

EVENING SITTING

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Murray, seconded by Mr. Flavel.

**Mr. Wormsbecker:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your indulgence, I wish to summarize that portion of my address given prior to the adjournment of this Assembly. As I previously stated, I was truly thankful to my constituents for having elected me. Traditionally, Weyburn has had excellent representation in this Assembly for the past half century. For example, former premier T.C. Douglas represented Weyburn during his years as premier of this province. Mr. Speaker, I will always be indebted to Mr. Douglas for the inspiration he has given me. Mr. Douglas applied the Christian brotherhood principle in the implementation of new social government programs. Mr. Douglas's approach has been described as the social gospel.

Mr. Speaker, I referred to scripture to illustrate and emphasize that politicians must be the servants of the people who elect them. I shall now continue with the remainder of my address.

Over 70 years ago, a young Armenian philosopher, poet, and artist by the name of Gibran asked the question: "Are you a politician asking what your country can do for you; or are you a zealous one, asking what you can do for your country?" The late president John F. Kennedy immortalized the words of Gibran through the following characterization by stating: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country." These two quotations express the current expectation of the public for their elected representatives.

The question can be asked, Mr. Speaker, why has the member from Weyburn sought political office? I shall not answer the question with a philosophical statement for I am not a philosopher. I am not about to answer the question with a long, convoluted statement for I am not a seasoned politician. There are many things that I am not and there are many goals that I do not have a burning desire to attain. One goal is not political longevity.

The question, Mr. Speaker, or I should state, the answer to the question why I sought office is pure and simple: I was asked. Yes, I was asked to put my name forward in nomination; asked not by one person but by several.

Mr. Speaker, the needs of my constituency is great, as are the needs of this province. I wish to be part of the legislative process in debating and redressing the problems facing the individual and collective needs of our respective constituencies in this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wormsbecker:** — As I stated, Mr. Speaker, the needs of this province are many, but the people of Saskatchewan have a rich heritage to draw upon in meeting the challenges of today and the challenges of tomorrow.

Adversity is not new to Saskatchewan. Adversity plagued this province during the '30s. Some of my relatives packed their bags and resettled in the district of the Peace River. But my father's father, like many of our grandparents, had the tenacity to tough it out. It wasn't easy. Our forefathers experienced the hardship and undauntedly faced the rigours encountered in settling this great province. The '30s produced one more obstacle to challenge their dogged spirit and will to survive.

Mr. Speaker, adversity does spring eternal hope. Our parents and grandparents grappled with the economic problems of the day and demonstrated their ingenuity in establishing marketing, retail, and financial co-ops across this province. It is ironic that the advent of World War II was the beginning of prosperity for Saskatchewan once again.

We, the baby-boomers, representing the generation following World War II, have experienced the best standard of living than any other generation before us. This standard of living has been achievable through hard work and penny-pinching by our parents and grandparents. Our immediate forefathers' goals were to see that their children and grandchildren would have a more comfortable economic future. Their goals were achieved during my lifetime. Now it is our turn to rebuild this great province for our children and grandchildren.

Agriculture and oil are the principal resources of my constituency, Mr. Speaker, but agriculture is the mainstay of our economy. Attempts have been made by previous premiers, with modest success, to diversify our economy. It is a direction that must be explored with greater vigour.

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

**Mr. Wormsbecker:** — Value-added processing to our agricultural products is an absolute necessity. The small country of Holland exports a greater dollar volume of agricultural products than Canada, the vast majority of which are value added.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the organizers of the concerned farmers for hosting the farm rallies at Rosetown, Weyburn, and Regina. These rallies emphasize graphically the plight of the farm families and rural communities in Saskatchewan. I further commend the organizers of the on to Ottawa trek, and applaud our Premier, our Minister of Agriculture and Food, and everyone who attended in support of the farmers of Saskatchewan and western Canada.

The Canadian public are now aware of the depressed farm gate crisis, the burdensome farm debt, the restricted cash flow, the continued depletion of farmers and their families from rural Saskatchewan, and the problems associated with the continued depopulation of rural

Saskatchewan. There is hope on the horizon, Mr. Speaker. The immediate solution may not be in sight but the will of the farmers and rural communities to survive is very encouraging.

In the Weyburn constituency, Mr. Speaker, some of the rural communities have declined dramatically, as is evident by the closure of post offices and elevators. Communities within a 20-mile radius of the city of Weyburn are now satellite communities. But there are vibrant communities still surviving — surviving with difficulty, but nevertheless still surviving. These surviving communities are people-oriented communities with active sporting organizations, community clubs, theatre groups, to name a few.

The larger communities in this province, like the city of Weyburn, shall survive as rural service centres and retirement centres. The smaller communities in my constituency can survive as communities of people, but not all shall survive as commercial centres. The surrounding smaller communities must co-operate with one another in planning their future viability as communities.

There is the opportunity of economic diversification in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The community bond program is a vital tool for the continued diversification of Saskatchewan. This program permits communities to strategize their future development. For those communities demanding action from government, it gives them an opportunity to put their money to work in their own communities.

The economic development committee for the city of Weyburn is actively pursuing new manufacturing and industrial projects. With the expansion of the community bond program to include co-operatives, I see a real opportunity for the co-op sector to be the primary vehicle for bringing economic growth and activity to rural Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Wormsbecker:** — Mr. Speaker, there are other issues, like health, education, and other social policies which are important to my constituents. I have met with some of my constituents and discussed the funding and delivery of health care and education services. It would be wonderful if the provincial treasury could fund our social programs without regard to our crushing deficit. Consequently, the continued delivery of our present level of social programming is directly proportionate to our ability to create new wealth, new jobs, and new markets.

Mr. Speaker, the greatest resource that my constituency has is its people. The ingenuity of my constituents and the Saskatchewan people will be tested over the next decade, but I'm confident that we will develop a plan to foster economic growth.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, I state that the future is ours. We do have control over our destiny. I look forward to working with my caucus colleagues, and I invite my opposition colleagues to contribute in a spirited and constructive manner during the legislative debates that

shall follow during the remaining term of this government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker

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

**Mr. Martens:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity that I have to be here to speak tonight on the resolution before us. I want to just say — I want to congratulate you for your role as a Speaker — and I know you so far have done it with a conscientious effort, and I appreciate that, and we will endeavour to work together with you on that matter.

The other thing that I want to do is congratulate the MLAs (members of the Legislative Assembly) who are new in the Assembly. I want to congratulate them for their win. I want to congratulate those on this side of the House and also to those on the other side.

I want to outline for the majority of you, who may not be familiar with my constituency, some of the things that I think are important in that constituency, and how it has through the past 10 years been a part of my life, and before that as a contributor — as an individual — dealing with a people that were there, and working in the municipal association, and through the municipalities at that time.

The constituency is made up of small communities and rural people. It's made up of people who have an energy that is related to agriculture, basically, and it's driven by a lot of goodwill and initiative that has been fostered by years and years of hard work and dedication.

We have about 18 different communities that are towns and villages in my constituency. It's been a pleasure for me to work with these mayors and aldermen during that period of time — dealing with the various issues that have arisen, Mr. Speaker. The reeves and the councillors of the 12 municipalities that I have in the constituency has also been a pleasure for me to work together with them.

It's through the work of the municipalities — the mayors and the councillors in the constituency — that I have had the greatest reward for my political career, working together with them to initiate programs and initiate responses to the various programs that have been involved, that the last nine years have been able to present to me and to them.

I know that in the community of Cabri we opened a hospital there about a year ago. It was a facility that took a long time to get into place. I know that some of the people on the board were there in 1975 working together to try and initiate a level 4 care facility, and together with the people of that community to try and develop a process whereby they could initiate a construction of a hospital and a level 4 care facility.

(1915)

The town of Herbert, which is the largest in my community, had a nursing home, but it had a serious problem with having rooms that allowed to have four

patients in one room, and it was difficult for the staff to arrange the co-ordination of the different kinds of people in that nursing home. And so it was a privilege to assist them in developing the kind of a facility there that could be more easily accommodating to the people that were clients there.

The responsibility in this relationship to working together with the rural municipalities in the highway system, initiating their response in the area that they wanted to have the construction occur, has also been a part of where I've been able to work with the municipalities, and I want to thank them for their direction and the encouragement they have been to me. Particularly highways like 43 that dealt with rural communities that had a poor access to road or traffic and now they have an opportunity to drive on some very good highways. And throughout the constituency I think that the Department of Highways have done a good job there.

I also want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that even though people in the northern part of this province might believe that they have the most unique parks, I would just like to say to the members of the Assembly here today that I believe we have one of the most exciting opportunities for generating a park facility that there is in Saskatchewan. It's along Diefenbaker Lake. It's called Sask Landing, and it's a different kind of a park. It's a park where sailing can be a part of the park facilities. It can be a place where windsurfing is a part of that exercise. And there is excellent fishing there. People have neglected to take the opportunity to come down to the south-west part of the province to see a facility that is as good as that. There is over 490 miles of shore line, and I think that that is an excellent opportunity for the people to exercise their opportunity to come down and visit down in that part of the province.

And if the member from Rosetown-Elrose wants to argue about which side of the lake is his or mine, it's ours as a part of the effort to build and construct a viable opportunity in a park facility. And as a matter of fact, it will be interesting to see where the facilities get built. I know we have worked hard to put the marina into the facility there. They've dug a lot of gravel out. In fact they made hills in his constituency and in mine with the unused gravel that's going to be used for the highway construction in that area. And I think that it's going to be an asset to him, and it's going to be an asset to the people in my constituency in relation to that. I hope that he can convince the minister responsible for Parks that the marina needs to be completed.

Anyway there is another area that I want to touch on, and it relates to the area of rail line abandonment in this province. It is a very, very important part of the exercise, I believe, of not only the Department of Transportation but also the part of how we relate to the various kinds of communities we have in the province of Saskatchewan. As the member from Weyburn just mentioned, that the small communities in his area were subject to a lot of pressure these days in relation to their size, the construction in those communities, the viability of the businesses in those communities — and it's no different in mine or probably anywhere else in the province of Saskatchewan.

They had an experiment in Alberta, and it's called the short-line rail system, and we in the province of Saskatchewan initiated that some time ago. And I believe that it is a part of something that is really a good program and a good process to maintain.

I want to say that the Southern Rails Co-op down in the area of Rockglen to Killdeer, and in the Avonlea area, have initiated some very positive benefits to those communities there. And I hope that the Minister of Agriculture will take seriously those contributions that are made by that transportation method and that transportation system.

There are two communities in my constituency which have placed a proposal before the federal government, and they are there now negotiating with the federal government together with Southern Rails to implement a better opportunity to serve those communities in delivering the grain to market. And I think that those are the kinds of things that we need to — as a part of an encouragement to the government — to say, this is what you need to do.

I was struck earlier this week by the lack of initiative in the throne speech. I know that it is the beginning of the campaign . . . or the beginning of the term of office for the new government, and they're finding their way around and looking at various things that were going on. They were not aware of a lot of the things that were in the department so I'm going to give them time to breathe. However, I would like to say that it's time to think about how we move forward in this province. We can't stand still. We can't allow ourselves the freedom to think that time is going to stand still in relation to the things that need to be done in agriculture in this province. And that in my mind, Mr. Speaker, is a very serious and a very intense opportunity for the Minister of Agriculture or the minister responsible for Rural Development, for these two ministers to speak to their colleagues in their government and to make the assessments important ones.

I noticed a lack of agriculture in there. I did note that there was some discussion from the member from Weyburn that community bonds were a very important part, and I hope that what I read in the paper today is not symbolic of what they're planning to do because they've run out of money as it relates to the guarantee. And I hope that they will say that there is more opportunity for community bonds than just what they have already attained. I hope that they maintain that program in order to develop those communities.

I want to say that the Speech from the Throne is generally intended to be a document that sets out the framework for departments and for the government to go, and I notice that there was a lack of anything in it to make it something that would be worthwhile.

I noticed a couple of things there that dealt with travel to Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, I had a constituent call me in relation to that and asked whether I was going. It was a woman and I said to her, I really believe that I need to be asked if I wanted to be on that trip and if it's anything that I can do to help, I'd be pleased to. But I never was asked

and it was never made available to me. And therefore, if that opportunity presents itself perhaps in the future, then maybe we need to be made aware of that as a caucus too.

I want to say to the members opposite that in all of the time that I was the associate minister it never became more evident, as I travelled around the province, that GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) and NISA (net income stabilization account) were probably the beginnings of something that could be good. And I want to say to the Minister of Agriculture that there are a lot of things that can be done to that, to enhance it, to give an opportunity. And I will, through my remarks, indicate to you some of those areas that I think can be worked on and that they can provide solutions because I think that that's where we want to go, and I think that's where the people of this province want to go.

Before I get into the GRIP and NISA programs extensively, I want to point out to the government the responsibility that you have in providing the dynamics within those little communities, as it relates to transportation, is very significant. I will say that in my experience as a reeve and as councillor in the time when I was involved in the municipality we had a rail line abandonment in the community that I lived in and it was not a good thing to have. And nowhere in the province are there more dynamics that are negative than when the rail line leaves your community. The whole principle of communities staying together are bound together by that railroad track and it seems like it's almost devastating when that happens. And I just want to point that out.

And it's not only in my constituency, it's going to happen in the Shaunavon constituency; it's going to happen in Kindersley; it's going to happen in Rosetown-Elrose. And if we don't stand up for the areas of development in that, we're going to be losing in the province of Saskatchewan.

It's also my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that with the discussions as it relates to the transportation system, there is going to be a need for us to, or a need for the province of Saskatchewan to very clearly identify how the attack on the grain handling system is going to come. And it's going to be the area from Lloydminster to Weyburn that is going to be most seriously impacted in a review of the transportation system. And I think that the Minister of Agriculture, who's also responsible for transportation, needs to be made aware of that.

Going to the area of GRIP and NISA, I honestly believe that NISA should be a part of the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture in Saskatchewan. I do not believe that it should be the responsibility to maintain that accountability in Winnipeg, or that the federal government needs to do that.

As a matter of fact, the commitment was made by the federal government to us that they would allow banks and credit unions to be the agency of record for the NISA accounts.

And so as I challenge you here today to make sure that that is a part of what that opportunity is to present itself, the significance is very, very large. It deals with it from the perspective of the impact in that community. The money

that is invested could also be invested in that community by that credit union and not have it leave to go some place else. And I think it would . . . in many of the small communities in my constituency it would be a real asset.

Now GRIP is a very complex issue, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not going to try and develop the program here today for you, although I know that you're somewhat interested because you have some land yourself. I will say that there are a number of areas. I have about five of them listed here.

I think, Mr. Minister, I think that one of the things that you need to think about is the area of soil reclassification in dealing with the volume of bushels per acre that that classification could represent. And I think that that is a part of what you need to take a look at.

There has to be continuation of no offset between crops, and I think that that is an important part. I went to a lot of meetings from Maple Creek to Carlyle and that was the general thrust of those people there. They said no offset between crops, and I think that you need to take that seriously.

You need to have a way to target the increase in yield. I really believe that farmers want to farm not for the program; they want to farm because they're good at it. They want to farm because they want to have an increase of the capacity of productivity. And we have to set out . . . set up a process whereby we can encourage them to deliver it.

And there is a process that has already been partly established for irrigators in the province of Saskatchewan, and I know that that is a good method in order to help achieve some of that production increase without jeopardizing the program, and without jeopardizing the opportunity for these farmers to deliver a better benefit for themselves.

(1930)

One of the things that was identified by a constituent of mine as I was travelling around a little over a year ago, and he identified it and I really think it should be considered, and that is to pay the premium at the time the grain is delivered.

And, Mr. Speaker, that in itself has the capacity of doing a number of things. It has the capacity of allowing the producer to deliver when he has the cash. It allows the capacity of the government to better schedule their payments in relation to the premium. And it allows . . . That's for the provincial government, and it does the same for the federal government. You don't have to borrow a whole lot of money to plug it in on November 1 to match the contributions given by the producers. And I think that those are the very kinds of things that I think that need to be done.

Mr. Speaker, when we deal with the program that is called GRIP, it began with two fundamental issues. It began with crop insurance as its base. It began with a price-fixed commodity. But that price was only there on the basis of a short fall in production, and that, Mr.

Speaker, is exactly the reason why the farmers asked the provincial government and asked me if there could be some changes made to that. And we initiated some of that.

And as we sit in this House, the lights that we have here today, Mr. Speaker, were not invented by Thomas Edison. He invented a lamp, but he didn't invent the kind of lights we have here today. And so as we build on the bricks that are there, we build the wall to protect these producers. And I think that that's the kind of thing that we need to consider, as it relates to the GRIP and NISA program.

I am actually, Mr. Speaker, very proud of the fact that we initiated those. And I'm also proud of this, Mr. Speaker, that we put into place, in the legislation, an opportunity for the minister to access the consultative process in relation to developing changes in that process. And I think that that is as important as any of the GRIP and NISA program itself.

I just want to say that in the discussions . . . going to Ottawa is not always the solution to the problem. Sometimes the problems have to be solved within the framework of this jurisdiction here. I want to point out that many times I have travelled there, and many times I've come back empty-handed. Many times I've travelled there, and we've gotten a good return on the kinds of things that we need to do. We need to pressure the federal government. I believe in that. We need to make them understand what the resolve of the Saskatchewan people is, and we have to get them to understand that.

I want to say though that we can't always throw the solution to the problem on the federal government, and I'll tell you why. There is a basic reason why I'm going to tell you why you shouldn't do that: because for every time that you do that and they pay you money, they will want to have some right taken and given back to them that we have.

And I don't think that we should freely just go there and say we want to have all this money because then they will want to have some jurisdiction that they want to control and have control over the province. And I think that you need to be very careful, when you're going to deal with those kinds of things, that you don't sell yourself and the rights that we have as Saskatchewan producers for that added dollar or what it can get you. I think that you need to deal with that in a very constructive way.

We have gone through the 10 toughest years in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker, in relation to the weather, the predators that hover on the agriculture sector in a natural kind of a way. We've had grasshoppers; we've had drought; in this past year we had so much rain we didn't know what to do with it. Parts of my constituency had 27 inches of rain this year. It's been incredible.

We have had drought; we have had flood. We've had places that ran water where they haven't run water for 30 years, Mr. Speaker, and that is in some ways an asset, but in many ways it has become a liability.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we can't sit down and say, Ottawa

give us everything. We've got to solve some of these problems within ourselves, and I'm going to challenge the members opposite who are in government to make sure that they consider that they have not only an opportunity, but they have a responsibility to do that.

I want to continue on to some of the things that I noticed during the campaign that I thought were of interest. And I noted that the plebiscites, Mr. Speaker, were very encouraging for what I believe the province of Saskatchewan to represent. They dealt with three areas and I was very pleased with the results of all of them.

I believe that the area of balanced budgets is important. I believe that. I believe that abortion is important. I believe that the kinds of things and the way the people voted during the election about abortion, I think that is important. I think it's important for us to consider that.

I also think that we have a responsibility in dealing with these kinds of issues and I think that the people of Saskatchewan told the legislature here in the province of Saskatchewan what their opinion was. And I think we'd better listen because I think we in this legislature have a responsibility to consider that.

And I want to also say that it's interesting that the people of Saskatchewan have entrusted the role of government to the NDP (New Democratic Party) Party. I am here as a part of a belief that the electorate is always right. However, I find it interesting that as a result of the election that there are as many NDP as there are. And I want to say that they probably should all, each on a variable occasion, send a bouquet to the Leader of the Liberal Party. That would assist in brightening her day but it would also be a credit to her and give the credit to where it's due.

I also want to say that that is a part of what I believe is the difference between what's on that side of the House and on this side of the House. We have, Mr. Speaker, had a long-time tradition that you were either a right-winger or a left-winger in this province, and it's been polarized fairly significantly in elections across the province. And it's been . . . As the member from Weyburn — no I believe it was Meadow Lake suggested that politics can be an interesting discussion in his house. And I think it's like that in every home. You get feisty over Christmas . . . or turkey dinner at Christmas time about your politics and what you believe in.

And the kinds of things that take place in my home are no different than in yours, and the belief is very intense. And I think that it's necessary for us to again, I believe, polarize that between right and left and do it on one-party system because I think that — or two-party system, I'm sorry. But we'll leave that for another day to discuss with you.

I want to say that the one question on plebiscite that I didn't talk about was the one that dealt with the constitution. And I think that as a person who was born in this country, but who's had parents and grandparents who moved to this country, who believed that this was the place to live and the place to raise their families and a good place to do that, that we need to have that opportunity presented to the public on how and what the

constitution should be like.

And I don't believe . . . and this is a criticism of the Premier, that he would in fact say to the Prime Minister, or to the federal government, perhaps that there was room for negotiations on Canada's constitution in relation to money being paid to western Canada. And I really find that not only difficult to understand why he would do that, but also difficult to understand why he would limit himself to protecting the farmers to what he gets out of the constitution and vice versa; because of the relevance that the constitution has to us as people in the province of Saskatchewan, why he would put a dollar value on that.

And we in this province — and I heard it over and over again in '86 — stood here and heard people from all stripes saying they didn't want to have the United States taking us over on the free trade debate. Well I would say that we need to be very careful what we trade off in a constitutional discussion. And that is a serious criticism on what I believe a poor error in judgement.

I want to say something, too, about a concern that I have. I asked some questions earlier about the laying off, relieving of responsibilities, firing, whatever you want to call it, of 271 crop insurance adjusters. And I want to make this point, Mr. Speaker. Each time, as the program works in Crop Insurance and in GRIP, each time that a farmer is not paid what he is entitled to, he is going to lose. And when are they going to catch that up? If he is in shortfall 1 bushel for every acre that he has on his farm, and if he seeds 1,000 acres, he's out \$4,000. When will that be paid back? On the final payment? Or will that be somehow measured into the system so that that individual can somehow be held accountable for the kinds of things that he earned out of the program, he's expecting out of the program, and now he isn't going to get?

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that is a poor way to handle what was supposed to be done fairly and equitably. And I'm going to be raising those as questions later on as a part of what my responsibility will be in this Assembly.

I was the minister responsible for the Sask Water Corporation, Mr. Speaker. And I was there when it started; I was there when it began. I helped build it; I helped put it together, and as a legislative secretary responsible for that, I saw how it developed. I saw how ministers were made responsible for the board and how they moved out of that responsibility and then allowed the general public to become a part of that responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I also was a part of that decision to allow the chairman of the board to be a citizen of the province of Saskatchewan who was not a politician. And I believe in that system. And I really believe that the Government of Saskatchewan is wrong when they're allowing ministers to be the sole members of those boards of directors.

I think that that is an error of judgement, and I think that is putting the power into the executive control of this province, and I think that's wrong. I don't believe in it and I never, ever have. I think you're wrong to do that no matter where you put it. We have had a whole lot of these corporations, all ministers of the Crown. And I think that's

wrong.

As a matter of fact, in Alberta what they've done, they've changed the laws to give regular MLAs the opportunity to sit on those boards. And I think that that is a step in the right direction. But I also think to take regular, ordinary people out of the responsibilities that they have as a part of their contribution to society is wrong. And I'm going to challenge you on that to fix that up because I really think it's a serious mistake.

One of the things that bothers me with the suggestion by those opposite is that you don't have patronage, we didn't have patronage, the next guy is the only guy that has patronage. Well I want to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that we have had patronage since politics began. It's not a part of what we do or they do, it's a part of what everybody does. And you want to step aside from that? You try. And as a matter of fact, I would suggest that there is a whole lot of patronage going on your side of the House at this point in time. It's a part of what governments are all about. And I think that that's a part of what you do and that's a part of what we did.

However, I find it very, very interesting that you would raise, as a part of your legislative agenda, to deal with the contracts that have been made with individuals who are civil servants and who are people who are working for this government in the province of Saskatchewan; that you would bring legislation into this House that would jeopardize those contracts that have been made with those people. I find that very, very difficult to believe.

Because I was in a position, Mr. Speaker, to employ a deputy and an assistant deputy and another assistant deputy in the Department of Agriculture who are career civil servants. They've been there longer — maybe not longer than you have, Mr. Speaker — but they have been here a whole lot longer than a lot of the people who are in this Assembly right now. And that wasn't a disparaging remark on the Speaker.

(1945)

However, I want to point out that you are jeopardizing the opportunity for people to come to work in the province of Saskatchewan if you deal with it in that light for every one of them; because the people will not want to come and work here if they can be legislated for a fixed salary contract and it can be wiped out at the stroke of a pen by the people in this Assembly. I think that that is wrong. I think you are wrong in doing that. As a matter of fact, then I would be able to say to all those people who have been employed in government on the other side of the House — whether it's in hospitals, nurses, doctors, teachers — why don't you put your salary on the line the same . . . your pension plans and your salaries on the line the same way that you're asking these civil servants to do that. Why don't you put that on the line and just say what you really should be saying — your pensions are gone. That's the kind of thing you're doing to these individuals who are career civil servants in relation to the kinds of things you're doing here.

And I want to add this too, Mr. Speaker, that we dealt with some of those problem areas as a part of the government

when we were there. And did we come to this Legislative Assembly and ask the Legislative Assembly with 56 people, give that guy that severance and give that guy that one? We never did. We abided by the rules and the general practices established in this province in establishing the severances that those individuals got. And they were done on the basis of a contract and negotiated and arbitrated on that basis.

And if you bring that into the House, Mr. Speaker, it is going to be very, very difficult for you to achieve the purposes that you want to have, knowing and understanding that you are jeopardizing many, many other contracts. I'm going to raise it; where are you going to stop in this business? Where are you going to stop? Are you going to stop at those deputies who didn't . . . you don't think work for you and do a good job for you? Are you going to go to the next layer of administration and say, I'm going to get rid of those too? Or go to the next layer of administration and say, I'm going to get rid of those too? And how far do you go? Do you go right down to the agents who are there in Crop Insurance and say, he didn't vote for me. He didn't vote for me. He didn't vote for me, so he's gone. And is that what you're going to do? Cause I'll tell you what, some of the back-benchers are laughing, but in 1971 you did exactly that.

And then I want to point out that was wrong at that time. And I think it's wrong today to think about that in relation to that. And I want to challenge you to be very careful what you do because I wonder if you have the constitutional right to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a couple of things about the decentralization. I know it's been a discussion that has torn apart the city of Regina. I know that it's been a discussion that has been felt across this province. However, what I want to point out is not that discussion about whether it's good or bad. I want to point out some statements made by various people who are sitting on that side of the House.

The member for Humboldt made some statements that are clearly not in keeping with the statements made by the administration of the government. He said, we like it in Humboldt; we want to have it in Humboldt. And what does he say now? Oh, it's not bad; we can send it all back.

What about the member from Kelsey-Tisdale, in Hudson Bay, for example? The Premier, the now Premier, he said it was a good thing to do. And if we as Conservatives say that they don't believe in it, he said this is not truth. And there is a legislative word, a parliamentary word I can't use, and that's what he used. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the kinds of things that were said about that program. It was said in Hudson Bay one way, in Regina another way.

And I challenge the people in this province to acknowledge that the member from Melville, the member from Melville should just ask his whether he wants Crop Insurance moved out of Melville. Ask the member from Swift Current, who's a friend of mine, whether he would like to have ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan), with \$2.5 million of payroll in that community, moved out. And that is the kinds of things that he, and others, should think about in

this whole decentralization program.

The next question, Mr. Speaker, is what we have to think about, is this: what are we going to do with those communities to maintain them if you're not going to do something that has some viability? Are you going to say to Crown Life, go to Melville, or Moose Jaw, or to Rosetown? No, you can't say that. As a matter of fact, are you going to do something about Crown Life? That's the question you've got to raise for yourself. Are you going to allow an opportunity for community bonds to be used through Crown Life, and have the people of the province of Saskatchewan be able to invest in an opportunity for another insurance company. That's the kind of things that we have to ask ourselves — are you doing the right things?

Now one of the things that consistently happened, Mr. Speaker, as a part of the discussion back and forth in relation to whether there should be more of this and more of that — more nurses, more health care, more education, more of everything — many times I can recall as clear as you can that the Finance minister stood in his chair and said there is no more money, you can't do it any more. And then the member from the seat that used to be Saskatoon University would stand up and say, yes there is more, there is lots more opportunity for you; you just have to get rid of this or that or the other thing and then you can have all of the opportunity in the world.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that we knew that there was tough, difficult times and the cupboard was bare. We knew that. We said that over and over again. And we will continue to point that out, that that is exactly the way we handled the government and that's exactly what caused the problem.

I want to just close by saying that it has been a privilege for me to serve in this Legislative Assembly. I want to point out the other thing that is significant to me. My family have been involved in government in one shape or form since about 1945. And I had an uncle who worked in this building, was the chief engineer, was a person who designed some of the rooms in here in the late . . . early fifties, and it became at that time very significant to me to be a part of this establishment.

It was an honour and a privilege. My uncle served as the director of construction within this building and for me it was a privilege to have him do that. And so it became a privilege for me to stand in my place here as an individual who believes in public service and believes that it is an individual responsibility to maintain that in the best decorum possible.

And it will be my intention, Mr. Speaker, to do a number of things as a member of the opposition. It will be my intention to provide the best opposition that I can, and the most viable and the most credible. And that, Mr. Speaker, is at times going to be reflecting negatively on the government and sometimes it'll reflect positively. But, Mr. Speaker, it will be this member's responsibility to make sure that the Queen's business is honourably done. I thank you for your time, sir.

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

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Solomon:** — Mr. Speaker, I merely rise to ask leave of the Assembly to introduce guests. But thank you for the warm . . .

Leave granted.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you very much, members. Mr. Speaker, it's my honour today and this evening to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, 15 scouts from my constituency, and their leaders, in your gallery. They come from the 86th scouting group in the north part of my constituency, and it's a real honour for me to introduce these particular people because I am an honorary member of the scouting movement in my constituency and I've always encouraged them to attend and learn more about government and how it operates.

With the 15 scouts in your gallery, we have Laverne Moskal, Paul O'Donnell, Garth Robson, Bill Miller, and Dave Claypool are the names that I have here. I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming them here this evening. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Solomon:** — Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet I'd like to introduce as well two other very young members of the province of Saskatchewan, residents, in the gallery as well. My son, Matthew, is up there who's seven years of age and he has his friend, Chris Braden. So I'd ask them to ask members to welcome them here as well. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Martens:** — I too, Mr. Speaker, would like to welcome these young men from the scouting movement. If you're ever down in the south-west and you want a good place to camp, Thompson Scout Camp is right on my land. If you want to come down there and visit, they have excellent facilities there. It's part of the great south-west, and you'd be very welcome to attend, and I would just welcome you here today.

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

### SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

### ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker and fellow members of the legislature, I'm pleased to stand today to offer my comments in response to the Speech from the Throne. The throne speech has outlined new priorities of a government I'm very pleased to support. This speech marks the first steps our government will be taking to put the province back on the road to economic and social prosperity.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, our government has outlined a series of proposals that will be undertaken during this first, short session of the legislature. Perhaps the most important step taken by our government will be the democratic reforms that we are committed to implement. These reforms are fundamental and represent our desire to bring government closer to the people of the province.

Mr. Speaker, your presence is symbolic of the changes we wish to embrace. You have served this province in many ways over the past years: as a member of the legislature, a minister of the Crown, and now as the second democratically elected Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, I have every confidence that you will represent this Assembly well and will further the reforms that are necessary to make the people of this province key players in our legislative process.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, politicians have fallen from favour with many of the people of this province over the past decade. Politicians have become synonymous with patronage, nepotism, and a secret government that is not open to ordinary people of our province. I trust that you will act to restore a degree of decorum and respectability to this Assembly, and by so doing will play a pivotal role in keeping our government in touch with the interests and aspirations of our constituents.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — Historically our legislature has served the people as an institution that was a vehicle for economic and social change. It was a means for people to put their ideas into actions. However, over the past decade it has increasingly been seen to thwart the interests of ordinary Saskatchewan people. I have every faith, Mr. Speaker, that with you now, not only symbolically but directly responsible to this Assembly, we will begin the process of restoring honesty, integrity, and competence to the Government of Saskatchewan.

(2000)

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

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, I join with you and other members of the legislature in working towards this common goal. I'm convinced that through a renewed process of democratic reform and open government, that we will be more accountable, more accessible, and more in touch with the wants and needs of our constituents. I believe that my commitment to these objectives is reflected in my election to this office by the people of the Kinistino constituency.

M. le Président, je voudrais dire quelques mots dans ma langue maternelle. C'est très important pour moi d'être capable de m'exprimer franchement et honnêtement parce que pour moi il y a des activités qui sont très proches de mon cœur.

Premièrement je te félicite sur ton acclamation pour la position de Président. Comme le nouveau gouvernement

de la Saskatchewan on a parlé beaucoup des réformes démocratiques et je suis très fier que ta position est un symbole de les réformes démocratiques qu'on veut instituer dans la législature dans le futur.

M. le Président, mes chers collègues, les membres de l'opposition, ça me donne un grand plaisir d'être debout ici aujourd'hui dans cette Chambre comme député pour la circonscription de Kinistino. Je voudrais vous parler un peu de les raisons pourquoi j'ai décidé de courir comme député.

Dans mes yeux depuis 1982 on a vu les priorités dans ce province ici toutes mélangées et toutes malplacées. Comme un fermier et un homme d'une petite affaire ça me faisait mal de voir que des grosses sociétés comme Cargill et Weyerhaeuser étaient favorisées par le gouvernement opposé.

On a vu, M. le Président, une compagnie comme Weyerhaeuser qui a été subventionnée sur les taux d'intérêts à huit et demi pourcent. Et également, M. le Président, on avait des petites affaires des hommes et des femmes de commerce qui ... (inaudible) ... C'est une priorité toute mélangée.

M. le Président, c'est très important aussi de ramener l'économie mixte dans la province. Puis quand je parle de l'économie mixte je parle de les éléments comme les activités dans l'économie comme les activités privées, publiques, et aussi cooperatives. C'est très important de ramener ça, M. le Président.

Mais je veux aussi ajouter que c'est très important pour moi dans la Saskatchewan d'être la voix pour les francophones dans la législature de la Saskatchewan.

(Translation: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words in my mother tongue. It is very important for me to be able to express myself frankly and honestly because for me there are activities which are near to my heart.

First of all, I want to congratulate you on your acclamation as Speaker of this legislature. As the new government of Saskatchewan, we have spoken a great deal about democratic reforms and I am very proud that your position is a symbol of the democratic reforms we hope to achieve in the legislature in the future.

Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, and members of the opposition, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to be standing here today in this Chamber as MLA for the Kinistino constituency. I would like to speak briefly about the reasons why I let my name stand as MLA.

In my view, since 1982 we have seen mixed-up and misplaced priorities in this province. As a farmer and a small-business man, it hurt me to see that the government was giving companies like Cargill and Weyerhaeuser preferential treatment. We saw, Mr. Speaker, a company like Weyerhaeuser getting interest rates of eight and a half per cent and on the other hand small-business people who ... (inaudible) ... It's a priority that's all mixed up.

Mr. Speaker, it's also very important to revive the small-business sector in this province. And when I speak

of the small-business sector, I speak of private, public, and co-operative elements. It's very important to revive that, Mr. Speaker.

And I would also add that it's very important for me, in Saskatchewan, to be the voice for francophones in the Saskatchewan legislature.)

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

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, Kinistino constituency is a vast constituency. It encompasses some 2,400 square miles. This constituency, Mr. Speaker, was an area where immigrants of many countries came to live. They settled and have coexisted with Indian and Metis people for generations. They have continued to share a common history, a history that is far from dull and listless. The history of the constituency as a centre of politics in the province sends roots deeper than those of the province itself.

It was in this area that some of the most interesting parts of Canadian history have occurred. In 1885 at Batoche, the North-West Rebellion broke out. It was a rebellion that is renowned across Canada. The issues of race, religion, and the authority of Ottawa were central to the politics of the region and the rebellion, and have helped to shape this province's destiny. Today we are less divided than we were in 1885. However, you will find that the hearty spirit of Saskatchewan politics continues to live on in this constituency.

Today we are a constituency of farmers and small-business people, working people and the unemployed, young people and seniors. We're made up of the two founding people of Canada. There are also many Ukrainian, German, Indian, and Metis people. We border the cities of Saskatoon and Prince Albert, yet our major communities are neither of these. Rather our activities centre around the communities of Cudworth, Wakaw, Birch Hills, St. Louis, Aberdeen, and of course, Kinistino.

Like many people in rural Saskatchewan, we see that our communities are being threatened by depopulation and a tough economy. High levels of taxation, heavy debt loads, and low prices for our commodities have affected us all. As a candidate in this last election it was brought right to my door — the problems we faced because of the economic malaise in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we need to define more clearly what rural Saskatchewan is going to look like in the future. We need to lay out a plan and we need to strive towards that plan. As a farmer and a small-business man I see the impact the past nine and a half years have had on our communities, our businesses, and our families.

I ran for a seat in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, because I wanted to make a difference. I believe the people of the Kinistino elected me because they wanted a new fresh approach, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that I believe

the best way we can bring harmony to the people of this province, to heal the wounds of the past nine and a half years, is to provide real economic opportunities for the ordinary people of Saskatchewan. Nine and a half years of division, misplaced priorities, and lost opportunities is too much.

Let me outline to you what the people of Kinistino are telling me they need. They tell me that we need stability in agriculture. I agree that we must work to restore the strength of the agricultural economy. We need to foster a diversified agricultural economy that will keep families on the farm. But we also need to be cognizant of the fact that any strong economy must be competitive in the world. In order to do this we need a level playing-field. We need a means to transfer land from one generation to the other. We need a fair price for our products. And we need a federal government that is willing to commit itself and work with the Saskatchewan government and farm families to protect the future of agriculture in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, I know that GRIP must be changed. It must better reflect the costs of production of today's farmers. I am pleased to support this initiative by our government. Farmers need to be included in the process. I am pleased that the Premier invited ordinary farmers and farm families to accompany him on the trek to Ottawa. It was not only symbolic, but indicative of a new style of open government and participation.

In the past, politicians who portrayed themselves as having a great deal of knowledge of farming have been the ones to state our case. The result was a game of politics involving the farm gate and farm families. Our government has provided a vehicle for the ordinary farmers to state their case to Ottawa directly. We know that the strongest voice is that of the individual farm family. Our government is committed to ensuring that individual farm families will always be consulted and involved in the decisions that affect their lives.

In addition to agriculture, the help of small business is central to the well-being of rural Saskatchewan, and Kinistino. Two-income families and off-farm income are growing in importance to the sustainability of rural families. As such it is important that we provide a level playing-field for the businesses that employ the members of many farm families.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you, as evidence, there was a study done in 1989 by the Federation of Independent Business which indicated that 80 per cent of all the new jobs that were created between 1982 to 1989 were created by small-business people who employed five employees or less. Mr. Speaker, small business is going to have to be a main ingredient in the economic recovery of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — One of the misplaced priorities I have seen since 1982 is the emphasis of the previous government on putting megadollars into megaprojects. The

Weyerhaeuser and Cargills were getting special deals. It is especially noteworthy that Weyerhaeuser got an interest rate subsidized to a level of 8.5 per cent while the previous government was weakening the only small business support program, the small business interest rate reduction program. Eventually they eliminated it completely, Mr. Speaker. That was unwarranted and shows where their priorities were.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — The interests of family businesses must be, and are, the interests of this government. I'm pleased that in this session we will vote to repeal the PST (provincial sales tax) imposed by the former government.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — The PST, Mr. Speaker, was yet another attack on small businesses of Saskatchewan. It was a tax that would have cost our economy as many as 7,500 jobs and would have cost the people of this province nearly \$400 million a year. And I tell you when I went during the election in Main Street, Cudworth and Main Street, Wakaw, Saskatchewan, people were telling me, we cannot take another \$400 million out of this economy.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — It is almost contemptible that this particular tax strikes hardest at the lower income families of our province. And let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we are going to ensure that no such tax is ever going to be reintroduced. We believe that by removing the PST we will provide a much needed shot in the arm to local businesses of all types throughout the province, but particularly in the rural areas of this province. It is important for us to put business on a level playing-field to stop the leakage of money from our local economies. We do not need the PST adding to the worries of small business already accompanying the low prices and cash squeeze of the farm economy.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to briefly talk about Indian and Metis people in the Kinistino constituency. I'm happy to say that reforms that we have already introduced will help Indian people to become more secure and fulfil some of their roles they should play in our society. We have introduced important steps such as helping in family issues. I'm pleased that we will continue to encourage co-operation with Indian and Metis people in determining issues that affect their destiny, and I look forward to working with Indian and Metis leaders in my constituency to begin resolving some of the long-standing problems that face them.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to stress the sense of privilege I feel to be taking my seat in this legislature at such an exciting and challenging time in Saskatchewan's history. This historic surrounding has housed many of the great debates that have shaped this province and our country. It has stood for generations as a symbol of what our people can do in co-operation with each other. Although it has been sullied some over the past decade, I hope that I can lend a hand in restoring this important democratic institution and the fine traditions it is known

for.

I hope that I live up to the standards, Mr. Speaker, of honesty, integrity, and competence that is demanded by our generation, and in so doing help to pass it on to the next. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci, M. le Président.

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

(2015)

**Mr. Serby:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the constituents of Yorkton, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Speaker of this Assembly. Throughout the years I have had the privilege of working with you as a caucus colleague and serving as an employee in your government many years ago. And I know that you hold the high regard and principles and virtues of fairness, respect, and order. And accordingly, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to serve in this House with you as our Speaker.

Today, Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honour and a pleasure to rise and speak in this Assembly as a new member representing the constituency of Yorkton. Mr. Speaker, at this time I wish to take the opportunity to thank the people of my constituency, Yorkton, for their overwhelming support and confidence in me. I am deeply moved by the trust they have shown me and I look forward to representing them with the same spirit and enthusiasm that they sent me to this legislature and Assembly with.

And, Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to congratulate all the members who have been elected to this Assembly or re-elected to this Assembly.

To my Ukrainian friends in Saskatchewan and across the province:

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.)

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

**Mr. Serby:** — (The hon. member continued to speak for a time in Ukrainian.)

Mr. Speaker, to my Ukrainian friends and constituents in Yorkton and across Saskatchewan, I thank you very dearly from my heart for your support.

Today we are in the kind of times where we must work together like brothers and sisters, like family and community. And that is the way that we can build a better life. Today I ask you for your support for our government so that we can build a strong province and strong cultures.

Mr. Speaker, the boundaries of the city of Yorkton is my constituency, known as the Promise of the Parkland. Approximately five years ago we were known as the Treasure-Chest City. Now I can't say for sure, Mr. Speaker, why the change, but within the past nine and a half years our city has gone from treasure to promise, which is identical to what happened to this province. A population of over 16,000, we are a regional centre to many government and public services and are

strategically located, accessed by five highway networks.

Mr. Speaker, we are rich in culture and heritage in Yorkton, and we are the home of the International Film Festival.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, in Monday's Speech from the Throne the initiatives and mood spoke clearly to the tone of the electorate's decision of just one month ago. In my address today, Mr. Speaker, it is my goal to relate the situation of my constituency and how it fits and meshes into the global picture of community which is Saskatchewan, and how past and future policies of government will affect and have affected us, and how, Mr. Speaker, we, as one constituency and one region, can play a part in the new restoration of Saskatchewan and the new development plan.

The central theme, Mr. Speaker, of our election campaign was to open the books, because in this province, Mr. Speaker, small business and farmers and labourers, the poor and the unemployed, harmoniously echoed that we had too much waste, too much mismanagement and too much patronage, and a lack of direction by the previous administration.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — Within just one month, Mr. Speaker, our government has selected a very capable and respected team to undertake the magnanimous task of sorting out where the money has gone — with the findings of this commission to the public an open, accountable and fully disclosed process which, Mr. Speaker, will be the trademark of our government. Mr. Speaker, that trademark has been seriously lacking and sadly lacking by the previous administration of the Tories.

Mr. Speaker, the constituents of the city of Yorkton are applauding the time frame under which our Finance minister has established our government's commission and in the time frame that he expects to have the commission reporting back to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, today we are uncovering from the reviews of the Crown corporations and the government departments the many, many sweetheart deals that the people of Saskatchewan were talking about and that were supporting by their tax dollars and the sell-off of many of our Crown corporations — employment contracts, rental agreements, and severance packages that, in my mind, border on being criminal and certainly immoral.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — Coming at a time, Mr. Speaker, when we're faced with the highest level of unemployment, food banks, and hungry kids in the history of this province, this kind of mentality of freewheeling practice of government must be ended. And I will be advocating and supporting any legislation that comes before this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that these kinds of practices as occurred under the Tory government never occur again,

and that we build in the mechanisms to protect the people of Saskatchewan from this type of abuse.

Mr. Speaker, during this session our government will be formally concluding the business of repealing the expanded and harmonization of the provincial sales tax. This decision, Mr. Speaker, has been applauded and supported in the majority by small business and consumers in my constituency and across the province.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — From our constituency alone, Mr. Speaker, upon the introduction of the unfair tax by the Tory government, we submitted thousands of names requesting and pleading not to introduce this tax. And it was true, Mr. Speaker, that we have names on those petitions not from Yorkton alone, but from Kamsack and Canora and from Esterhazy and Sturgis because Yorkton, Mr. Speaker, is central to the trading area of nearly 100 miles radius around our city. And, Mr. Speaker, Yorkton is the third largest trading area in this province. And we might even be second if Saskatoon and Regina could ever figure out which one of them were first.

The small business in the city of Yorkton, particularly those in the restaurant and clothing businesses of which our city is blessed with, were afraid of their livelihoods of which many are long-standing family businesses.

Mr. Speaker, the city of Yorkton, today more than ever, depends on our small business. And the legislation to repeal this unfair tax of the previous administration provides a revived lease of hope for many of the retail and restaurant owners in our constituency.

There is absolutely no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that since the election of October 21, whereby the Premier announced an end to the collection of the PST, we have saved, in Yorkton, small business from closing their doors. We have saved some jobs in our community. We have witnessed a growth in consumer spending and we have seen a reduction of some of the cross-border shopping to the south. And, Mr. Speaker, we have seen a return of our Manitoba shopper to our city.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, the repeal of the tax could not occur soon enough. And it will be viewed and remembered as one of the most unfair and unnecessary tax grabs by the previous government.

Mr. Speaker, in Monday's Speech from the Throne we will be asked to vote supply on the estimate provided to this House on April 1, 1991 by the previous administration. In doing so, Mr. Speaker, this will now bring the 1991 deficit up from 265 million to nearly a billion dollars and an additional burden to the already staggering provincial debt accumulated in just nine and a half years of Tory government. Mr. Speaker, when I hear and see the reckless abandonment of the previous Tory government's spending habits which are being uncovered and exposed daily, by the Hong Kong office rental of \$1,800 per month, executive salaries to board chairmen starting and exceeding well into the hundreds

of thousands of dollars, and severance packages which are in the millions of dollars, it appals me. When I look at what we could have done in Yorkton if we had just had a portion of that annual allocation, Mr. Speaker, the picture for Yorkton would look somewhat different.

For example, Mr. Speaker, in the past year it was necessary for us to close 20 regional hospital beds. And we are one of the highest of seven regional hospitals in the province with an urban senior population of over 20 per cent. And we serve a geographic population of over 90,000 people through one centre.

In 1982 we lost nearly 60 beds. Since 1982, Mr. Speaker, we lost nearly 60 beds. And we lost nearly the same number of employees who have now left the province and are living elsewhere. I know this firsthand, Mr. Speaker, because I sat on that hospital board for six years and tried to impact the decisions that were made by the previous government.

But more significant to this, Mr. Speaker, is just last Monday in our hospital nine people were laying in our emergency department because we had no bed space — and these were not just folks from Yorkton, Mr. Speaker. There was not enough money for sick people and jobs in the previous government. But we had enough money for high-cost office space and inflated executive salaries. What a series of ill-fated priorities, Mr. Speaker.

As I scan my constituency, Mr. Speaker, those misguided priorities are visible in other sectors. In 1982, Mr. Speaker, in the city of Yorkton, we saw the closure of three schools which had created an increase to the teacher/student ratio because the school boards were faced with cutting back on 11 teaching positions. Today, Mr. Speaker, our school boards are just coping in an attempt to manage the problems that are precipitated by those kinds of decisions, especially when our enrolments have not been proportionally reduced.

Mr. Speaker, decisions were made, however, in concert with an overall integrated plan which included a new facility for a city because it encompassed the regional philosophy to educational service delivery.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that these three school boards, and parents, and ratepayers of our city and district, that this new billion dollar deficit of the previous administration has not jeopardized in any serious fashion the long-term goals and collective work of our comprehensive and innovative undertaking, because in our city these school boards have come as close to achieving the true spirit of co-operation and integration and community as can be exemplified, and they can do little else without affecting the quality and standard of education for the young people in our centre.

Mr. Speaker, this deteriorated financial position of our province, which was guided by the mismanagement model of the previous administration, has created additional hardship and hamstrung the work of our urban municipality, while during the same period, Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers of this province have had to cope with increased taxes.

As an example, having sat as an alderman on the city council of Yorkton, we have witnessed in 10 years the elimination of the capital grants program. To the urban municipality of Yorkton this works out to approximately \$750,000. In the current budget year, the city of Yorkton saw a revenue sharing grant reduced by approximately \$65,000. And, Mr. Speaker, in 1990 and 1991 the city of Yorkton lost its per capita transportation grant of approximately \$46,000.

At the same time, the city has needed to absorb the increased costs of the power utility, telephone costs, the GST (goods and services tax). Mr. Speaker, in 1991 when the city council of Yorkton reviewed our budget estimates, we were in a deficit of nearly 3 mills and we hadn't even begun the budgeting process including all of our priorities. And that picture didn't brighten any even though the previous minister tried on two occasions to enlighten the picture with his press budget speech and then his depressed budget speech in this Assembly.

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

(2030)

**Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, in the urban municipality of Yorkton and across this province we have city councils that remain optimistic and committed to maintaining the essential services for our residents, visitors, and our patrons. The shifted burden of responsibilities to the urban municipalities — a critical issue for our government — that shift, Mr. Speaker, lies clearly on the reckless spending habits of the Tory government during the past nine and a half years.

Mr. Speaker, the strength and the future of the province depends a great deal on our relationship and partnership with our urban and rural decision and policy makers. The city council of Yorkton is a major urban centre in east-central Saskatchewan, along with the chamber of commerce and our economic development commission, have made their commitment to work with our government in strategizing and planning and dialoguing in order to turn the depressed financial position of this province around, because our government believes in working with people.

Mr. Speaker, as an urban member elected to this Assembly, I want to state that my boots are still deeply planted on the farm. The future and vibrancy of my constituency, and I believe this province, depends significantly upon the stability and strength of the agricultural sector. Mr. Speaker, in the weeks since the election and as the government in transition, my constituents are encouraged and optimistic by the government's action and response to the farm rallies and with our trek to Ottawa.

The message that Saskatchewan people are telling me is that our government is committed and has a focus in attempting to ensure that the Saskatchewan farm families and industry are protected and that our government is sincerely committed to seeing farmers becoming self-supporting and -sufficient. And that, Mr. Speaker, when our Premier goes to Ottawa and sits down at the negotiating table with the Prime Minister, he's not the

servant, Mr. Speaker, he's the main course.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, in my constituency of Yorkton we had two of the largest agricultural manufacturing industries in the province, if not in Canada, in the Morris Rod-Weeder Company and the Leon Manufacturing Company.

At one time, Mr. Speaker, not more than five years ago, these companies employed in the neighbourhood of 700 and 400 people respectively, who in the majority lived in our city and in the surrounding communities. Today these companies, even with some diversification, have had to reduce their work-force and operations to the point where they are questioning their ability to compete in the industry.

Mr. Speaker, the effect of their reductions and cut-backs have been devastating to the economy of our community and this province. Today our economic development commission in Yorkton is working closely with those companies and I know that with the co-operation and the attitude and focus our government has towards job creation and agriculture, meaningful gains and strategies will be achieved in rejuvenating the agricultural industries not only in our community but across this province.

Mr. Speaker, as an urban elected MLA, I want to state that more than ever, we must focus as a government on helping the Saskatchewan farmers get a fair and immediate return for the commodities they provide.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — I know that our government will continue to build and maintain the relationship with Ottawa as we have started, so that farm support programs like GRIP can be reworked, redesigned as a future support program as they're required.

And, Mr. Speaker, our Premier and our Minister of Agriculture, in concert with the federal government, are keeping their fingers on the pulse of the international trade markets and GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), because, Mr. Speaker, when the agricultural sector of our province is humming, so are the folks of Yorkton and, I would suggest, the rest of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, my city council is pleased to hear of our government's expedience in introducing legislation respecting the ward system. This issue has been strongly supported and advocated at SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) conventions from the time it was discarded by the previous administration.

Mr. Speaker, with the return of the ward system in communities over 100,000, urban ratepayers will be assured of stronger and more accessible representation for their areas. Furthermore, the municipal elections process will become more orderly and less cumbersome for the voter and the administration of elections.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that our government will ensure

that in the future a municipal and a provincial election will never occur at the same time, as in this province we just completed, because the process confuses the public, creates all sorts of administration difficulties, and eliminates capable men and women from participating in the democratic process of running for office to municipal governments.

Mr. Speaker, a political strategy that thwarts the people's rights and privileges must be changed.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to the principles of democracy to ensure that all people of Saskatchewan have a voice to this Assembly. I support the forthcoming legislation of by-elections occurring within six months of a vacancy. In this province we had several constituencies that had been left unrepresented in this legislature for months, as the previous premier awaited an appropriate political climate. This was a blatant abuse of the rights and privileges of the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, our government intends to introduce legislation on developing a comprehensive code of ethics and conflict of interest guide-lines. And this is the type of signal, Mr. Speaker, that my constituents and the people of this province have been waiting for. Included in this package are guide-lines for elected representatives and senior public servants. Mr. Speaker, if there was one single issue in my constituency that motivated people to get involved in the election of '91, it was the fact that our government would be bringing in fair and responsible hiring practices to the public service.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — The people of this province had lost confidence in the political process and our political system. When I campaigned at the door on the issues of honesty and integrity and accountability, people said that we politicians were all the same. Well, Mr. Speaker, we're not all the same. I'm not all the same and our government's not the same. I know that we're committed to building a team, participatory democracy, honesty, and integrity.

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

**Mr. Serby:** — And that's the measure my constituents sent me to this Assembly with. And, Mr. Speaker, that will be the yardstick that they will measure me by. Because that's exactly the criteria that the previous administration was measured on, and the people, Mr. Speaker, were right.

Mr. Speaker, in the constituency of Yorkton the spirit of community, co-operation, and commitment are well understood and practised. Because for the past 10 years we survived as a community only because of those intrinsic characteristics and values that the people of Yorkton and Saskatchewan have and hold.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Yorkton are committed to the philosophy of community. And as their representative in this government Assembly, we acknowledge and accept the challenges that face us. We know they won't be easy.

But my constituents believe as I do, that collectively, rationally, and co-operatively, we will over time reduce and eliminate the social ills of poverty and hunger, create jobs, manage and reduce the debt, and bring about a quality of life and prosperity in this province that we were once accustomed to.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Ms. Stanger:** — Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to introduce a guest?

Leave granted.

**Ms. Stanger:** — I would like to introduce a constituent of mine. He's sitting on the government visitors' gallery. He is Mr. Terry Crush from Lone Rock, Saskatchewan. Mr. Crush has been working on surface rights for many years. He's one of the most knowledgeable people on surface rights, and I welcome him to this Assembly and I'm proud to have him here.

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

## SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

**Mr. Carlson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to participate in this debate, and like other members, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to begin by congratulating you on your election. Of course historically, the head of the Speaker has not always been square on his shoulders and I'm sure you know that, but I have every confidence that you can keep yours on even in this Assembly. Also I'd like to congratulate all the members of the legislature in their victory on October 21.

I'm very pleased to rise and participate in this debate because it's my first opportunity to thank the constituents of Melville for placing their faith in me. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, I can also claim a first in this legislature. I believe I'm the first half of a brother team to be a member of the Legislative Assembly and my brother, Irving . . .

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

**Mr. Carlson:** — . . . was a member of this Assembly from 1971 to 1975, and I'm honoured to follow in his footsteps.

Mr. Speaker, Melville has a great community and a long history and varied history. It is the home of the Millionaires, a training ground for many, many hockey greats: Eddie Shore, John Ferguson, and of course, Syd Able, who played on that famous line with Ted Lindsey and Gordie Howe. And the tradition continues today, Mr. Speaker, with Tim Cheveldae, Detroit Red Wings number one goal-tender.

As well, Mr. Speaker, Melville is a railroad town. It takes much of its character from the railroad tradition. Our name comes from Charles Melville Hayes, who was president of the Grand Trunk Pacific, who drowned in the sinking of the Titanic in 1912.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, the city of Melville is only a highlight of the constituency and in this day of rationalization and centralization we look to other major centres for cultural and economic definition. But in Saskatchewan there is still a variety and vitality away from our cities.

Melville constituency has many distinct villages and towns within its boundaries. Each town has its own flavour. Grayson is strongly German; Balcarres and Abernethy are predominantly English; Ituna is Ukrainian, and north of Melville, Mr. Speaker, where I come from, is a mixture of Hungarian and people of Swedish backgrounds. The people in these communities are proud of their separate heritage and determined to maintain their distinctiveness. And, Mr. Speaker, they are very proud to be Canadians.

I have saved for the last the first, Mr. Speaker. Also within the constituency of Melville are the File Hills Reserves of Peepeekisis, Star Blanket, Okanese and Little Black Bear. Historically the full riches of the aboriginal community has been lost in the great waves of immigration which has swept this country and province. Canada's first people have been denied their rights within society. And we as well as they have suffered because of this apartheid.

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

**Mr. Carlson:** — The people of File Hills, Mr. Speaker, have been innovators in education and economic programs to enrich their lives, but there are still many barriers to be torn down. In defining and building a relationship for the future, I hope that we can establish a process that is inclusive and co-operative.

(2045)

Mr. Speaker, the beginning of a new government should be a time for optimism. The people have spoken for change and this government is pledged to deliver, to change for the better. But our work is cut out for us in the days and months ahead. New programs, new ideas, new policies will certainly come, but I feel our first challenge is to restore the spirit of the people.

In the past few years I have been . . . seen an alarming change in my community. Saskatchewan men and women have always been rugged and self-reliant, and despite great odds, they have been optimistic. We built our communities and our farms and churches on sheer determination and effort — a co-operative effort.

During the 1980s we saw that tradition abandoned. New word, ugly words, come into the language: Thatcherism, Reaganism, Mulroneyism. Co-operation became a dirty word, compassion forgotten. Individualism was in and a cut-throat competition was the rule of the day. The results that we know have been disastrous. People have suffered

economically. They have suffered in ways deeper than that. I have seen the effects in the Melville constituency, Mr. Speaker, and I would wish to share some of these stories with you.

I met a constituent during the campaign who was working on putting her garden into preserves. When I asked her how her garden was, she started to cry and told me that she had a difficult time looking after it because she was sick. Then she informed me that she'd had a nervous breakdown because she's going to be going on mandatory retirement this fall, and when she checked into her pension she realized that she was going to be retiring into poverty and this was quite a strain on her.

Another family who have two students in university, financially were able to look after when their first child left to go to post-secondary education. But when the second child left last year, this family, who by their own admission is making a good income, felt that when they had to take a second mortgage on their house, they were able to do that, they had the finances. And they felt that education in Saskatchewan in the '90s are based not on the capabilities of the child but more on the thickness of the parent's wallet. And they felt they had that opportunity but they didn't know how less fortunate people would be able to cope with that.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I run across an individual who had been injured at work a few years back and had not received a nickel out of workers' compensation. And this person was really perturbed because the previous government during the campaign, the government of the day, was talking about the money saved in workers' compensation. And this individual saw that as a direct result on him and the rest of the workers in the province who they'd short-changed on compensation and had not received any money from it.

Another person was telling me . . . This person was on pension and she was always able to, on a monthly basis, put a little bit of money away for unforeseen expenses. But in the last couple years with high taxes and in 1991 the GST and the PST, she was unable to put any money away on a monthly basis to have as a war chest to make major purchases if an appliance broke down. When her fridge broke down this summer, Mr. Speaker, she had to rely on her children to make that purchase of that fridge for her, and she felt very distressed and hurt also.

Having given you a brief view of the Melville constituency and some of the problems within it, I would like to point out what is likely the dominant feature of the Melville constituency and which is most rural constituencies in the province of Saskatchewan and that is agriculture.

Agriculture has always been susceptible to the greed of the open market. We have tried to modify and take the abuse out of the system. On our farms we built shelter-belts to protect us against the ravages of nature. In our industry we designed our own kind of shelter-belts: the Canadian Wheat Board and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

Our intent was to buffer ourselves and our industry and

our producers. The worth of these structures is evident. Canadian agriculture has enjoyed the respect of other nations.

Our vision for this industry has now collided with a neo-Conservative corporate agenda that has over the past 20 years increasingly devastated a progressive and fair system.

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

**Mr. Carlson:** — This agenda is attempting to weaken and outright destroy our institutions, and it is going after the individual farmer as well. In 1969 the federal government released its report on agriculture. This report, Mr. Speaker, fundamentally changed the policy direction for agriculture. It clearly stated that two-thirds of farmers would be eliminated.

In 1989, Mr. Speaker, the federal government released its own paper called **Growing Together**, which reiterated the 1969 goals of the federal report on agriculture. And we all remember the former premier's statement that 50 per cent of non-productive farmers should be eliminated.

The strategy for agriculture, Mr. Speaker, is subtle. Through a systematic, uncaring, wrongly directed . . . politicians were determining the fate of Saskatchewan women and men. The Devine government chose to place its faith in such politicians to the obvious detriment of this province. And the former premier said, you're doing a great job, Brian.

The industry envisioned by the former premier is one of environmental, economic, and social disaster. The consequences were ably described by the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood. I would add for your consideration, when we cite figures showing the decline from 1981 to present day of farmers, we must remember that those figures only tell part of the story. Farmers have spouses and they have families. If we imagine that nearly 10,000 farmers and consider the additional losses — the families — we must see that figure greatly increased. Did we lose perhaps not 10,000, but more likely 35 or 40,000 off our farms?

Also, we must consider our towns and villages rely on farmers. Businesses, services, schools, churches rely on farmers. Without the agriculture industry and the producers, we lose much of our reason for being. We are still very much a resource-based economy.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are resourceful. It is with great optimism that I stand here before the Assembly tonight. We have suffered greatly. We have faced great difficulties. Many of our problems are man-made. We have the capacity now to put an end to destructive policies. We have the opportunity now to replace them with the policies that will economically, environmentally and be socially beneficial.

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

**Mr. Carlson:** — Mr. Speaker, we saw in the days past an initiative that was brought together . . . brought together government leaders, parties, farm leaders and ordinary

people. They came from across the Prairies in order to, with a united voice, carry their message to the politicians in Ottawa. They demand change. It was a first step but a necessary step. People acted; they were refusing to be acted upon. I think this initiative is very significant.

Early I described the sense of despair I found. The crisis that led to the despair is still with us, Mr. Speaker, but if the crisis is still here the will to overcome it has to be strengthened.

We have been mandated to rebuild this province and I believe we will do just that. I believe we will have to be sensitive to more than just politics; we must be sensitive to the process. We have only to look at our history and our recent past and see the damage of bad process and bad politics.

Mr. Speaker, I'm optimistic and I look forward to carrying out the responsibilities of this government. I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this debate.

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

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member from Kinistino on his feet?

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a guest to the House.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure, through you, and to you and other members of the legislature, to introduce a constituent of mine, Mr. Morris Werezak from Fish Creek. He's a farmer out in that corner of the country, a great friend of mine. I would ask other members of the legislature to offer greetings to Morris. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** — Why is the member from Maple Creek on his feet?

**Mr. Goohsen:** — I would beg leave, Mr. Speaker, of you to introduce a member of our constituency.

Leave granted.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Mr. Speaker, and Assembly, it gives me great pleasure this evening to introduce Bill Kruczko, a fine man from the Maple Creek constituency. Bill has worked hard for many, many years over in our area. He's the president of the Cypress surface rights association. He and his colleagues are presently journeying on their way to Estevan for an annual meeting and we are happy to welcome him to our city. And I would ask that all of you would welcome him with me.

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

## SPECIAL ORDER

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

## ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

**Mr. Draper:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, sir, hon. members of this distinguished Assembly, it gives me great pleasure to address my maiden speech to you as the newly elected member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg constituency.

First allow me to congratulate you, sir, on your election as Speaker of this House, and I wish you success of it. My first contact with you, sir, was when I represented Assiniboia-Gravelbourg district medical association on Saskatchewan Medical Association representative assembly, and you, sir, were the minister of Health. I cannot say that the New Democratic Party was the most favoured political party of Saskatchewan doctors at that time. However, I can say with all honesty that your fairness and integrity were well recognized and respected, and I know that I can add their congratulations to my own.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — Let me also congratulate the other members of this House on their election or re-election and wish them all success in this House. I have been very impressed by the quality and content of the speeches over the past two or three days. So many good ideas, and so well expressed. It makes me feel so humble at my own meagre contribution. As for myself, Mr. Speaker, I am very conscious of the honour bestowed upon me by the constituents of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg riding that have elected me to this Assembly.

A number of the hon. members will be familiar with that area of the province, but for those who are not, please allow me to present some information. The riding extends from Coronach in the east to Fir Mountain in the west, a distance of about 80 miles, and it includes the industrial workers and their families of the open pit coal-mine and the power plant on the one hand, and the ranchers of the Wood Mountain hills on the other. Much of this land will become the Grasslands National Park in the near future.

Nearby is the Wood Mountain Indian Reservation, one of the most prosperous in the province due to the fine cattle that they raise there. It was near here that Chief Sitting Bull settled and struck up his lasting friendship with Jean LeGaré, the trader whose name is immortalized by the park at Willow Bunch. From Bateman and Mossbank in the north the constituency stretches for 60 miles or so south to the very edge of civilization — the U.S. border — where, as Kipling put it, the trails run out and stop.

(2100)

Highway 13, the Red Coat Trail, bisects the riding running from east to west and intersects Highway 2 at Assiniboia, the largest town in our area with 3,000 inhabitants, probably the best piece of real estate in the constituency because of the confluence of these two roads. The mainstay of the riding of course is agriculture. And, Mr. Speaker, sir, we are hurting badly.

Gravelbourg of course has a large French population and the well-known College Mathieu which attracts students from all over three prairie provinces and gives us a very strong francophone flavour. Apart from the usual mixture of farmers of British extraction — English, Scots, Irish, and Welsh — there's also a considerable German Lutheran contingency which is rather a surprise in Gravelbourg, and adding a touch of more exotic colour, a very successful but small group of Laotians, as the result of the Indo-China conflict.

South of Lafleche and Limerick, there are settlements of Ukrainians and Romanians. And in Lafleche itself there are many Flemish speakers from Belgium, Scandinavians largely out of Minnesota, some Dutch, and of course the Chinese whose cafés dot our small towns indicate that we have a very varied population. And I thank them all for their support.

The Speech from the Throne, sir, starts with a very appropriate phrase: a new beginning. This is a particularly poignant phrase for me because it was 25 years ago this month — the 19th to be exact — that my wife and our two small children and myself witnessed that most incredible scene: a bright wintery dawn over the prairie, brilliant and clear, pink and blue, sky stretching from horizon to horizon over startlingly white snow. For us it was truly a new beginning, particularly because we had just moved from Lagos on the Nigerian coast. Indeed, sir, I may say that it was a metamorphosis, let alone a new beginning.

You may appreciate the irony of our position that, amongst all that snow which was very deep in that winter of 1966-67, our first acquisition had to be a refrigerator. Of course we had to buy a stove, clothes washer and dryer and all the rest, but it's the refrigerator that sticks out in my mind. We were so used to putting the bottle of milk out of the window on the window-ledge on the north side of the house, and the bottle would stay firm all year round. But in Saskatchewan it's very different.

Anyway everything was fine. We spent three months in Wadena, and from there we moved down to Lafleche and stayed there for nine years. Eventually we moved up the road to Gravelbourg and — low and behold! — the fridge packed up, followed shortly to the dump by the washing machine, the range, and the dryer. Not really surprising, they'd all been purchased at the same time. They'd all lasted the 10 years that Bernard Shaw described so eloquently in *Breakages Ltd.*, and they all died at the same time. You can imagine, sir, what inflation had done to the price of hardware in the meantime.

Under a previous CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) administration, sir, public works programs had been initiated in small towns throughout the province: rural electrification, water treatment plants, sewage systems, piping, lagoons — the works. All very important, and all necessary for a proper standard of living for our rural residents.

Private enterprise was not prepared to do it. There was not going to be any profit in it. So we — or rather you, because I wasn't here at the time — had to do it

yourselves. Unfortunately, sir, like my household appliances, these public utilities have also succumbed to the passage of time, and they're very much in need of replacement and upgrading to meet modern standards.

For example, our water treatment plant in Gravelbourg that had cost \$60,000 25 or 30 years ago needed to be replaced during my term of mayor. You'll be shocked to know that it cost almost \$700,000 — a tenfold increase.

And to make matters worse, the technology is such that it requires a full-time operator, not just the daily dose of zeolite as the old one did. And although the water tastes much better than that of Regina or Saskatoon, it costs us \$20,000 a year for a man to operate that plant throughout the year, which over the next 25-30 years will double the cost of that installation. And this does not include the cost of repairs, because the equipment is computerized and requires specialists from Regina, Calgary, if major problems arise.

We've also since had to upgrade our sewage lift stations, sir, at a cost of \$90,000, largely because our water is so good and our residents are using so much of it that they are overloading the pumps that force the waste into the lagoon. Now we have to add another cell to the lagoon to accommodate the extra water.

And so the problem escalates. And I'm quite sure that we're not alone in this problem, sir; that similar problems must exist in Rockglen, Mazenod, the rest of my constituency, and the province as a whole. These, sir, are problems that I suspect we as a government shall have to face in the very near future, and the cost is going to be enormous.

I remember in 1982, Mr. Speaker, how the leader of the PC Party at that time promised to abolish the health and education tax, then at 5 per cent. You probably remember what happened to that promise. The tax went up to 7 per cent. This administration has promised to eliminate the expanded provincial sales tax during the last election and it is in process of doing so with this throne speech.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — It has always been said, Mr. Speaker, that once a tax is in place it stays there for ever. Today, sir, we are proving those pundits wrong.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — And reports over the radio at the beginning of this month indicate that sales in November have risen considerably in this province as a direct result of the declaration by our Premier on the day he was elected.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — Not only that. Prices in my favourite Wheatland restaurant in Gravelbourg have fallen to reflect the removal of the PST. It would have been easy for the proprietor to pocket the difference and say: sorry, but we would have had to put the prices up anyway — as has happened so many times in the past with taxes that have

been removed. But he didn't, and I therefore salute him — an honest man — here today, and through him, the other honest traders throughout our province who have also reduced their prices because of the removal of this tax.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — They got an awful bad time from their customers when the tax went on, and it wasn't their fault. They deserve a little bit of praise for taking the prices down again.

Assiniboia-Gravelbourg is a rural riding, sir, and farming and ranching of course are its backbone. And although I cannot claim to be a farmer, through my practice I am in constant contact with farm families on a daily — and a nightly — basis. I do know what their problems are: they tell me day after day, week after week, month after month — the financial difficulties, the stress, the problems with children, the problems with repairing and replacing, the problems with debt repayment, the number of hospital aides and nurses at our hospitals terrified of losing their jobs that keep their farms from sinking into the morass of high costs and low returns.

The local business people who are closing their doors because instead of one family on a half-section 40 years ago, there is now one family on two sections — basically 25 per cent of the population. Abandoned homesteads, schools, and churches abound everywhere in our province. And these people are not just moving into town, sir, they are moving out, out of the province all together. My own four children are gone: three are in B.C. and the fourth is in Toronto. We've no jobs to offer them. And when we lose our population we lose our tax base, and with no taxes we cannot pay for services, and the vicious spiral begins and we go down and down and down.

We have no choice, sir, and as agriculture is the basis for our economy we have to work from agriculture and help the farmers, because when they get some money in their pockets it'll go to the local business men and the local business men will be able to pay their suppliers and their suppliers will be able to pay their wholesalers. And eventually, if General Motors and the big corporations get the money, at least it'll have paid a lot of bills on its way up to them.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — This province was founded by small farmers and small-business men. And when you had to break 10 acres of land in three years by hand, I don't imagine many people started with three or four sections of land. They worked themselves up, literally, from the ground and they succeeded. And I suspect that this is the only way that we in Saskatchewan can succeed. We start at the bottom and work our way up bit by bit, year by year.

It would be nice if big, important industries moved into Saskatchewan and brought their expertise and their order of success with them, creating new jobs for our unemployed. But it's pointless to import them on the condition that we the taxpayers accept all the risks and let them take all the profits. Job creation and diversification

are great goals, but there's no point in spending \$50 million to create fifty jobs or even a hundred. No one spends a dollar to make a dime. The secret of good business is to spend a dime and make a dollar.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — The Leader of the Opposition accuses us of looking backwards when we should be looking forwards. Certainly we'll look backwards, sir. We'll look back to see where we went wrong. And that backward look, sir, takes us to 1982 because that is where we went wrong. We succumbed to the blandishments of a TV evangelist who put his hands deep, deep, deep into our pockets and kept them there.

The Leader of the Opposition complains that the throne speech is hollow. On the contrary, it is solid. Hollowness is caused by the presence of empty promises like the promise to reduce personal income tax by 10 per cent. Do you remember that promise, Mr. Speaker?

The throne speech is short but it is succinct. We have to clean up the mess left when the hon. member prorogued the legislature without even passing his budget. The only thing he passed, sir, was the buck and that buck stops here and now.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — Contrast the negativism of the official opposition with the positive remarks by the new member from Saskatoon Greystone, sir, who although a minority of one, packs more punch than the other 10 put together.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — There's a tremendous job to be done, Mr. Speaker, but I'm convinced that we can do it. If I wasn't, I could leave the province. I don't have to stay here. I wasn't born here; I've got no ties here. My only interest in this province is it's given me a good living for 25 years and I'm going to hope for the next 25 years.

(2115)

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

**Mr. Draper:** — When the CCF came into power in 1944, the barrel was empty and they started from scratch and built up what we had. We are lucky, sir. Our barrel is not quite empty yet. We still have SaskTel, SaskPower, and Energy — those terrible twins — and SGI. And we can start from here with them and build up again. We can do it; we must do it. Our grandchildren are dependent on us to do it. Thank you, sir. Good night.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — It's an honour for me to address this Assembly in response to the Speech from the Throne today.

I'd like to describe my constituency a little bit for you if I can. Souris-Cannington is the constituency from the very south-eastern corner of this province. We're bordered on

the east side by Manitoba and on the south by the United States. We're basically an agricultural community: grain farming, cattle, hogs. We also have a major other industry: the oil industry. The oil is as important to our area as is agriculture.

Most of our RMs (rural municipalities) receive the better portion of their income from the oil rather than from property taxes on agricultural land. This makes our RMs a viable operation in our constituency. We have more roads per mile probably than most other places in the whole province, and we have good roads.

I would like to begin by saying thank you to the many friends in Souris-Cannington that worked very hard on my behalf. It is because of their hard work and dedication that I am standing before you today. It is on their behalf that I bring a strong voice to this Assembly. I intend to look out for the best interests of the people in Souris-Cannington and for the next four years as a member of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

The word loyal is a good word to describe the way I feel about my duties here and a good word to describe the people I represent. The people of Souris-Cannington are good, hard-working people, Mr. Speaker. And they are people who understand the requirement of having a member in the House to represent them. They understand the need to have a good member, not just any member. The people of Souris-Cannington are frugal and realistic. They were prepared to wait and elect the right member from Souris-Cannington. They were also prepared to wait in a cost-saving measure rather than holding an election immediately before a general election.

The people of Souris-Cannington felt they were well represented by the member from Estevan and his government. The people from Souris-Cannington thought well enough of the member from Estevan and his government to elect a member for Souris-Cannington from that same party.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Souris-Cannington are the kind of people who can always be counted on to band together when a neighbour is in need. In addition to strong family roots and values, we rely on agriculture, energy, and water. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Alameda dam of the Rafferty-Alameda project is in my constituency.

The people of Souris-Cannington and I have locked horns with the NDP because the NDP wanted the Rafferty project scrapped. We have five kilometres of water right now behind the Alameda dam. This was a dam in which there was never going to be water, according to the opponents.

Because my neighbours are the type of people that fight for what they believe in and don't give up easily, we persevered.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — There were a few heated debates along the way, but we all know the end result of the fight. Now, Souris-Cannington will be among those benefitting from this worthwhile project, despite the opposition of

the NDP.

We look forward to enjoying the benefits this project will provide for our area; the benefits of recreational facilities, water for our communities, the economic benefits these will provide, and let us not forget flood control.

I look forward to the next four years of working as an MLA for the people I believe in, Mr. Speaker, and in turn people who believe in me.

Mr. Speaker, for many years now, I've been a full-time farmer, a husband, and a father. I've had the opportunity to watch the political parties from the outside looking in, to watch the news, listen to the radio every day with an objective ear.

We have been through some tough times on the farm, but I represent a party that went beyond any other government to see that farmers got help when we needed it most. The people of Souris-Cannington knew, recognized, and appreciated the efforts the member from Estevan and his government took on their behalf. And, Mr. Speaker, that's why I'm here today. My family, along with thousands of other farm families, have benefitted as a result of a PC (Progressive Conservative) government that cared enough to come up with solutions instead of saying, good luck; make your payments as best you can. And I am grateful for that, Mr. Speaker.

As a man with an open mind, I've listened to the NDP over the past several years to see what sort of ideas or solutions they had to offer. Mr. Speaker, as a farmer I watched the NDP — and listened — to see how they were going to help me deal with drought and grasshoppers, interest rates, and many other problems faced by my neighbours and myself. Although they had plenty of time — in fact, years — to come up with some answers, I heard nothing.

I shouldn't say the NDP said nothing, Mr. Speaker. I heard complaining, whining, and criticism. But complaining doesn't help me or my neighbours make a payment or give us a tax break on a new grain truck. Mr. Speaker, I believe it's more important to get up and do something when you have a problem than it is to talk about it or criticize someone who is doing something to make things better.

The NDP didn't offer me a thing. I watched them, Mr. Speaker, not only as a farmer but as a father. I watched the NDP to see what they had in store for my children. I know the world is changing every day, and my kids need a different sort of education today to compete in the '90s than I did some years ago. Again, Mr. Speaker, the NDP offered no programs or alternatives that would make opportunities happen for my children, only complaints. Then I realized it was a pattern, an NDP pattern. After doing my best to be objective and spending a lot of time listening, I came to a conclusion--the NDP had no plan, Mr. Speaker, no plan. No short-term plan, no long-term plan, and nothing in between.

The NDP had no plan for agriculture, no plan for education, no plan for seniors or youth programs, and certainly no plan for economic growth in our province. It

was hard to believe that a party that wanted to form government didn't have anything to offer the people they wanted to represent. And as I stand here today, Mr. Speaker, the same holds true — still no plan.

As opposition, the NDP had no platform and their campaign manager, who the NDP have since appointed the new president of SaskPower, makes light of the fact. The article I have with me today from the *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, dated November 16, 1991, I would like to quote the first sentence from that article: "The NDP won the provincial election because it had no platform," said the party's campaign manager, Jack Messer. Basically, what Mr. Messer is saying here is that the NDP won in spite of the fact that the people had no idea what the NDP can or will do.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say the future of Saskatchewan is nothing to make fun of. I say that having no solutions as a government is completely irresponsible and unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP don't have a plan because they're afraid. Like ostriches, they are afraid of pulling their necks out of the sand and taking a look around, and facing reality. Instead of wanting to build and diversify and grow, the NDP want to make Saskatchewan a cocoon; a self-contained cocoon province that's run by three NDP politicians who make all the decisions — a troika.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry to say the troika has already started to build their cocoon. Take the closing of our trade offices, for example — the NDP troika wanted to kill two birds with one stone. By closing the trade offices in Hong Kong, Minneapolis, and Zürich, the member for Regina Elphinstone and his cohorts could carry through with their petty, political vendettas and slam the door in the face of business growth and trade in Saskatchewan and begin building the cocoon.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they got their chance to eliminate the jobs of a couple of former PC ministers at the expense of old foes. They severed important links Saskatchewan business had with the rest of the world. And for what, Mr. Speaker? For politics. They certainly didn't do it to help promote Saskatchewan businesses.

Ask the many business men who have benefitted from the trade offices if they think closing them was a smart business move. Ask them, Mr. Speaker, and you'll find they'll shake their heads in disbelief — disbelief that a government in the year 1991 can be afraid to move ahead, afraid of tapping into our province's potential and competing, and, Mr. Speaker, disbelief that a government will put partisan politics ahead of what's good for the people.

I understand the NDP is afraid of growth, Mr. Speaker, afraid of anything they can't control. That's proven by their record. But it's you and I and our neighbours who suffer because of it. The NDP's philosophy is: if you can't buy it and run it, we hide from it.

That philosophy holds true in another example of NDP cocoonism, Mr. Speaker. The recent energy options agreement does not force Saskatchewan to build a

nuclear reactor. The purpose of the agreement and the \$50 million it provides is to research all forms of energy: coal, solar, wind, and yes, nuclear.

(2130)

I can see that the mere mention of the word nuclear makes the members opposite squirm in their seats. They don't even like to talk about it. In fact at the November NDP convention, they voted to halt all uranium exploration in our province. Sounds like they're afraid, doesn't it? Sounds to me like the NDP want to add another layer to the cocoon and ignore the benefits of nuclear research.

Mr. Speaker, although nuclear energy and research . . . through nuclear energy and research we could very well see a cure for cancer or AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) in our lifetimes. And the NDP are afraid of it.

I was listening to the Lorne Harasen show during the election. The discussion was about nuclear energy and whether we should pursue it in Saskatchewan. One caller, after agreeing with developing nuclear research in our province, said, for once why can't Saskatchewan be a world leader in something? I want someone to stand up and tell me that we can't. She was right. Why can't we?

Mr. Speaker, what's wrong with receiving \$50 million to develop research that Saskatchewan can sell to the rest of the world? What's wrong with exploring every environmentally safe energy option available to us? What's wrong with our province being the biggest producer of the best quality uranium in the world? What's wrong with us using the safest, cleanest source of energy known to mankind right here, maybe in the meantime curing cancer?

I'll tell you what's wrong with these things, Mr. Speaker. Nothing. The only thing that's not right with this whole picture is how the NDP are trying to rob Saskatchewan of a monumental opportunity. They would rather pay \$4 million out of the pockets of taxpayers to break the agreement. Four million dollars, Mr. Speaker. And they talk about waste and mismanagement. If economic growth under an NDP government were any slower, they'd have to speed up to stop.

But as I said earlier, the NDP record proves they're afraid of growth. I guess that's what we have all come to expect from them. Under an NDP administration in the '70s Saskatchewan could have been a leader in the oil industry. We could have been a leader in the natural gas industry. But what happened? The member from Riversdale and the NDP government sat back and watched while Alberta soared light years ahead of Saskatchewan in developing both gas and the oil patch.

Mr. Speaker, they may have made us very slow in developing gas and oil during their opportunity, but I'm not going to allow them to make Saskatchewan a back seat to anyone in the uranium industry.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — I'm not going to sit idly by while the NDP let yet another chance to develop our natural resources slip through our fingers.

I'm also not going to sit by and watch the NDP destroy the progress made in the past 10 years in the oil industry. In spite of getting a slow start in the '70s, because of a Progressive Conservative government during the '80s, the oil industry grew. In south-eastern Saskatchewan, due to our previous government's encouragement, we are producing record amounts of oil.

The new horizontal drilling technique has proven to be very productive. This new productivity has provided much new employment for my constituents and new income sources for landowners, the rural municipalities, and the Saskatchewan taxpayer.

Right now, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are doing their best to convince the oil companies and their workers that they've changed. But in fact they haven't changed.

I have an article with me today from the *Leader-Post* dated April 11, 1991. In the first sentence, the NDP member from Saskatoon Broadway says the NDP government would: tap oil companies for additional royalties in order to boost education funding. And thank goodness she's not the minister of Education.

Within this same article, the NDP member from Regina Dewdney says: royalty revenues should be used to pay for farm safety net programs. And, Heaven help us, he is the Minister of Finance.

Once again, in the same article, the NDP member from Regina North West says, and I quote: the NDP is trying to shed the image created during the 1970s that the party has designs on all profits earned by the energy sector. And guess who is not in cabinet? The one member over there who actually expressed some understanding of the industry is the one who is shut out, relegated to the back of the class.

Mr. Speaker, I don't blame the NDP for wanting to shed their image of anti-business, anti-growth, especially since this is the only territory in existence that still wants to practise socialism. I do, however, blame them for leaving farmers, industry, families, literally everyone in the dark as to what's in store for Saskatchewan.

What are the changes in store for the oil industry? The people of Saskatchewan need to know. Mr. Speaker, it's easy to see why the NDP have no plan for our province. They can't even agree amongst themselves which industry to scare off first.

Their NDP friends in Ontario have managed quite well so far to single-handedly chase a good percentage of the business out of their province, most of which are looking to the United States, Alberta, and Manitoba. Even investors from the United States are plagued by the Ontario NDP. In fact, *The Globe and Mail* on July 5 of this year read: Quebec replaces Ontario as U.S. investors' choice. Separatism seen as less a worry than an NDP government. Bob Rae should receive some sort of recognition other than the fact that an NDP government

will never be elected again in Ontario — like the trophy for the most damage done to free enterprise in a single year or less.

Judging from what the Saskatchewan NDP government has done in only a few short weeks, I believe the member from Riversdale could give Mr. Rae a run for his money.

Mr. Speaker, even though the NDP have proven to be destructive, they seem to at least think about the environment. After all, they're doing their best to be environmentally friendly by recycling. The only problem is all they're recycling are their old ideas by even older members. I say old ideas aren't good enough for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. After all, the land bank with their recycled name remains the land bank, doesn't it? Higher taxes, even when they are hidden on the price-tag, still come out of the pockets of the taxpayers, don't they?

An NDP government that had no plan when they were opposition still stand today with no plan. The NDP still think they're opposition. They still keep referring to the member from Estevan as "Mr. Premier". They think if they keep their mouths flapping enough and bash Tories enough maybe no one will notice they don't have a plan.

I wonder who the members opposite think they're fooling? I know they're not fooling the people of Souris-Cannington. They're certainly not fooling the members on this side of the House. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think the only people being fooled by the NDP are themselves—they're fooling themselves. They're fooling themselves if they think the people of Saskatchewan, after hearing NDP election promises of more money for farmers, more money for education, more money for health care, more, more, more, are simply going to forget.

The NDP are fooling themselves if they think people won't notice when they no longer have to pay 7 cents on a cup of coffee, but instead have to pay higher income taxes. And, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are fooling themselves if they think they can wish all their problems away by echoing cries of waste and mismanagement, and open the books.

Well I'd like to clue the members opposite today of something they seem to have forgotten — you're government now. You have raised many expectations in the people of Saskatchewan, and you have to produce the goods. Mr. Speaker, the NDP think they can make pie-in-the-sky election promises and then turn around and say, oops, the cupboard's bare; we can't do what we said we could. That's not good enough.

I'm here to see that the NDP promises of open government are evident in proclaiming the freedom of information Act. I'm just getting wound up.

I'm here to see that the people of Souris-Cannington and the people of this province are listened to when they express their views on balanced budget legislation, publicly funded abortions, and the constitution. I do want a lot, Mr. Speaker, but not more than the people of this province deserve. Everyone in Saskatchewan deserves to be heard, deserves to have their questions answered. The

people deserve to hear the member from Riversdale stand up and explain why, on June 10 of this year he said, and I quote: For the PCs to say that we would cancel Fair Share is an outright lie. And then, just days after becoming government, he scrapped decentralization altogether.

What alternatives does the member offer? Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the member from Riversdale what plans the NDP have for sustaining rural Saskatchewan. What are you replacing the over 1,300 government jobs with?

Mr. Speaker, I have other questions as well. Through the harmonization of the E&H (education and health) tax with the GST, farmers received a 100 per cent tax break on all their input costs. A farmer purchasing new tools for \$2,000 would receive \$280 back. Or a dry-waller, purchasing a new pick-up for 25,000, would get a rebate of \$3,500.

**The Speaker:** — Order. I would ask the members not to interrupt another member while he's speaking.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through harmonization, all other Saskatchewan businesses receive the same tax benefits as well. Now it may sound complicated, Mr. Speaker, but basically with harmonization, a farmer, a business man, and a tradesman's occupation became tax free. Businesses also received additional competitive advantages by collection of the expanded E&H tax at U.S. border crossings. The collection helped reduce the discrepancy between Canadian and U.S. prices and therefore allowed our local businesses to be more competitive.

But, Mr. Speaker, the NDP and the member from Riversdale repealed harmonization. My question today is: what are the members' plans to replace harmonization?

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Is the member going to make my farm and my neighbour's farm operation tax free? Is he going to make the grocery store in Redvers or the clothing store in Carlyle tax free? My constituents deserve to know, Mr. Speaker, and so do thousands of farmers, business men, and tradesmen that are affected.

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

(2145)

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Since Souris-Cannington is located directly above the North Dakota border, the business owners in my constituency need to know how the member from Riversdale is going to cope with cross-border shopping, especially since the NDP just revoked the only program that ever made their businesses tax free and competitive. My constituents need to know what the member from Riversdale is going to do to make Souris-Cannington's businesses more competitive. We need answers, Mr. Speaker, and in many cases the livelihoods of constituents depend on getting these answers.

I can assure the people of Souris-Cannington and the rest

of this province that this side of the House will get answers to their questions. That this side of the House won't just criticize and complain, but offer viable alternatives — real alternatives — solutions to the issues we face as a province, whether it be agriculture, the economy, or protecting our family lives.

The next four years will prove to be challenging ones. It will be challenging to keep the NDP government on the right track since they seem to be wavering to the left track. I look forward to these four years as a member of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition and the years following as an MLA when we fill up the government's side of the House.

It was indeed a pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to address this Assembly today. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this evening to participate in the debate on this, the Speech from the Throne of the first session of the twenty-second legislature of the province of Saskatchewan. This is also an historic first, being the first throne speech from the New Democratic government led by Premier Roy Romanow.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — This is also the first opportunity I have of making an address in the legislature, and I would first of all like to thank the voters in Pelly for electing me to serve as their member.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that public service is an honourable occupation. I realize that many people have grown cynical towards and indifferent to the political process. Political jokes abound about all political parties. Some are humorous but many are cruel. Too often, Mr. Speaker, politicians are seen as self-serving or creatures who serve the highest bidder. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that when I leave this legislature people will say of the member for Pelly, he cared for his constituents, he loved his province, and served them both well.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — That will be the true measure of success, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my constituency is located in central Saskatchewan in the parkland region on the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border. This region has often been referred to as "red square" but my constituency has been represented by all political parties.

Today, Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech we return to our past, to our history, to our pioneers, and look once more to the future, a future based on traditions of Saskatchewan people working on behalf of Saskatchewan. Today, Mr. Speaker, we look to the future, the future of people working together, building together on the traditional Saskatchewan building blocks — the co-operative movement, public enterprise, and private enterprise, a necessary mix for western Canada, Mr. Speaker.

This is a history of our province, Mr. Speaker, a history of people working to create our solutions for our problems,

and they did a good job.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Mr. Speaker, in the election this past October, the people of Saskatchewan faced a fundamental choice between privatization ethic expounded by the members of the opposition, or a return to the Saskatchewan way put forward by Roy Romanow and the New Democrats. On October 21 the people delivered their verdict. They realized that privatization ran counter to the very values held by most people in this province. They knew that privatization did not build this province. Mr. Speaker, the people knew that privatization did not build, it wrecked.

Mr. Speaker, the people knew who built this province. They knew the architects of Saskatchewan were farmers, workers, and teachers, not the kind of people that backed privatization — accountants, bankers, media buyers, investment dealers, consultants. These were not builders, Mr. Speaker. These people made no bones about the nature of their work — buy and sell, up and down, keep them trading, pile up the commissions, keep up the margins. And this, Mr. Speaker, for the members of the opposition, was their version of the new Jerusalem, their vision of what they wanted for Saskatchewan people.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan rejected that government and the members opposite and their philosophy.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — They chose, Mr. Speaker, to return to a Saskatchewan where people of Saskatchewan, ordinary people working together, building together, and creating together Saskatchewan solutions for Saskatchewan problems; our future, made in Saskatchewan, for Saskatchewan people, by Saskatchewan people.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Already, Mr. Speaker, in this throne speech we have seen the return to the democratic ideals supported by Saskatchewan people. No longer, Mr. Speaker, will Saskatchewan residents be forced to be without a voice for months or even years in the Legislative Assembly because the members of the opposition were fearful of how the voters would act. No longer, Mr. Speaker, will political expediency determine how long people will be deprived of their voice in this Assembly. Democracy will prevail, Mr. Speaker. The will of the people will be served. This is the right way, the Saskatchewan way.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that anything illustrates more profoundly the difference between our new government and that of the members opposite than our handling of the crisis facing Saskatchewan agriculture. Mr. Speaker, this agriculture crisis facing Saskatchewan has been documented, but I do believe I would be remiss if I did not touch on some of the more significant problems facing our farmers here in

Saskatchewan. I also believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is important that all of the people in Canada should know about and understand the desperate situation facing our agricultural communities here in Saskatchewan and all across Canada.

First, Mr. Speaker, Canadian grain and oilseed producers face unprecedented low prices for their products. Prairie grain producers, Mr. Speaker, will only receive two-fifty a bushel for their 1991 crop. If we allow for inflation, this will be the lowest price for wheat in our province's history. What does this mean, Mr. Speaker, to rural Saskatchewan? It means, Mr. Speaker, that long-established farms face prospect of foreclosure. Farm families are under tremendous stress. And as a result, rural communities are disintegrating as thousands leave rural Saskatchewan.

How can we solve this tragic situation, Mr. Speaker? Well in the long term, farmers want to earn their income from the market-place rather than from government payments. But, Mr. Speaker, until the international subsidies wars end, farmers need assistance and they need it now.

Why, Mr. Speaker, do they need it now? Because they are facing low incomes, high levels of debt financing, and high interest rates. Mr. Speaker, farmers look at a net income of \$4,000 for the year 1990 and \$6,000 a year 1991. This is the money that's left and available for the payments of loans, for family living expenses and university education for their children. Mr. Speaker, if other sectors of our Canadian economy had to meet all of their needs on an annual income of \$6,000 a year, surely there would be a revolution.

Small wonder, Mr. Speaker, why farmers are angry and hurt. And, Mr. Speaker, only the federal government has the ability to provide short-term assistance so that this desperate need at this time . . . Mr. Speaker, many farms have worked hard to reduce their own problems. Farmers have adopted new techniques, have become more cost efficient. Farmers have diversified.

Over one million acres of specialty crops are now planted in Saskatchewan and the livestock production has increased. Farmers have taken marginal land out of production, helping themselves and helping our environment in the process. Many farm families have taken off-farm income. But, Mr. Speaker, there is still a need for short-term assistance, and only the federal government can provide that.

It was because of this, Mr. Speaker, that our government recently participated in a unique lobby to persuade Ottawa to provide this assistance. Virtually every farm group and every farm organization in western Canada participated in this endeavour. And I was pleased that so many political parties from western Canada also chose to participate. It was with regret that I noticed the Conservative government from Alberta and the Conservative opposition here in Saskatchewan chose not to participate.

Mr. Speaker, this lobby was not seen as an exercise in fed-bashing. It simply attempted to demonstrate the enormous extent of the problem facing agriculture and to

place a human face on this tragedy.

The great achievement of this lobby I believe, Mr. Speaker, will not be the federal aid that will result because of it — although it will be gratefully accepted — but even more important, that it will be the first time people across Canada and our politicians in Ottawa were able to recognize the huge problems facing agriculture today and the extent of the human tragedy that it is taking.

Mr. Speaker, this government is also doing all that it can to assist farmers. At the request of agricultural producers, we have begun a review of the GRIP and NISA. We are prepared to negotiate improvements in these programs with the federal government. We are also engaged, Mr. Speaker, in talks with lending institutions and others to provide badly needed farm debt relief for our farmers. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that all of these activities involved co-operation, commitment, and a sense of community. No early morning phone calls to Ottawa here, Mr. Speaker. Just people working together to seek solutions based on a political consensus.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Because it is morally and humanly right, and I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and the members of the opposition, that it is this spirit of co-operation, renewal, commitment to community that reflects the historical patterns of the Saskatchewan life that will lead us to a success in our endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, we have also indicated in this throne speech that we intend to repeal a legislation which provided for the expansion of harmonization of the provincial sales tax. The elimination of this tax was widely criticized by many key elements of the Saskatchewan economy. It will not only put millions of dollars back into the pockets of Saskatchewan consumers, but it will stimulate the hard hit sectors of our economy such as the tourist trade, in particular restaurants, and will also, Mr. Speaker, remove taxes from books — a particularly stupid measure if I ever saw one. For our schools and universities . . .

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

**Mr. Harper:** — For our schools and universities . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Before I call it 10 o'clock, I would like to remind members of several things.

Number one, we do not refer to members in this Assembly by their first name or last name, but we refer to them by their constituencies. I would also like to remind members that it's unparliamentary to refer to measures taken in this House as being stupid. They are unparliamentary and I would ask members to refrain from using those.

The Assembly adjourned at 10 p.m.