mr. Speaker, the discussion came up on Bill 61 as well, and they voiced the same thing that they hear out in rural Saskatchewan that, yes, people are opposed to taxes. But also, Mr. Speaker, they voiced the same thing that I have just mentioned, that people said if you're going to have services they must be paid for as well. But we had an interesting discussion this morning, Mr. Speaker, when I talked about Saskatchewan and what we have to offer. A gentleman from Atomic Energy Canada came and spoke to the group and offered a few of his thoughts and insights to the possibility of enhancing uranium exploration and mining, as well as nuclear energy in our province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, you may say well how does that relate to Bill 61? Well, Mr. Speaker, if we were to enhance and take some of the ideas that were presented to the committee today, as this gentleman said, he said, for too long Saskatchewan has been . . . we've been drawers of waters and hewers of wood. And he said, we pull our uranium out of the ground at \$10 a pound and we sell it. We sell it and where does it go? It goes to eastern Canada, where they then process and manufacture and get it all ready for the industry and then they turn around and put it on the world market at \$500 a pound.

And you have to ask yourself, well, why wouldn't we in Saskatchewan begin to manufacture and develop our industries, such as we're doing with our natural gas, such as we're doing with our natural gas and the fertilizer plant at Belle Plaine, such as we're doing with the pulp mill at Prince Albert, and going into now manufacturing paper.

And, Mr. Speaker, those businesses in turn will be paying taxes into this province, which will strengthen the provincial economy and indeed provide a better atmosphere and a nicer place for you and I to live in.

Look at the upgrader here in Regina.

An Hon. Member: — And Lloydminster.

Mr. Toth: — And the one going up . . . yes, my colleague from Lloydminster has mentioned, the one at Lloydminster. How many jobs, Mr. Speaker? When these upgraders . . . the upgrader was built in Regina, Mr. Speaker, was it five jobs? No, Mr. Speaker, I believe it's

something like 250 or 150 permanent jobs. But at the peak of construction it was well over a thousand jobs. And at Lloydminster at the present time, their construction jobs in the upgrader, well over 3500 construction jobs.

But let's forget about the upgrader for a minute. Let's just take a look . . . I was in my community at a ball game with my sons on the weekend. I was talking to a young gentleman who was in the resource sector and service industry in the oil fields. And he was telling me that in our area alone, Tri-Link is going to be drilling 30 wells in the next few months. Now he was all excited about that. What does that mean? Well, he's just in the service industry — but 30 new wells. And even if you get 10 of them on stream, that means he's got 10 more wells to service. That means he's got to hire another person to work with him. Mr. Speaker, that provides another job; it provides more employment in the area.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we look around this province, as a government I believe it is our responsibility not only to preserve and protect and to enhance our economy, but it's our responsibility as well to provide a climate in which business can come in, become part of this province and help create some of the jobs. I do not believe personally that government should be the creator of all jobs. I believe we need to work along with business and have business work along with government to create the jobs so that, Mr. Speaker, we can get to the point that where maybe taxes do not have to be increased because we've got a broader expansion of our tax base.

We've got more people working, more businesses and more individuals employed, so there's more taxes being paid and, Mr. Speaker, the more people we can employ in our province, the less the onus is put on you and I, and the greater the ability this province will have to provide the health, to provide the education, to look after those in need, and as well, Mr. Speaker, to tackle and reduce the provincial debt.

And, Mr. Speaker, before I close I would have to suggest . . . I have to give an accolade to the member from Weyburn. Certainly it hasn't been an easy time to be bringing in a provincial budget and certainly bringing in the provincial budget that the member has brought in at this time and at this time in our mandate, Mr. Speaker, hasn't been easy. It hasn't been easy for him and hasn't been easy for anyone.

But I believe, Mr. Speaker, when it comes down at the end of the day, people are going to look at this government, to look at this Premier, to look at the Minister of Finance, and they're going to suggest, yes it was tough, yes I didn't like eating the extra tax but yes, I do like the health, I like the education, I like what you're doing to protect the province of Saskatchewan. I like what you're doing to try and build Saskatchewan so that there are more jobs for our young people. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe this province is a great place to live and I will be voting against the amendment and in support of the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the last days lately, I've been in my constituency some of

the time meeting with some of my constituents. And I have the privilege of representing in this legislature a constituency where many of the people are older people, many of them are women.

And I met today with a woman who is in her 80's who talked to me over a cup of coffee, and she said, you know, she said, this is the worst situation we have ever seen in the province of Saskatchewan. This is such a corrupt and wasteful government, we have never seen a situation as bad as it is now, even in the Dirty Thirties.

And this was a person — and she's not the only one — who reminds me of the history of this province and what it was like in the past and what it was like when we had the last Tory government. And many of them even have tears in their eyes when they look at the destruction that's happened in this province over the last nine years. And on their behalf, I want to take this time that's given to me now to reflect on what I have seen in the legislature over the past five years as I've been here as an MLA. I have seen a government that reflects very much the concerns . . . the criticism that the seniors have been sharing with me in many different ways.

First of all, as I've mentioned, a government that has been just the worst government in the history of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — And a government which in its dying days is bringing in a tax Bill that hurts this province more, almost, than anything else they've done — and they've done so much over the last five years and over the last nine years since they've had control of this province.

They have not learnt from history. They have not kept their promises. This is a government that has betrayed the people, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — They were elected promising that they were going to do away with the sales tax in 1982. That's what they said. And they were going to reduce the personal income tax by 10 per cent, and now we have the member from Moosomin and the others that have been talking, talking about the . . . praising the taxes that they've been putting on the people. That's double-talk. That's broken promises. That's dishonesty. That's what this government has been about.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — You can't have a government that wants to have it two ways and that can't keep faith with the people of Saskatchewan. And we need a government that will keep faith with the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — We will have a change of government and we will have a government that will put this province back together again. But it won't be easy after this last round of Tory government.

And the seniors remind me of this when they tell me what it was like before. They're very concerned about how we're going to be able to put this province together. But they certainly want to see a change, and they know that nothing can be as bad as what we've had over the last nine years. And it will be a wonderful day when we can be rid of this government opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — There is strong words to be used about the government, Mr. Speaker, strong words. I met this morning at the Saskatoon Council on Aging with a number of seniors and they told me how angry they are about what's happened. And we will use words, Mr. Speaker, like traitors. The government opposite has betrayed Saskatchewan. It is a government of traitors. It has shown this so many times, and with this tax Bill it shows it once again.

You don't care. You don't care that people are going over the borders to shop. You think it's great now that you can bring in policemen on the United States border to try to stop people from escaping from this awful tax that you're putting on them.

But you're betraying the people of Saskatchewan. You're betraying the business community and you're betraying the communities that are on the borders, not just of the United States, but the borders with Alberta as well. So this Bill that you bring in reflects again this attitude of betrayal of the people of Saskatchewan.

This tax Bill also reflects the fact that this government opposite, which pretends to be a government of business people and a government that understands business community, has brought in a tax which is costing us jobs and which is costing us sales. We are lower in sales. We're losing jobs. The restaurant owners estimate a 20 per cent drop in sales. These are poor business people that have taken control of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — While they pretend to us that they know what business is about — more of that two-faced approach — you don't know what business is about and you won't listen to business. You're hurting the businesses.

(2345)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — Used car dealers have told you you're hurting businesses. Restaurants have told you you're hurting businesses. The border communities have told you you're hurting businesses. The bookstores, the publishers, the clothing stores — they've all told you you're hurting businesses with this tax Bill; never mind what you've done to businesses with your other schemes and legislation that you've brought in, and programs. You've hurt business.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — You've been hurting businesses since 1982 and this Bill is just the final blow.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — I've mentioned being two-faced with the people. I want to mention another dimension of dishonesty, and that is the Minister of Finance pretending that he has had an advisory committee to promote this harmonization and extension of the sales tax. And that is false, Mr. Speaker. This advisory committee has been used by the government, as it has used other groups of people, as fronts to pretend that they have advised something that the government brings in quite different than I'm sure what they've advised.

Yes, it makes sense to harmonize the E&H tax with the GST tax on what was there before. But you can't take that recommendation for harmonization and spread it to all the GST. That's not right. You're misrepresenting what your committee has told you, as you had misrepresented so many things that have been told to you. You're a government that has misrepresented people. This is a government that has been cruel to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — We've experienced it for nine years and I've seen it for five years. It's a cruel government and this sales tax just increases that cruelty. It's a government that has no idea what it's like to have low incomes, to not have the money for essential services. And I've seen these government members opposite laugh when we've mentioned this; I've seen the Premier laugh. And I am offended by that, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — They're so comfortable with the money that they've made and their friends are so comfortable with the money that they've made. But they don't respect the taxpayers' dollars. They don't understand what it's like to have this hard-earned money and to not be able to cover your costs and to have your disposable income shrinking. They laugh in the face of that reality, and that is cruel. Mr. Speaker . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — So, Mr. Speaker, I have pointed out that this is a government of broken promises. It is a government that has betrayed the people. It is a government that instead of being able to manage properly and be good business people, is really a government of poor business people. It's a dishonest government, Mr. Speaker, a cruel government. And it's all reflected in this legislation as it's been reflected in so many other programs in legislation that this government's brought through.

And ramming this tax Bill through, the biggest tax grab in the history of Saskatchewan, ramming this tax Bill

through with forcing closure and with not having an honest and good open debate is another example of the disrespect for this legislature that I have seen over the last five years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — Beginning in 1986 when the very first item that we had to speak to was the fact that this government broke some of the rules of the legislature and the procedures of the legislature, right through the government reorganization Act and all the other things that this government has done, right up to closure through the potash Bill and now ramming this Bill through — disrespect for the legislature, trying to avoid it. Closure on the largest tax Bill in the history of this province. What kind of a government? You should be ashamed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — And we presented petition after petition, slowly and methodically, to give you a view, an overview of all the communities, of the people across this province who are opposed to this tax Bill. When you tried to muzzle us, we presented those petitions, and that was a very important act of this legislature. The people's voice must be heard. And you in your dying days of your government are not listening to anyone. Perhaps that's just as well. Block your ears; don't hear what they're saying. Don't listen. Don't care. Lock your doors, lock your ears, and go down to defeat.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — The member from Moosomin talked about how you have to have all these new taxes now, in the dying days of your government, to pay for things like health care and education. And you've been collecting \$4.5 billion of taxpayers' money every year, and you don't have money for our health care and our education and our social services. You've blown it completely. It will be a good day for the province when we can open the books of this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — And we will catch you at some of this waste and mismanagement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — We may not be able to catch you at all of it because the money has been squandered away — all kinds of scams and things that you've given your approval to, and wasted the taxpayers' money. But with \$4.5 billion we say that this tax Bill is not needed, and we say that when we form the Government of Saskatchewan we will repeal this expansion of the sales tax.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — I listened to the member from Moosomin speak about how this sales tax was going to strengthen rural communities, that we're taking this sales tax so that we can pay money for GRIP and NISA, money for the farmers. But the farmers have to pay this sales tax. The

farmers pay this sales tax as much as anyone else does. And the money for GRIP and NISA will not send farmers on shopping sprees into the malls. The farmers are hurting; they can barely manage to hang on. And they do not appreciate this sales tax any more than anyone else appreciates it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — In fact I was interested to hear the editor of the Moosomin *World Spectator* on the radio yesterday telling how angry the people are in the Moosomin constituency.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — They're angry about the taxes that they have to pay, and they see the government's move to destabilize and decentralize services by throwing civil servants all around the province as raising more expenses for the taxpayers. On top of everything else, they're going to now spend more money on that. And that came from Moosomin, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Moosomin also mentioned seniors, saying that they didn't want the money for their games and they want to be charged for health care. Well the seniors are very concerned about the deficit that this government has run up in the last nine years of its mandate — a terrible deficit. Seniors are particularly concerned about that. And of course they want to see an end to that deficit.

And you're manipulating the seniors by saying that they will accept sales taxes and charges on health care to help cover the cost of the deficit. But the seniors aren't fooled by that any more than anyone else is. And while all the people of Saskatchewan are deeply concerned about the deficit, the fair way to deal with the deficit is to get the spending under control and to end the waste and mismanagement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — A government of waste and mismanagement, a government of disrespect for the legislature, a cruel government, a dishonest government, a government of poor business people, a government that's betrayed the people of Saskatchewan — the worst government that this province has seen according to the people that I've been talking to.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to make the point that this government opposite has given both politicians and government a rotten name. And this Bill contributes to that because it's brought in by a government that said it would not increase sales tax — in fact it would end the provincial sales tax. And now they've socked the people of Saskatchewan with a sales tax that is going to be devastating. It is already devastating. And if it comes in in any more form, it will really destroy the province completely.

To give politicians and government a bad name and defeat the cynicism that the voters of the province have about government is a really rotten action from a group of

people. You don't respect your position that you've won in an election. You've betrayed not only the people of Saskatchewan but you've betrayed representative democracy.

And I register my concern and objection as I register that of the people that I represent here in the legislature for the actions that this government has indulged in over the last nine years.

It is a terrible situation we have in Canada right now when people are so cynical about government, because it becomes a very great worry as to how they will replace . . . what people will do, how desperate people will get. People go over the border to shop somewhere else. People come to the legislature in great numbers to let you know how upset they are with your government.

I for one want to see government that's good government, that listens to the people, that uses a process like this to decide the very best things for the people of Saskatchewan, not to toss them about as this government opposite has done for the last nine years.

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2400)

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure tonight to rise in strong opposition to Bill 61, to this motion of closure, and to the imposition of this very unfair provincial goods and services tax upon the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I believe this tax Bill before us tonight is symbolic of the tragic record of the last nine years of PC government. Mr. Speaker, first of all it is symbolic of the broken promises of the PC government opposite because this is the government, Mr. Speaker, introducing and ramming through this tax Bill this evening, that promised nine years ago that if it was elected, there would be no E&H tax in the province of Saskatchewan.

And what do we have before us today? Not only is the E&H tax still in place; not only has the E&H tax been increased from 5 per cent to 7 per cent; but now, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite tell us that the E&H tax must be expanded further to cover all the basic necessities of life — to cover home heating fuel, to be levied upon restaurant meals, to be levied upon children's clothes and shoes, and all clothing under \$300.

And they say they won't stop there. They say that on January 1 they want to levy a tax on all services in Saskatchewan — all services covered by the federal GST. And all of this, Mr. Speaker, from a government that promised nine years ago there would be no E&H tax in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if this doesn't represent a broken promise, if this doesn't represent a breaking of trust with the people of Saskatchewan, then I don't know what

does.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is why 120,000 people have petitioned this legislature asking the government to listen and not to impose this tax. And the ultimate breaking of trust with the people of Saskatchewan has been this government's refusal to listen to those petitioners, Mr. Speaker. We on this side of the House are committed to listening to those petitioners and we are committed to stand here tonight against this tax Bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I said that this tax was symbolic of this nine years of PC government, and I say it's symbolic not just in the context of broken promises, but in the context of the waste and mismanagement that we have seen from this government over the last nine years.

And we are now being asked tonight in this tax Bill to pay for those nine years of waste and mismanagement, Mr. Speaker. We are being asked to pay for the PC privatizations and the hundreds of millions of dollars that they have refused to collect from the purchases of the public assets.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, several of my colleagues, including my colleague from Athabasca, have pointed out that this government has yet to collect a single penny from the sale of the Prince Albert Pulp Company and eight million acres of northern forest resources — \$236 million owing, Mr. Speaker.

Millions of dollars owing, Mr. Speaker, from the money that is yet to be accounted for from the sale of our potash resource in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And millions of other dollars owing from other privatizations that have yet to be collected.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's just the beginning. Because in addition to that, an even larger debt is owing to the people of Saskatchewan from the failure of this government. And that is, Mr. Speaker, that this government has, over the last nine years, year after year, failed to collect for the people of Saskatchewan a fair return on the sale of the resources of this province.

And as some of my other colleagues have pointed out, sir, year after year we have seen for instance a huge tax break granted to the oil industry in this province. We have seen royalty holidays on new wells drilled right next to existing wells in the same old oilfields that the existing wells were operating in, and millions of dollars given away from there.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, when this government was first elected, we saw the amount of money collected from oil drop from over \$500 million a year to just over \$200 million a year, Mr. Speaker. And that \$300 million a year has been forfeited each and every year by the PC government since it was first elected, making the imposition of this tax one of the inevitable but unnecessary results. Now, Mr. Speaker, that's just another example of the careless fiscal practices of this government.

And in addition to failing to collect a fair share of resource revenue in the province of Saskatchewan, and failing to collect the money that's owing from the various privatizations that have occurred, this government has squandered money, Mr. Speaker, in the form of waste and patronage in the province of Saskatchewan at almost every level — from the almost \$600,000 that it spends each year on an image consultant, their image consultant being Corporate Strategy Group in Toronto, to the \$1.9 million a month that this government squanders on advertising.

The latest ads, Mr. Speaker, are the Fair Share Saskatchewan ads that we hear playing on the radio in the last two or three days.

Does this government believe that we, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, should be paying for this kind of advertising which is nothing less than sheer political partisan advertising on behalf of the PC Party to promote their latest attempt to get themselves re-elected, Mr. Speaker? I think not, and yet we're being asked to pay for that advertising in the form of this provincial goods and services tax, and we say shame.

Mr. Speaker, the government would have us believe that they need to build new office space here in the city of Regina while they embark on their decentralization plan, and that we need to continue wasting taxpayers' dollars on empty lease office space throughout this city and throughout many other urban centres in the province of Saskatchewan. Taxpayers' money, Mr. Speaker, being spent on unnecessary office space, millions of dollars being wasted and we're being asked to pay for that in the form of this goods and services tax here tonight. And we say, Mr. Speaker, that that is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, there are many, many other examples of wasteful expenditure, but I think one of the classic examples is the money that has been wasted on the patronage appointments of this government. And we've seen in the last year alone, Mr. Speaker, appointments from former members of this legislature to trade offices in Hong Kong and to trade offices in Minneapolis at great expense to the taxpayer — \$90,000 for Mr. Andrew, \$90,000 for the former member from Indian Head-Wolseley, Mr. Taylor.

And to boot, Mr. Speaker, we've seen almost every former member of the Legislative Assembly on the PC side of the House receive some form of patronage appointment to government after their defeat or their retirement from this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and all at very significant expense to the taxpayer. And now the taxpayer is being asked to pay for that tonight, Mr. Speaker, in the form of the provincial GST. And we say no way to their way, Mr. Speaker — no way to their way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I said that this tax was symbolic of PC policies over the last nine years. And I said first that it was symbolic of the broken promises of the PC Party. And secondly, I said it was symbolic of the waste and mismanagement of the PC Party, and their imposition then on the people of Saskatchewan to pay for that waste

and mismanagement in the form of this unfair tax. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is also symbolic of the unfair tax policies of the PC Party over the last nine years.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that consistently over the last nine years we have seen a government policy that has asked individual taxpayers in this province to pay more and more while the corporate sector in this province gets a tax break. And I mentioned a moment ago the big tax break to the oil industry in the province of Saskatchewan which I just think is morally reprehensible, Mr. Speaker, that every taxpayer in this province should be asked, Mr. Speaker, to pay an extra 6 or \$700 a year to offset the tax break given to the oil industry in the province of Saskatchewan. I say that's reprehensible. But it's just one example, Mr. Speaker.

Because in addition to that, we have seen the federal and provincial PC parties provide big tax breaks to their corporate friends. And I want to give a few examples of that taking place in the province of Saskatchewan, sir. I want to give a few examples of Saskatchewan companies that have gotten big tax breaks at the hands of the PC Party.

And I want to use as an example, Saskoil, the privatized Saskoil corporation. Once in public hands, now in private hands. What was Saskoil's profit in 1989, Mr. Speaker? It was some \$8.114 million in pre-tax income. How much income tax was Saskoil asked to pay by the Government of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada? Well I'll tell you how much, Mr. Speaker, zero dollars and zero cents — no taxes paid by Saskoil on a profit of over \$8 million.

What about North Canadian Oils, Mr. Speaker? What about North Canadian Oils? A 1989 pre-tax income of \$33.478 million. Well, how much in taxes do you think North Canadian Oils was asked to pay, Mr. Speaker? It didn't pay a single penny in income tax, Mr. Speaker, not a single penny in income tax, while every single person working out in the oil patch for North Canadian Oils was probably paying at least 25 or 30 per cent of their wage income in taxes.

Is that fair, Mr. Speaker? No. And now the government has the gall to ask each of those families to pay another \$740 in the form of provincial GST. And we say no way to their way, Mr. Speaker, no way to their way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — What about Hudson's Bay Company, Mr. Speaker. What about Hudson's Bay Company? How much did they pay on their 1987 profits of \$49.7 million? How much did the Government of Saskatchewan collect from them in income tax? Do you know how much, Mr. Speaker? Not a single penny. Yet the clerks who work in Saskatoon at the Hudson's Bay, many of whom are my constituents, Mr. Speaker, are paying several thousand dollars a year to this government in income tax, and now their families are being asked to pay on average another \$740 to pay for this provincial goods and services tax. And we say, Mr. Speaker, that is an outrage, that is an injustice, that is a classic example of the unfair tax policies that this PC government has pursued. And we

reject those policies, Mr. Speaker, and we stand against them here tonight in this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — We say, Mr. Speaker, that there should be no tax on basic necessities like food and clothing and shelter and home heating fuel. We say that we need a tax system that takes account of the ability to pay, Mr. Speaker. And yet this is a system that the PC government presents us here tonight, Mr. Speaker. This is a system in which the millionaire in the city of Regina who goes to buy a cup of coffee and pays a 7 per cent tax, will pay exactly the same tax as the senior citizen on a fixed income of \$6,000 who buys the same cup of coffee. And we say, Mr. Speaker, that is unfair on a purchase that is an essential item to our day-to-day lives. We say that is unfair.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(0015)

Mr. Prebble: — Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I've indicated, this tax is symbolic of many of the PC policies of the last nine years. And I say that one of the most important ways in which it is symbolic is that it is symbolic of whom this PC Party has no regard for when they set their policies. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that it demonstrates that they have no regard for the average person. They do not govern on behalf of the average person in the province of Saskatchewan. And they do not govern on behalf of those who are low income in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They disregard their interests.

And I want to give a couple of examples of that. First of all, this is a consumer-based tax. It is not a tax that most businesses pay, rather it is primarily a tax that consumers pay, Mr. Speaker, and it is a tax that particularly hits hard on those who are low income. And I want to give a couple of examples of that, sir.

First of all, I want to point out, for instance, that students in my constituency and throughout the province are going to be hit hard by this tax. And those students, Mr. Speaker, for the most part, cannot afford this extra tax burden. These students, Mr. Speaker, for instance, at the University of Saskatchewan, are facing a 35 to 45 per cent tuition increase next year, depending on the faculty that they are studying in. And in addition to that, this government is now asking them to pay at least another \$100 a year in provincial GST on the cost of their textbooks alone. Combined with the federal GST, that means they'll be paying at least another \$200 a year in textbook costs. And we say that's unfair, Mr. Speaker, and it's another way in which post-secondary education in this province is being made less accessible to those young people.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at those who are poor in the province of Saskatchewan and particularly, Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — They get a \$200 tax credit.

Mr. Prebble: — The Premier says they get a \$200 tax break. And I want to say to the Premier, he knows that is not true. A senior citizen on fixed income, living on the old age pension and the guaranteed income supplement, you know, sir, they will not get a penny in tax credit. They'll be paying the full 7 per cent provincial GST on everything they buy. You know that, Mr. Premier, and we say that's unfair.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier says they'll get a tax credit, and I say to the Premier, I say to the Premier, he knows that a married couple without children, where the bread-winner has been laid off and is on unemployment insurance and then takes a minimum wage job to support himself and his spouse, he knows, Mr. Speaker, that that married couple living on 8 or \$9,000 a year will not get a single penny in tax credit from your government, Mr. Speaker, not a single penny in tax credit.

That is another of the reasons why this 7 per cent PST is so unfair to that family, Mr. Speaker. They will be faced with the full burden of home heating fuel tax and a tax on restaurant meals and a tax on every dollar of clothing they buy, and they will not get a single penny in tax credit from your government. And we say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no way to their way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — And, Mr. Speaker, again with respect to who the Premier has no regard for, he has no regard for small family business in this province, small restaurants in Saskatchewan, small clothing stores in Saskatchewan, publishing houses in Saskatchewan, bookstores in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker — all these small businesses who are being crippled by this unfair PST. This is just another example, Mr. Speaker, of how this government does not govern in the interest of small family business in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — And finally I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this tax is symbolic of the lack of respect for democracy that this government has and for their refusal to listen to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this tax Bill, first of all, is being brought in in the context of closure — closure for the first time in the history of Saskatchewan being used on a tax Bill. And I want to say to the Premier: sir, you are ramming this tax Bill through because you know, Mr. Premier, that it is unpopular, and you want to bring its profile to an end in this legislature.

You're afraid to allow debate on the Bill, sir. You're afraid to allow the voices of the people of Saskatchewan to be heard in this legislature through the tabling of petitions against this tax Bill. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I say that because the Premier is afraid, he is resorting to closure and he is refusing to listen to the 120,000 petitioners who have lobbied against this Bill before the Legislative Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, with 40 minutes remaining until the time that the PC Government of Saskatchewan says, no more words, I stand in this Assembly. I stand in support of my constituents and I stand in support of Saskatchewan people and I stand opposed to the PC PST.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, when I look across the floor of this Assembly, what do I see? I see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see Tories down the yellow brick road, Tories down the yellow brick road. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, without attempting to cast aspersions on little Dorothy from Kansas or on Toto, her faithful dog, Toto, and without attempting to cast aspersions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the Scarecrow and the Cowardly Lion and the Tin Man, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I point out for this Legislative Assembly that there is a difference.

Because you see, as Dorothy and Toto went down the yellow brick road, her friend the Scarecrow really wanted to have a brain and the Cowardly Lion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, really wanted courage and the Tin Man, Mr. Speaker, he really wanted to have a heart. And when I look across this Legislative Assembly, what I see sitting in front of me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are Tories down the yellow brick road — no brain, no courage, and no heart, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And so without in any way wanting to besmirch the reputation of the Scarecrow, let me just bring to the attention of the Assembly the efforts of the best business brains of the PC Party. What are these brains telling us in this Legislative Assembly in this Act before us, Mr. Speaker? They are telling us, these best business brains of the PC Party, that we've got to have this tax in time of recession. They said, oh this is a great time for this tax — this is recession.

And then the Minister of Finance, he stands in his place and what does he ask us to believe? He asks us to believe that with this ridiculous, heartless, cruel tax he is going to tax us into full employment, he says. The best business brains of the PC Party are going to tax us into full employment. He says with this tax in Saskatchewan we're going to create 5,000 new jobs, he says. Mr. Speaker, I ask you: why didn't he make the tax 14 per cent and create 10,000 new jobs? Or, Mr. Speaker, why didn't he go whole hog? Why didn't he make the tax 70 per cent and create 50,000 new jobs? — from the best business brains of the PC Party.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to you, if this argument sounds ridiculous, it sounds ridiculous because it is. It's based on a faulty assumption. It is absurd to say this tax will create new jobs; it will not. In fact over the next five years it will cost Saskatchewan people 7,500 jobs. And I say, what can you expect when you're getting the best from the

business brains of the PC Party? No brains.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Well the best business brains of the PC Party, they say in this time of recession we're going to give you a tax that takes one and a third billion dollars out of the Saskatchewan economy over the next five years. And that's going to save us all, they say — the best business brains of the PC Party.

Well the best business brains, the Scarecrow of the PC Party, the Scarecrow of the PC Party he says, we've got to stick the long arm, the long tax arm of the PC government deep into the pockets of Saskatchewan people — that's what he says. We've got to stick the long tax arm of the PC Party into the pockets of Saskatchewan people. And somehow this is supposed to help Saskatchewan in recession.

And he says we're going to introduce a new tax inspired by our country cousins in Ottawa. They have got their version of the best business minds of the PC Party in Ottawa. They've got the GST for Canada. Not only did the GST exercise a body-blow to the people of Saskatchewan, they said it's such a wonderful thing for Canada, it's driven Canada into remarkable state of the economy. We've got to have us one of them here in Saskatchewan, they say. Oh yes, this is what'll get us out of the recession, the Scarecrow of the PC Party. The best business brains of the PC Party.

Well here we are, here we are the PC Tory, the Tories down the yellow brick road. And what about the Tory lions, the Tory cowardly lions looking for courage. Oh and what courage we're seeing, what courage this is. What courage does it take, I ask you, Deputy Speaker, and I ask the members of the Assembly, what courage does it take on this very evening to lock the doors of the Assembly out of the galleries of the people's chamber of this temple of democracy. What courage does it take to shut out and to lock out the people.

What courage, what courage does it take, Mr. Speaker, what courage does it take to bring closure for the second time in Saskatchewan history? In the entire history of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, closure has been brought only twice, both times by this Cowardly Lion bunch of PC government members opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What courage, what courage.

You know what they're afraid of? They're afraid of words. They're afraid of words. Well the member from Maple Creek she utters her, oh she . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I have waited, I have waited for a month to hear you stand on your feet and defend this tax. You don't have the courage to defend this tax and you have done the only thing that's sensible for you. You have decided you're not even running again in your constituency next time around.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — So maybe you've got a little more intelligence, maybe you've got a little more intelligence, you've seen it coming. You've told them back home

you're not even going to come running again.

Oh, they're afraid of words; they're afraid of words. Mr. Deputy Speaker, around the world every day there are people who are dying, who are dying for the right to have differences of opinion, to have political differences settled by debate and vote in assemblies of elected members. We sometimes forget in this nation and in this province that around the world there are more nations in which democracy does not exist. The fact of the matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this, is that when people become so frustrated, when people do not have an outlet that involves words, then they turn, then they turn to violence to solve their problems.

And so we have, here we have in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan the cowardly lions — the cowardly lions of the PC Party. They're afraid of words.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier, the Premier seems to be eager to debate from his seat. Yesterday in this Assembly the Premier quoted Allan Blakeney in trying to make a point in this Assembly. Let me quote to the Premier, Allan Blakeney.

I remember a time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was a day about four years ago in this Legislative Assembly when Allan Blakeney, a man who served — and I think in the minds of all people regardless of their political persuasion — served with dignity, served in the best interests of Saskatchewan people as one of the finest premiers, and not only in the history of Saskatchewan but in the history of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(0030)

Mr. Hagel: — So, Mr. Premier, Mr. Premier, Mr. Premier, if you'll just be quiet long enough to let your ears do a little listening. Just, just, just, whoa, whoa, settle down. Just listen, just listen, just listen. Mr. Premier, this would be a new experience for you. Will you just listen?

Four years ago I remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . Mr. Premier if you'll come to order, just settle down, just settle down, Mr. Premier. I remember four years ago on the last day that Allan Blakeney served in this Legislative Assembly, and members of this Assembly stood to speak in respect of one of the finest politicians our country has known. And what did Allan Blakeney say on his last day in this Legislative Assembly as he stood to his place?

He had the opportunity to talk about his accomplishments because they were many, but he didn't. What he talked about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when he stood to his place, was the importance of this place. And he said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he said, there will be those who say at times that they become too frustrated and that this place does not move quickly enough. But he said, it is always important, it is always important that those of us who are elected to represent our constituents come to this place to do what we were sent to do. And he referred, he drew our attention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the root of the word parliament.

I remember Allan Blakeney saying that parliament is based in the root of the word *parler*, to talk. On his last day in this Legislative Assembly his final words were to remind us — and, Mr. Premier, if you could try and get some of your members in order just to listen — to serve to remind us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is our role and is our responsibility to come to this place to talk. He said it is a talking place.

It is our responsibility in this place to say where we stand and why we stand where we stand. And what we see today from the cowardly lions of the PC Party is a party that no longer has patience in a democracy with words. Words. They're whistling by the graveyard because they're scared of words.

Well I say as well, Mr. Speaker, it is a test of courage, it is a test of courage for a government to govern itself with a mandate. And what we have is a tax that is being rammed down the throats of Saskatchewan people, the largest tax increase in the history of the province, by a government that has no mandate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, there are two ways to get a mandate. There are two ways to get a mandate. One is to get yourself elected and that gives you a four-year mandate, Mr. Speaker. Here they sit in the eighth month of the fifth year. I say they have no mandate to ram this tax down the throats of Saskatchewan people — not in the eighth month of the fifth.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — In the eighth month . . . Oh, there's the member from Maple Creek again. She . . . Oh, we wait . . . we await your debate madam. We await your debate. We await your wisdom. You do not have five years. There is only one government in the history of Saskatchewan that has gone the five years. It was in the time of war. And after the five years were up they were gone and that's what's going to happen to you in next provincial election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — You have no mandate. But the other way you get your mandate . . . your mandate was gone eight months ago. The other way you get the mandate is to make commitments to the people of Saskatchewan and then to keep your promises.

And what did you promise? What did you promise? In 1982 you said to Saskatchewan people that if you became the government you were not going to reduce the sales tax, you said. You said you were going to eliminate it entirely. So if you were keeping your mandate, we would be looking at a Bill tonight which is to eliminate the E&H tax. But is that what we're doing? Is that what we're doing? No.

Not only have you kept the sales tax that you inherited and promised to get rid of, you raised it to 7 per cent. And now, now, Mr. Speaker, with this Bill and then moving to harmonization, Mr. Speaker, what this government is doing is not eliminating the sales tax, they will be tripling

the revenue from sales tax. I say you have no mandate to do that in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And so we'll test your courage. You have a chance to test your courage, and we will be looking very carefully in 25 minutes when it comes to vote to see if there is any single one of you on that side who has the courage, who has the courage to go against your Premier and your front-benchers, who has the courage to stand with your constituents in the weeks before . . . few short weeks before the next provincial election. We'll see if you've got courage in this House when it comes to the vote.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I said these Tories are down the yellow brick road. They've got no brains. They've got no courage. And they've got no hearts.

You don't have to be terribly bright, you don't have to be terribly bright, if you just take an hour or two in your own constituency to talk to some of the real people. Real people — like the ones that you locked out of the Legislative Assembly building here tonight. If you just take the time to talk to some of the real people of Saskatchewan, they will tell you that Saskatchewan people are taxed out.

You have no right to betray your mandate and to impose a tax on Saskatchewan people that they can't afford. Saskatchewan people are taxed out. Your Tory cousin, Brian Mulroney gave them the GST which was the straw that broke the camel's back. And with the PST, it's like a knee in the gut to Saskatchewan people . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You bet you can use that word. I used that word because that's exactly what it feels like to Saskatchewan people.

If you had just a thread of decency, just a thread of decency, what you would be doing is listening to the real people, to those people . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — To those people back in your own constituencies who, within the next few weeks, you will go back and ask them to return you to this place. No heart. And so I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I look across this Legislative Assembly, it is painfully clear to me that what we see are Tories on the yellow brick road. Tories with no brain, no courage, and no heart.

And in the near future, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the near future the people will speak. The people of Saskatchewan will say that there are two ways; there's your way and there's the New Democrat way. And I predict, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when they have their chance, the people of Saskatchewan will say, no way to your way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — But I repeat, as I conclude my remarks to this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I repeat the commitment; a commitment made by new New Democrats — New Democrats who are used to keeping

their promises because that has been the proud record of CCF and New Democrat governments in the history of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — The only reason the people believed you birds in 1982 is because this province had had a 40-year tradition of governments keeping their promises. And I repeat the commitment; the commitment made to Saskatchewan working people and to Saskatchewan seniors and to Saskatchewan young and old and rural and urban and to business people and to professionals. The commitment that if we are given a mandate to govern following the next provincial election, one of the first acts, the first legislative act of a New Democrat government, will be to get rid of the PST. If you decide to ram it down the throats of Saskatchewan people 21 minutes from now, that is the commitment of Saskatchewan people. We will get rid of the PST along with getting rid of you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — So I say, I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people can have it both ways, they can have both. They can get rid of the PST and they can elect themselves a government which will approach the future of this Saskatchewan with a sense of honesty and decency and responsibility, a government that will invest its efforts in building a future for Saskatchewan young people. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I conclude by saying, I stand firmly with my constituents, with the people of Saskatchewan, and in opposition to the PST.

The Speaker: — Member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to thank you and the member for Moose Jaw North and various other members of the House for drawing this debate to an intense climax so that I may now enter and say a few words.

Mr. Speaker, this is the very first time, the very first time I've had the opportunity to enter the debate on this Bill No. 61. I am depressed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because this PC government sitting to your right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has restricted me — the elected representative for 10,000 people in Saskatoon Westmount constituency — to 20 minutes of speaking time on this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, this from a government who say they believe in freedom. This from a government who say they believe in open government. This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from a government who says they believe in freedom of information and in fact have a Bill on the order paper, Bill No. 70, dealing with that very topic. This from a government, Mr. Speaker, who says they believe in hearing from the public by referendum and plebiscite. This from a government who has Bill No. 69 on the order paper dealing with that very subject.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you may think there is a bit of hypocrisy here, a lot of hypocrisy by a government who

says that . . . puts Bills on the order paper and restricts me, the duly elected representative of 10,000 people in Saskatoon Westmount, to 20 minutes speaking time on this most important Bill. My constituents, Mr. Deputy Speaker, along with many others numbering 120,000 people in Saskatchewan, have clearly, graphically indicated their views on two items. Number one, they are opposed to a broadened 7 per cent E&H tax, this Bill. They want a provincial election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(0045)

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill, Bill No. 61, clearly is about obtaining additional government revenue, taxation revenue from the people of Saskatchewan. According to a long-standing parliamentary tradition of grievance before supply, my constituents, along with representatives from all other constituencies, deserve a suitable time, a suitable opportunity to register their opposition to this Bill, if they wish, before it receives passage in this Assembly. Twenty minutes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not a suitable amount of time for me to register my constituents' very strong opposition to this major additional tax grab of over \$400 million.

Two questions come to mind easily, Mr. Deputy Speaker. First, as background, how did all this begin? How did all this begin? Second, has this government demonstrated good stewardship of the taxpayers' dollars? It started in 1982, as far back as 1982, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with a newly elected Saskatchewan government, elected popularly in 1982, full of promise, who raised false expectations, many false expectations.

Let me deal with some of those false expectations, Mr. Speaker. I have here some of the literature that these government members passed out to the public in 1982. Here is the master copy from the Conservative Party. It's called *Pocket Politics*, a quick reference on PC politics for candidates, 1982. Under the area of fighting inflation in this *Pocket Politics*, the Conservative Party puts a number of items, but to keep within the order of the debate here, Mr. Speaker, I'll only refer to two or three of them.

First of all they're going to phase out the provincial sales tax. That is the very tax we're talking about in this Bill 61, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They say in other tax relief that they're going to provide to the people of Saskatchewan, a 10 per cent reduction in personal income tax. And they're going to remove the gasoline tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This was in 1982 — a government full of promise.

Well did the candidates say that? The Conservative Party said that. Did the candidates say that? Well the member for Melville said that. The member for Melville, who sits in this Assembly now and is a member of the Executive Council, he said he's going to roll back the gasoline tax, he's going to reduce provincial income tax by 10 per cent, and he's going to remove the 5 per cent E&H tax. Did you hear that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The 5 per cent E&H tax, not the 7 per cent tax. This is the candidate for Melville who sits in this Assembly, who has broken his promise to the electors of Melville and to the province of

Saskatchewan.

We have another candidate here for the Conservative Party, the candidate for Swift Current, Saskatchewan. Yes, a former deputy premier of this province. She says a Progressive Conservative government is dedicated to phasing out provincial sales tax and reducing personal income tax by 10 per cent.

An Hon. Member: — Was that a solemn promise?

Mr. Brockelbank: — Oh it must have been a solemn promise; she put it in her campaign literature and you should be able to believe the campaign literature the party puts out. It's in writing. It's attested to them, to their promises in this campaign literature.

What about some other Conservatives, some who sit on the front bench — some who sit on the front bench. The member for Kelsey-Tisdale constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What does the member for Kelsey-Tisdale say in 1982?

Well there's a lot of misinformation in this particular leaflet that the member put out to the people in his constituency — a 10 per cent across-the-board cut in personal income tax. That's one of the things he's going to do. And he's got other things here that he hasn't kept, but I want to stay within the rules of this debate talking about taxation and how this government is wanting to acquire more tax revenue.

The member for Kelsey-Tisdale did not keep his promise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you should be able to honour the promises that are written down in the campaign literature by these people. You should be able to trust them.

What about the member for Redberry? The member for Redberry was in the Executive Council. This is one of the highest positions you can acquire in this province — a member of the Executive Council, a position of trust, a position you should be able to take the person's word for.

What did the member for Redberry say? He said, savings to you in other areas. This is part of his leaflet. I've got it right here, Mr. Speaker. It says here: phasing out the provincial sales tax, a 10 per cent reduction in personal income tax, and a number of other things they haven't kept. But I want to stay within the rules of the debate, Mr. Speaker, and only refer to taxation items. There's other areas they've fallen afoul of their campaign literature.

Now here's another one, Mr. Speaker, and I know you'll be interested in this one. I hesitate to mention the constituency, Mr. Speaker, but this person says, a candidate for the Conservative Party says eliminate the gasoline tax, he says the 40 cent a gallon gasoline tax.

Well now, does that illustrate that the member was ignorant, because it was 29 cents then? Does it represent that the member just took the word of the Conservative Party that it was 40 cents when it was actually 29 cents? I don't know. Or does it represent a prevarication of some kind on the campaign literature? I don't expect it from this member, quite frankly.

This member also said he was going to eliminate the 5 per cent sales tax on clothing and utility bills. Well, well, well. Now I said I hesitate to mention where the constituency was, but I'll give you a clue. It's north of Regina; it borders on Last Mountain Lake. And, Mr. Speaker, if you were to reach out, and I'll bet you just as easy as you could touch wood, you could guess which constituency it is. Yes sir, that's what that person said.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Now we hear a lot, and here's a member that didn't make it into cabinet but I think he's got all the credentials, he's got all the credentials to be a Finance minister, because we can't get any worse. We can't get any worse in this province. I listened to him today and he sounds like all our other Finance ministers. It's the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Perhaps I'm too hard on the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster, because he says a Progressive Conservative government will provide a 10 per cent reduction in provincial income tax and phase out the sales tax.

Now I agree, he hasn't made it into cabinet so therefore he has no force, and consequently he's not been able to implement his program which he promised to his residents in Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, I have another one of these members who ran for the Conservative Party again and again. Mind you, it's twice too often now. But he says, savings to you. He's talking to his people in his constituency, and he's going to provide savings to you in other areas by phasing out the provincial sales tax, by a 10 per cent reduction in the personal income tax. And then he says . . .

An Hon. Member: — Who is it?

Mr. Brockelbank: — Well let me finish. He says sincerely, and his name is there. Now I can't mention his name, but I'd be glad to tell you he's the constituency of Shellbrook — Shellbrook constituency. And he says with all his sincerity, he says he's going to cut these taxes — get rid of personal income tax, reduce it 10 per cent, phase out the sales tax.

Now we've got another one here. And this guy, this member . . . I should call him a member because, Mr. Speaker, they are all hon. members. These are all hon. members here. Their promise is their bond. This one is a comer, this one's a comer in the Conservative Party, Mr. Speaker. And he says what he's going to do. A Progressive Conservative government will provide a 10 per cent reduction in the provincial income tax and phase out sales tax. The very Bill we're talking about here tonight, he's going to phase it out.

Now this particular member also got caught on the

gasoline tax thing because he says he's going to make a reduction in the 40 cent a gallon average . . . or gasoline tax. He didn't realize, the member for Melfort didn't realize it was 29 cents — 29 cents, now 45 cents a gallon; 29 cents then, he thought it was 40 cents a gallon back in 1982. But anyway, he said he was going to do away with it, he was going to do away with it.

Now this next member, I don't want to be too hard on him because this member is going to retire. He's seen the light and for what . . . It's a question of swimming away from the sinking ship. And this member got caught on the gasoline tax thing too. He thought it was 40 cents a gallon; it's only 29 cents a gallon. That's all the tax was. He was going to reduce provincial income tax; he was going to take the 5 per cent sales tax off; he was going to eliminate it. Yes, I wish the member for Saltcoats a good retirement, a good retirement as I hope he wishes me, but he should have been honest with the people in 1982 when he put out this literature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Now where did these people get their ideas? Well obviously they took their lead from front and centre, front and centre in the Conservative Party. And here I have the leaflet of the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan. And what does he say?

What does the Premier say? Now the Premier even goes farther, and I suppose that's his right as leader to lead the way, to lead the way for the Conservative Party. What does he say?

In his campaign literature his solemn, sincere promise to his voters and to the people of Saskatchewan, the Premier of Saskatchewan said in 1982, eliminate the 5 per cent sales tax. He says the first phase, the first phase of the PC government's commitment to the complete elimination of the sales tax — get these words — in its first term of office.

The Premier says he's going to eliminate this tax that tonight that he's already broadened to not 5 per cent — 7 per cent. A big increase. Now he's going to broaden it to a whole range of other goods, and if the people of Saskatchewan give him another chance, he'll even broaden it more on January 1, 1992. And he solemnly wrote, he solemnly wrote, it's there for history to see that he was going to take off that tax in the first term of office, Mr. Speaker.

Well I don't want to spend too much time dwelling in the past in 1982. They're all honourable men and women, and they made their promises. And history will be the judge of whether they did the honest thing with the voters of Saskatchewan.

But regardless of that, Mr. Speaker, the debt began. Each year a deficit. It kept escalating. And along with it, taxes kept escalating. And they had a unique way of introducing new taxes, this government. I have got to give them high praise for the inventive ways that they brought in new taxation.

I have a page out of the 1985 budget — the 1985 budget. I

believe the minister of Finance was one Bob Andrew. In 1985 he said this. Just let me read one small paragraph, Mr. Speaker. It's completely within the rules of this House because it refers to taxation and how this government handles it and how they introduce it, how they slip it to the public. Tonight the Minister says, tonight in reading his budget speech, we will take the first step towards tax reform, tax reform. The introduction of the flat tax . . . Mr. Speaker, my time can't be up. I protest . . .

Klein
Hodgins
McLeod
Lane
Hepworth
Hardy
Kopelchuk
Petersen
Wolfe
Martens
Hopfner
Martin

Britton
Pickering
Sauder
Toth
Duncan
Gleim
McLaren
Baker
Swan
Muirhead
Johnson
Gardner

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(0100)

The Speaker: — Order. Order. It being 1 o'clock the motions will be put to the House.

The division bells rang from 1 a.m. until 1:01 a.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 23

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

Romanow
Prebble
Rolfes
Shillington
Lingenfelter
Tchorzewski
Thompson
Brockelbank
Mitchell
Upshall
Simard
Kowalsky

Solomon
Atkinson
Anguish
Hagel
Pringle
Calvert
Lautermilch
Trew
Smart
Van Mulligen
Koenker

Nays — 23

The Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:09 a.m.

Nays — 30

Devine	Neudorf
Muller	Gerich
Schmidt	Swenson
Klein	Britton
Hodgins	Pickering
McLeod	Sauder
Lane	Toth
Hepworth	Duncan
Hardy	Gleim
Kopelchuk	McLaren
Petersen	Baker
Wolfe	Swan
Martens	Muirhead
Hopfner	Johnson
Martin	Gardner

The division bells rang from 1:04 a.m. until 1:05 a.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 30

Devine	Neudorf
Muller	Gerich
Schmidt	Swenson