

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly, 31 grade 12 students from Robert Usher Collegiate. They're accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Fred Steininger.

I'm going to find this meeting interesting. During the election campaign I, the Conservative candidate, and the Liberal candidate from Regina Churchill Downs, met with this class and we had a debate which lasted a couple of hours actually, with this group. So it'll be interesting today to meet with them to see how the reality compared with the campaign. I'll look forward to it.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jess: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and this Assembly the former MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from The Battlefords, David Miner and his wife Mona, in the . . . wherever that is.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Pringle: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a constituent and a friend, Mr. Jack Dooben, who is a long-term public employee himself; and a former constituent, Mr. Bob Stobbins. These gentlemen are in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They just dropped by to see if their MLA was here and working. And they haven't discovered that yet, if he's working, but they're going to be going on a tour right after. And the member from Wildwood and myself will join them for coffee.

And we hope you enjoy your visit to Regina and have a safe trip back. And I would ask all members to welcome you to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Government Policy on the Uranium Industry

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy and Mines. It pertains to the industry which his government and party have long been an enemy of — the uranium industry.

Mr. Minister, your NDP (New Democratic Party) colleagues in Ottawa recently sponsored and voted on a private members' Bill C-204, which, if it had passed, would have closed down the uranium sector in our province, thus throwing thousands of people out of work and eliminating a huge source of tax revenue. I would like

to ask the minister if it's his government's intention to introduce similar legislation in this province.

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer to that question is no.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, it is clear that you have no plan for this industry and that your party recently, at your party's recent convention, again demonstrated that the will of your delegates is to shut down the uranium sector.

Will the minister clearly state what his government's plans are for this vital sector so that thousands of direct and indirect employees working and investing their futures in this industry can plan their lives?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like to correct the member opposite that at our convention this fall in Regina we did not decide on uranium mining, be it to close it or do any . . . There was no resolution passed on uranium mining. The motion that was passed at the convention had to do with the reactor, so it had nothing to do with uranium mining.

Further, in answer to the member's question, is that this government and this department is currently in the process of reviewing the policies that have been in place, both in the oil sector, the gas sector, the uranium sector and all sectors. And when that policy has been reviewed we will come up with a concrete policy to develop the mines and the resources in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. When will the minister provide Saskatchewan with the information as to what his government's plans are for this industry?

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't give you a definite time line but it will be soon.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — A new question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Energy and Mines. Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that many of the towns and cities, including the city of Regina, are now making plans for attracting a possible nuclear power station to this province as a result of signing the energy agreement between Saskatchewan and the federal government.

Will the minister tell the House the current status of this agreement, and will he tell this House exactly what his government's plans are to replace the potential CANDU 3 reactor with, both in terms of alternate energy sources and as a replacement for the tens of thousands of jobs lost in this opportunity with the agreement.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate

to the House and to the member who asked the question that the memorandum of understanding between Atomic Energy of Canada and SaskPower is clearly under review. In the agreement there is a six-month clause that the former premier will be well aware in which time the government, SaskPower, has an ability and an option to review the understanding.

Clearly what we want to do here is take time to make sure that the economic spin-off if the project were to go ahead or if it is cancelled, that we look at all the options available to us, including renegotiating a deal that would be in the best interest of the people of the province.

Obviously we want to take the time to make sure that the decision that we make is clearly in the best interest of the taxpayers, unlike many of the understandings and agreements that were taking place over the last nine years that cost us billions of dollars and were scratched out on the backside of a cigarette package.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, a new question for the Minister of Energy and Mines, or the Environment, whichever one wishes to answer.

We know that there are four uranium companies in Saskatchewan — Minatco, Cameco, Amok, and Cigar Lake — which are currently in a state of limbo, not knowing whether they will be permitted to spend literally billions of dollars in new developments in the North. Will one of these two ministers, whoever is most up to date on this situation, please advise this House what these companies will be permitted to do in relationship to their planned investments?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite probably is aware and the opposition's probably aware, that there is a federal-provincial panel in place right now which is studying the environmental impacts of uranium mining and also disposal of the tailings and so on. And until that panel reports, the uranium companies are well aware of this, that they have to wait with any further development until there is a report and their approval has been received from the federal government and also from the provincial government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Location of Saskatchewan Pension Plan Office

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. In my community, Mr. Speaker, many people are very, very concerned. I've had calls from the mayor of Kindersley, members of the business community, and even employees of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. They're living with a great deal of anxiety because of the government's approach to rural communities and its deal with the unions to centralize government operations in Regina once more. Even the member for Redberry agrees that in his response to the Speech from the Throne, jobs are needed in rural

Saskatchewan.

My question to the minister is: will the minister assure the people of Kindersley that the office of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan will remain in Kindersley, yes or no?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, the government has always pursued the principle that government services should be closer to people, and we will continue to look at those services. We have no quarrel with government services being where the people have access to them.

As far as Fair Share, we are looking at all the moves that the former government made and we are going to look at whether those moves make sense, and we'll evaluate them accordingly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — As the minister is well aware, the move of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan had absolutely nothing to do with Fair Share. It was an announcement that was made prior to Fair Share. My question again to the minister is: will she assure the people of Kindersley that the Saskatchewan Pension Plan will remain in Kindersley?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, we have no quarrel with the moves that were already made. What we were talking about is where the moves have been a part of Fair Share, we're going to evaluate those and take whatever action is in the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan.

As far as the moves that were made in former years, those moves will continue to be in the communities that they were placed in.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Once again, is that a commitment to the people of Kindersley? The Pension Plan will remain in Kindersley, yes or no?

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, we do not intend to move the Pension Plan out of Kindersley.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to hear that the member will assure the people of Kindersley that the Pension Plan will remain there. My new question, Mr. Speaker: is the minister also prepared to make those similar assurances to the communities of Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Kamsack and Melville — that government offices will remain in those communities and will not be taken from them? Thank you.

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, those corporations that were moved previous to 1991 will remain in the communities that they were placed by the former government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Water Supply and Irrigation Projects

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the minister responsible for Crop Insurance. Through the past 90 years, the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) and the province of Saskatchewan have worked hard to build an infrastructure in irrigation in the south-west. They have some money left over from an agreement that was reached — I think it's about three and a half million dollars — an agreement was reached with Sask Water in order to build a project along the Battle Creek. Are you reviewing that or are the farmers and ranchers going to have to wait for another two or three years before they see construction begin on that project?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, all the government projects, of course, are under review. I'm not sure of the exact stage that project is at. I believe it is far from final stages of planning in any case and will be reviewed and looked at on a economics point of view as every other program will be. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The farmers and the ranchers down there have used water from the drainage system of the Cypress Hills for years and, Mr. Speaker, the member from Elphinstone realizes that and the new member from Shaunavon realizes that. They've been studying the Frenchman River to . . . They've got studies that high on the Frenchman River, and Battle Creek is of significance to these people. In fact I had a phone call from a gentleman down there, asking whether in fact they were going to proceed with this construction.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, this project, as the member opposite has pointed out, has being reviewed and looked at and studied for nine years or longer. I've had one month in office. I have not yet got definite plans to go ahead with that project at this time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Another supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Minister, we did look at it for a considerable time, and it had approval from the PFRA and Sask Water Corporation to move ahead.

My question to you is . . .

An Hon. Member: — The state of Montana.

Mr. Martens: — And from the state of Montana. My question to you is: are you going to proceed with it and when?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I repeat, we are reviewing that. We don't want another Rafferty-Alameda. We will review it carefully before we do any construction.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Those people that are down there don't want a further delay. They don't want further review. They don't want any more. In fact they reached an agreement with the people of Saskatchewan under direct contract. If, Mr. Speaker, if the people that are government here today do not enact this by the spring, they're likely to lose the federal funding. Don't you think it's necessary that you move that project forward so that the financing can be in place to do that?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I just repeat, we are looking at that project as we're looking at all other projects at this time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — New question, Mr. Speaker. So you're looking at projects. Are you looking at the one in Melfort too?

An Hon. Member: — Which one?

Mr. Martens: — Seriously, the one that puts water into the city of Melfort? The quality and the quantity of water in the city of Melfort have been a serious problem for years.

An Hon. Member: — For nine years.

Mr. Martens: — And we have . . . Mr. Speaker, it was also, in view of the observations that have been made, more than just nine years.

Is the minister going to tell this Assembly that they're going to proceed with the agreement that was reached with the city of Melfort, and the aldermen and the city councillors from the city of Melfort, from Beatty and Kinistino? Is he going to proceed with that project?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, there are ongoing discussions with the city of Melfort and the surrounding communities and Sask Water and that is ongoing discussions on that as we have taken over. And again we've only been in office for one month and I hardly think we could have changes of policy in that short a time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Is the minister going to say that to the towns of Beatty and Kinistino, and to Melfort and perhaps to Star City and Wakaw? The same kinds of things: you're going to study and review? How long are you going to do that with an agreement that has already been reached with the city of Melfort?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the citizens of Melfort and district have enough patience to know that a new minister does not make a decision on a project on the first month that he's in office and I think they are very concerned that we do not waste taxpayers' dollars, and that we proceed in an orderly fashion, and that we'll make our decisions in due course without being rushed at this time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. That project has been reviewed far enough. It was signed, and an agreement was signed — the same as the one with the Battle Creek. An agreement was reached with the water users associations and with the provincial government. When are you going to move forward? You said you were going to review. How long? I want to know when.

You got to buy the pumps, you got to buy the material, you got to do all of that, and if you're not going to do it, you're going to run into . . . Two or three years from now, you're not going to have any project done. You need to begin today. And I want to know from you when you're going to start it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I might remind the members opposite that an awful lot of agreements were signed and the only thing missing was the money to carry through with them. And so I think . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to, as a preamble, say to the people of this Assembly that the money was in place from the PFRA to build the one in Battle Creek. Now I want to know if you're going to allow that \$3 million to float down the river just like it always has into the United States, just like it traditionally has out of there, and when are you going to build that?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I repeat what I said previously. We are going to review these. We are making decisions. We are not going to be rushed into making immediate decisions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is there then, from the responses that you've made, an agreement now being renegotiated with the federal government to implement a different kind of a program in the south-west on Battle Creek?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, there are currently environmental studies going on in that area. There are federal-provincial agreements being made. Progress is being made. These all, as you probably are well aware, take some time and decisions will be made in due course.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well at least I got a half an answer on that one, and I'm going to try on Melfort again, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister going to acknowledge that an agreement was reached with the Sask Water . . .

The Speaker: — Order. That's the second or third time that the member from Moose Jaw Palliser has interfered,

and it's the last warning I'm giving you — the first and last.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the minister responsible for Sask Water. Is he going to give some assurance to the people of Melfort who have worked diligently through the member from Melfort when she was mayor, through the council that was there when she was the mayor, would you give some indication not only to her but also to the people that are residents there that they're going to have some decent water — water that isn't going to be harmful to their health — in relation to the development of that project?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, in keeping with our new government's policy, those people will be consulted and checked with before we make decisions. They will be part of the decision-making process.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary. I'd like to just say to the member he should just ask the member from Melfort whether they have in fact not been raising money to finance that program out of the city of Melfort. And they have the belief that they're getting the water.

They have a water quality problem that is very serious to health and they have a quantity problem. Now it's, I believe, your responsibility to tell those people that they're not going to get a project or they are. And they need to know how soon they can get it done.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, we will tell the people and we will tell them the truth, and we will tell them as soon as we make decisions. And we will consult with them in making those decisions and we will carry forward with their . . . look after their problems as well as we can considering the economic mess that we were left with to work with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister prepared to allow a combination of private financing, public financing, and urban financing in that development of that project?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, considering the economic mess, as I pointed out we inherited, I think any method of financing that we can possibly look at will be looked at.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, new question. Would you also allow an opportunity for other communities that have been asking for water, like Rosetown and Kindersley. Would you allow the same kind of dynamic to be used in terms of financing that are going to be used in Melfort? And would you use that as a project that you could use as an example for that financing?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, again anything would be considered. I don't think I have the wherewithal to debate in exact detail of different financial projects throughout the province. But we will consider any

method and any way we can to provide services to people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Providing services as you indicated to the city of Melfort is extremely important to those people there. You're going to do it in a sense for Rosetown and Kindersley but what about one that has already been planned? One that has already been engineered? When are you going to start on that one?

If they don't buy pumps this winter and put the facilities in place, they're going to have water in '93 or '94. We'll be re-elected as government by that time and that . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — When will you provide them the go-ahead for that project?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I repeat that this project is under review and under consultation and it will continue in due course.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 7 — An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 8 — An Act respecting the Tabling of Documents and Certain Consequential and Other Amendments of Other Acts resulting from the enactment of this Act

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Tabling of Documents and Certain Consequential and Other Amendments to Other Acts resulting from the enactment of this Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question put by the member . . . I want to table now.

Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question put by members, item no. 7, I hereby table.

Mr. Speaker, the answer to questions put by members, item no. 8, is hereby tabled.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask this question be converted to motion for return (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motion for return (debatable).

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask that this question be converted to motion for return (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motion for return (debatable).

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question put by members, item no. 11, is hereby tabled.

Mr. Speaker, the answer to questions put by members, item no. 12, is hereby tabled.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — I would ask that this question be converted to motion for return (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motion for return (debatable).

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the question put to the Assembly, item no. 14 is hereby tabled.

I would ask that item no. 15 be converted into motion for return (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motion for return (debatable).

Before the minister rises on question no. 16, I wish to refer all hon. members to rule 38(1) *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* which states that:

Written questions may be placed on the Order Paper . . . (only so long as they seek information) . . . relating to public affairs . . .

Similarly, Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, 6th Edition, paragraph 428, states as follows:

A question . . . must not:

(dd) deal with matters not officially connected with Government or Parliament, or which are of a private nature.

Therefore I rule because section . . . or paragraph . . . section 4 does not pertain to any administrative jurisdiction that the government is responsible for, I rule part 4 out of order.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the answer put by member, item no. 17, is hereby tabled. And that's it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is again my pleasure to enter in and continue my debate regarding the speech presented by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor regarding the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, over the past number of days we've heard a number of members in this Assembly espouse and talk about their own constituencies or talk about the direction that hopefully we're going to be heading in this province. But it seems to me, as I've indicated Friday last, that certainly the speech that was presented at the Speech from the Throne leaves a lot to be desired regarding a plan or a program for our province.

Mr. Speaker, I've heard many members make comments and give some suggestions. I've heard comments about the fact that maybe . . . and seen policy come forward presented by, or in the media such as *The Western Producer* regarding the fact that maybe the land bank is something that should be looked at again.

Mr. Speaker, when I think of the land bank and I look at what has happened to many people in our community, in our surrounding area, I wonder indeed if many members really realize some of the problems that the land bank created. Is that the plan that was being laid out by the members, by the government, regarding agriculture and where we're headed?

Possibly, Mr. Speaker, what we could have had instead of a land bank, a program put in place that would have provided a bank for land, if you will, maybe to fill the vacuum or the void that was left by the Farm Credit Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago a program could have been put in place that would have given or lent money to beginning or established or young farmers that would have given the dollars at an interest rate over a long term that would have given them a better opportunity to establish and build a farming operation. So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that in light of the comments regarding land bank, instead of talking of the old programs, maybe we should start looking ahead and building for the future.

Mr. Speaker, as well, we take a look at the . . . taking a look at the Speech from the Throne, and there are many people in the communities that I represent and I'm certainly sure around the province that are wondering exactly where commitments are towards projects in their communities made by the former government as regarding health care facilities or regarding educational facilities. What is the government's commitment to these communities at this time?

The throne speech certainly didn't lay out any kind of a plan that would ensure people across this province and people in rural Saskatchewan that much-needed facilities such as hospitals or care homes or even upgrading of educational facilities were going to be part of the new government's agenda. And so I would ask the

government to lay out their plan, lay out the program — where are we going? Certainly I didn't see any of that laid out before us in the Speech from the Throne.

I believe many communities and many people want to have some assurances that the work and the diligence that they have provided in planning for their community structures will indeed continue and they would see a completion and the development of these plans and also the commitment to building the hospitals or health facilities that are needed.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, even as we've heard again today in this question period, and we probably will hear for a period to come yet, that the new government to continually reminds us . . . or continues to reminds us of the fact that this province is lacking in its . . . we're facing economic woes and certainly are lacking in any kind of finances to move ahead with many projects.

But I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if we just took a few moments to think about it, harmonization of the education and health tax with the federal sales . . . or the GST (goods and services tax) certainly would have derived much-needed revenue for the province.

And what did we see in the throne speech? Yes, Mr. Speaker, we did see that the government made true on their commitment to rescind that tax. And now, Mr. Speaker, what do we have laid out before us? We have laid out a scenario by the Minister of Finance that is so bleak that bond agencies and lenders across this country and in other parts, and certainly in New York, have dropped our credit rating to — what is it? — a triple B-plus, Mr. Speaker.

And considering those circumstances I can see why members opposite are just not making a lot of promises at this time. And yet prior to the election, what do we hear? What do we hear? Many promises — promises laid out for the people of Saskatchewan of how much better the province will be once the NDP are elected to power. And where are we today?

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated the other day, I'm pleased to have been appointed the opposition member responsible for the families. And I'm proud today, Mr. Speaker, to have represented the government that was the first government in Canada to designate a specific ministry dedicated to family issues.

I'm also proud of the job of the former minister, the member from Regina Wascana, Mr. Beattie Martin, and his staff for the job they did to rectify the many difficulties faced by families today.

And as I indicated the other day, Mr. Speaker, I intend to continue to stand up on family issues and on moral issues.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, the commitment from the member from Estevan and his colleagues when we were in government was to stand up for families and for moral values. And our commitment will continue. Mr. Speaker, our commitment to the family will never change. And I

welcome the responsibility to ensure that the members opposite continue to look at the importance of the needs of families.

I shudder to think of what fate lies before the Family Foundation though, in light of the fact that the program has been put under the control of the Minister, I believe, of Education, instead of having its own minister such as we had.

Mr. Speaker, I challenge the member from Riversdale, if he really does have concern for Saskatchewan families and their welfare, that he not only restore the minister of families to its own department, but have the courage to enhance even if it wasn't an idea put forward by the New Democrats or by the present government.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, to take an idea, a positive idea presented by another party and to continue to work with that program, shows us that a government or any person, regardless of who they are, can continue to build and that we can work together through co-operation to build and enhance our communities.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, when we look at where we're going to be heading in the next few years, we look at development. And I believe a number of the members on the government side of the House talked about economic diversification. And I believe one of the members talked about value-added processing. And certainly over the number of years in which your loyal opposition was that government prior to the last election, we worked strenuously to develop our rural communities, to develop and enhance our economy, to build around the economics and our rural communities. And, Mr. Speaker, one of the tools that we introduced — and I believe it's a very good and positive tool — was the community bond program.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the new minister has also indicated that he considers, and his government considers this program, which was devised by the Conservative administration, as an important tool of economic development once minor changes are made. He also indicates that: we think there should be a change there, and I will be taking a recommendation to caucus that co-ops have a role to play in community bonds.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at our community, when we look at our province, certainly I believe there are many people around this province . . . they have already indicated through their willingness to become involved in community bond programs that they are willing to put their money where their mouth is. Mr. Speaker, they were willing to put the financial backing they have into programs and into a commitment to help strengthen and to build on their rural communities. And as I look through the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, I trust that even the government will recognize the importance and the role that community bond corporations can play in developing and building our province. Certainly it was a real commitment made by the former government, the former premier.

Whether the NDP choose to recognize it or not, there was significant progress made in the past 10 years. And I can

look at my own constituency, and I look at the community bond programs that have been moving forward, presented and enhanced by the current government.

(1445)

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think each and every one of us would also admit that what we really like to see as well is not just programs that have to be developed because of government programs that are in place, but certainly programs that have been initiated privately.

And I know a number of private programs and small manufacturing has taken a place around this province. And I want to commend the people of the province for their commitment to their community, to their province.

This province, Mr. Speaker, has been building for 10 years, and my colleagues and I don't intend to stand idly by and watch the NDP work at possibly even tearing down programs that have been built up. And certainly I'm sure that members opposite will recognize good, positive programs and will indeed build around them.

During my first term in this legislature, I observed with great dismay the continuous criticism we saw from the now new government when they were in opposition. I trust that even as we enter into this new term in office that my colleagues and I will not only direct criticism and bring the government to task, but will also offer . . . and we will work at offering some good, positive alternatives to help build our province.

Mr. Speaker, I think when we look at this past election, and it's interesting . . . I find it amazing that the NDP campaign manager, when in, I believe it was, in North Battleford, thought it amusing that their party could win an election without a program or without a platform.

And I think what we've seen through this Speech from the Throne certainly reiterates and brings home to us the fact that the people of Saskatchewan have waited for eight or ten years for a program or a plan from the new government and they're still waiting. The Speech from the Throne has left us with the question: what is the plan? What's the program? Where are we going?

Well I think the people of the province of Saskatchewan have waited long enough and its time to lay out a plan. It's time to let us know where we're going. It's time to let people know across this province what they can expect from the new government if they can expect anything.

I have to question whether the NDP feel they can glide through four years of government without even laying out even a broad plan if you will, without getting . . . if not getting specifics so people in Saskatchewan know where they're at.

I wonder about . . . I have to question the credibility of election promises made by the government prior to the election, like open the books, increase funding to health and education, decrease taxes and the elimination of the deficit, when they've already broken many promises. How is it possible to make promises based on nothing, no

plan? How is it possible for the member from Saskatoon Broadway to promise increased funding to education when the NDP don't know where the money will come from? And we heard that again in question period today — we just don't have any money.

Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly when we formed the government of this province we did put money into education. Education and health spending increased dramatically. And, Mr. Speaker, we are going to hold the members opposite accountable for all the promises they've made.

How is it possible for the member from Riversdale to promise decreases in taxes and increases in health funding and the elimination of the deficit when in fact what is his plan? What are his ideas? How is it possible? What are the people of Saskatchewan going to say? I believe the people of Saskatchewan are looking for a plan.

Mr. Speaker, did we see a plan? It seemed that the plan that was laid out during the election was a plan to promise people anything they wanted to hear. Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that as the Conservative candidate in the Moosomin constituency, I didn't go around promising people a lot of the things that they wanted to hear. I told them the truth.

I told them that, yes, we were in a difficult time. Yes, we had a deficit. Yes, there wasn't any money for the programs. But I also, and people also admitted, that when we . . . Mr. Speaker, I also found that people admitted that we were there to help them when interest rates were going through the roof. We were there to protect them. Even home owners. Not just farmers and small-business men, but home owners.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've heard a lot about the deficit and where it is and I believe the comment was just made: yes, but did you tell them the truth about the deficit? Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance can certainly inflate the figures. And when you don't harmonize the sales tax, Mr. Speaker, look at the number of dollars that are lost. And I would suggest to the people of Saskatchewan, I would suggest to the people of Saskatchewan that they better be careful, and that they better be watching very closely because the dollars to meet the promises are going to have to come from somewhere. They may not come through harmonization, but they'll certainly come from . . . (inaudible) . . . in another form.

Just because the new government has been elected, it doesn't mean the problems of hunger will disappear. Mr. Speaker, we again will be monitoring the approach of the new government towards this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the people of Saskatchewan are asking governments to just present the straight goods. And I believe the member from Estevan and the Conservative Party certainly did that in the past election. We let people know where we were; and we let people know we needed the finances; and we let people know how we were going to achieve the finances, not only to continue to build and strengthen Saskatchewan, not only just our large urban centres, but rural Saskatchewan, but

also to continue to build for the future for our young men and women and for the boys and girls who will be the future generations. I believe people of Saskatchewan need to know where we are. They need to know where we will be going and where we're going.

Mr. Speaker, as the member responsible for the families, I certainly will continue to bring the government to task and make sure that programs and initiatives brought forward by the former government will be enhanced and built upon and that families will continue to be a major program and a major part of this government as it was of the former government.

I'll also continue to be reminding the Minister of Social Services of her responsibility to the people around this province. And certainly we're going to . . . I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan are going to expect more than they heard from the minister regarding the incident at the Beatty Indian Reserve. Mr. Speaker, I believe we must be responsible and take our jobs very conscientiously.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many more things that I could get into, and I'm sure that my colleagues and I will be getting into and speaking on over the next number of days — or should I say weeks? — certainly the next term of government, that we will bring to the attention of this House the responsibility of the government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to end my comments by bringing forward a quote, and I bring this quote especially in light of the discontinuation of the works project through the Social Services — a quote that I think really says a lot for us, and a quote given by Abraham Lincoln, and he said this:

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by encouraging class hatred. You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn. You cannot build character and courage by taking away a man's initiative and independence. You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, as we go through this quote and as we listen to Abraham Lincoln, certainly he has a lot of positive comments made in that quote that we can all take to task and we can all apply as we work on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to pose an amendment to the motion, seconded by the member from Estevan, that the following words be added to the motion:

But regrets that the government has undermined Her Honour's Legislative Assembly and has shown disregard for the fundamental principles of democracy by attempting to derogate from the constitutional role of Her Honour's Legislative Assembly and further regrets the complete indifference of the government to the needs of the

people as proven by the government's failure to deliver a solid economic plan to the people of Saskatchewan that would create employment, promote diversification, improve health care and education, and most deeply regrets that the government has denied assistance to the rural families of Saskatchewan at this time of crisis.

I so move, seconded by the member from Estevan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — What's your point of order?

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you rule on a point of order. Is it permissible for a member who has spoken once on the throne speech to be a mover or a seconder of this motion?

The Speaker: — The member's point from Prince Albert Carlton is well taken. The member from Estevan has already spoken in this debate and therefore cannot second a motion. The member may enter the debate, but he cannot second a motion. So I — unless there's another seconder — I have to rule the amendment out of order.

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, I will second the order.

The Speaker: — The amendment has been moved by the member from Moosomin and seconded by the member from Arm River, that the debate will continue.

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to address the amendment to the motion of the Speech from the Throne, and join my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, as I did in my initial comments, of saying to the public and asking the general public: where is the strategy, and where are the promises, and where is the money, and where, Mr. Speaker, is the diversification and the balanced budget?

I recall, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure that many of the Saskatchewan public have heard during the recent election campaign, the NDP promise, and the member from Riversdale promise, the now Premier, to cut taxes, spend more money for farmers and health and education, balance the budget, create new jobs, eliminate the food bank and poverty, all at the same time, Mr. Speaker.

Now we heard that over and over again as part of his plan, that he could cut taxes, which he says he's going to do; spend more for farmers; increase spending for health and education, which we have well documented; balance the budget, which he said he would do; create new jobs and diversify the economy; eliminate food banks and eliminate poverty.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit to the public and to this Legislative Assembly, the reason that we see no plan today is that obviously during the campaign the Leader of the Opposition promised people something that he could not, and no individual could deliver.

I remind the members opposite that this is what we added up during the campaign debate and speeches that we heard that we thought would be in a Speech from the

Throne if in fact the NDP won.

They were going to bring back the old dental plan: that was \$16 million; going to bring back the old drug plan: that would be \$83 million; hike the health care budget by 5 per cent: that's \$80 million; reduce the student/teacher ratio by 14 million; hike the province's share of school operating grants to 60 per cent: that's \$110 million; put in a school breakfast and lunch program: 68 million; increase the highway budget: \$60 million; create an environmental institute for 40 million; relieve residential property taxes: 173 million; implement pay equity in the public sector for 60 million.

(1500)

Eliminate poverty completely: 481 million; child care for Indian and Metis groups: 25 million; more counselling and therapy services: 660,000; subsidized day care for middle income earners: 7 million; bring back the northern food transportation subsidy for 250,000; increase disabled allowance by 150 per month for 14 million; stop deducting the Canada Pension benefits from welfare cheques: \$46 million; fund special aids for the disabled: 290,000; lift the cap on utility rates for welfare: 9 million.

When you add it all up, Mr. Speaker — this is just off the top during the campaign — you get \$2,760,472,000.

Additional promises, as they were going to cut taxes, spend more, balance the budget, create new jobs, eliminate the food bank, and eliminate the poor. And help for farmers, and help for everybody else and just eliminate all the problems.

Now this did not include existing programs like health and education that are already there, or agriculture programs or water programs, or commitments to towns and villages I've been talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I mention this, and the amendment to the motion is simply that we heard the rhetoric, which had some semblance of an idea of what we were going to see happen for people in this province, and yet when we see the Speech from the Throne, it's not there. There's nothing there.

They condemned the government of the time saying, well I don't think that you've got the money or taxes are too high; you're getting too much money. Or you're not going to be able to do this, you're not going to be able to do that, therefore they're going to fix it all. And when they have the first opportunity, Mr. Speaker, as you heard, the Speech from the Throne, it was the shortest, hollowest, emptiest Speech from the Throne in the history of Saskatchewan. In all of the Legislative Assemblies that we've had here in the province it was the most empty.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, let's just look so far. Just so far the new government has been in power for about ten days, two weeks; certainly since the session started we've had a week and a day. And let's just look at the report card to date.

There's no cash for farmers. And the Minister of Agriculture and the Premier admit that they have no plan for agriculture and no plan for cash to help farmers. Now I'm going to introduce plans right now in the next few minutes of what could be done. But there's nothing in this Legislative Assembly from the government to help farmers.

They had money for a trip to go to Ottawa, take a bunch of people on airplanes, spend some money for three days, 2 or \$300,000. And they come back and say, aren't we really doing something? And there's no money during a crisis.

And many people here must have got elected on the farm crisis. Said, boy the NDP are going to do something. They're going to cut taxes, balance the budget, more money for farmers, more diversification, more for communities, eliminate poverty. Then we start up. No cash for farmers. There's no tax breaks for farmers, there's no harmonization benefits for farmers when they're buying their trucks or their cars, their machinery, their quonsets; none of that.

The Premier has said the country's worth about \$4 an acre. He says if I don't get the help that I want here then I won't go for the country and the constitution.

Well, Mr. Speaker, isn't that something, that the brand new NDP Premier of Saskatchewan is standing up in front of the rest of the world and said, well if we just get an extra 4 or \$500 million from the federal government, and our share would be in the neighbourhood of 2 or \$300 million, about \$4 an acre, then I'll stick up for the country. I'll stick up for Canada as a result of \$4 an acre. And if I don't get my \$4 an acre then I'm just not going to go along with the rest of the country.

Mr. Speaker, not only wasn't there a plan — and that's why the motion was raised here — but all the promises of all the things that they were going to do that they could do, cut taxes, spend more, balanced budget, create jobs, eliminate poverty . . . But now he's turning around and said no, I've got to sort of blackmail the country. I'm going to have to go to the rest of Canada and say, unless you play ball with me and I get my \$4 an acre, I'm not going to go to the constitutional meetings; I won't support the Prime Minister or the other premiers or the first ministers.

Mr. Speaker, is that the essence of the Speech from the Throne and the first few weeks of government? Is that what it's all about?

Mr. Speaker, they haven't stopped the foreclosures in Saskatchewan in agriculture. The minister knows that. The Minister of Agriculture knows that there's farmers in trouble all over the province, and they wait and they wait and they wait and they wait. Is that the plan, Mr. Speaker? Why don't they tell us. They can wait until spring, and maybe most of them will have had the real big sword from some financial institution — just wait and wait and wait. Is that the plan? Is that why people voted for the NDP, to see them sit on their hands?

I say to all the new members in this new legislature, don't be fooled by this old boys' club here of 10 or 11 people in

cabinet that say this is the plan; now we'll tell you what really goes on in here. We'll just wait. We'll blame the previous government for all of the problems. But there's nothing that we can do. And we'll let the farmers suffer; we'll let the poor suffer; we'll let the people on the reserves suffer; the towns and villages won't get what they're after. We'll blame the previous government.

Well folks, it isn't good enough. You didn't get elected because of that. Are you going to go home and tell your friends and your families at Christmas time, that's why you were elected — when people are hurting in a crisis and nothing in the Speech from the Throne. And they can stand here in their seats, a little group of 10 over there and tell you all what to do.

Mr. Speaker, I'm telling you, this is the most hollow Speech from the Throne this Legislative Assembly has ever experienced at a time of crisis. Since the 1930s we haven't seen anything like it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, and I give you credit, Mr. Speaker, you allowed members in the opposition to raise a debate, crisis in agriculture. And we asked to debate that because everybody in the province, including the Premier, acknowledge there's a crisis in agriculture. And we said, can we debate the alternatives to help them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, wasn't it something to watch. Wasn't it something to watch the first few days in the legislature. The NDP are on their feet, all elected new members representing rural ridings, and they wouldn't even stand and debate agriculture, or their plan, or their hopes. The people out there are going to say the NDP and the new Premier are the grinch that stole Christmas in rural Saskatchewan. There is nothing here for rural Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — In fact they don't have the courage to stand, Mr. Speaker, and even debate it. And one after one after one after one would have stood there and said no, no, no. And they did. They wouldn't acknowledge the crisis. And the Premier opposite said, well that's too small of opposition. They can't make this matter. It doesn't count.

It doesn't count when people are hurting and you've got a large majority, so you can stand arrogantly and say because you have ten members or eight members or nine members or one farmer, they don't count?

Mr. Speaker, we have 60,000 farmers and families out there that are suffering, and you know it and I know it. And we've worked really hard to help them. And the first chance of a new administration, they should be ashamed of themselves, Mr. Speaker, because there's nothing in the Speech from the Throne and they wouldn't even acknowledge that it was worth debating.

Mr. Speaker, they even ducked the vote. Now how's that for the first opportunity of a new Minister of Agriculture, new Minister of Rural Affairs . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I just want to draw the member's attention that he is not to refer to members, whether they were in the House previously or in the House now. That is not an accepted practice here.

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, maybe I could word that another way. Thank you for your ruling. The other way, Mr. Speaker, is that if we go down and look at *Hansard* and we go through the names and the ridings of those that participated in a vote, it'll become clear who did and who didn't. And there are some members who I would encourage the public to look for their names in that vote, and it's in *Hansard*. Some they'll see, some they won't, and it's clearly the record. But that's there, Mr. Speaker, that's there.

And I just want to remind all those new members who think this is really a courageous act, this Speech from the Throne, one, you wouldn't debate it. And comes time to even vote on whether you'd argue about it, you look at the list for yourself then. You find if you had the courage of your conviction to stand there and stick up for your plan, stick up for agriculture, stick up for the things that you're going to do for rural people.

And then, Mr. Speaker, while they don't have a Speech from the Throne, they go out and they fire 200-and-some rural people — fire them. And they make a big joke of it. He says, we don't have to inspect the grain in the bins. Half of it's inspected; half of it isn't. Well, Mr. Speaker, I just make this point very clearly to the Minister of Agriculture, the Premier, and others. Do you expect the public in this province . . . when you have an automobile accident do you phone SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) and say, I think it was about \$5,000 damage; send me the cheque but you don't have to look at the car? Is that what they expect, Mr. Speaker? We're dealing with billions and billions of dollars going to farmers, and they're not going to take the time to inspect what's there? Do you have hail insurance that go across the province . . . and you phone up the crop insurance and you say, hey boys, I had a big crop failure here. A hail storm went through. I got 100 per cent and I think it's worth about 12,000. Send me the cheque. And you don't have to bother coming out and looking because it's okay because the new NDP administration says it's okay. We don't have to do that.

Mr. Speaker, the point is if crop insurance doesn't have integrity, farmers won't trust the system. And they won't trust the new NDP administration, and they won't trust others. How in the world, Mr. Speaker, are you going to put out billions of dollars and have half the farmers' bins measured, half of them not and people have claims? Crop Insurance has never paid out a claim without inspection — never!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — And now, Mr. Speaker, this member opposite says, well there's GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) and NISA (net income stabilization account). And they'll all have claims, Mr. Speaker. They'll all have claims, and you know they should be inspected. And these people, Mr. Speaker, their first action was . . . well I

guess those 200-and-some people, they probably didn't vote for the NDP. We could have a . . . (inaudible) . . . excuse, Mr. Speaker, that maybe there's no patronage in this operation, but we'll go down and look at these. For efficiency reasons we'll just pretend we don't need them all. And they just waxed them right out. They cut them right out, Mr. Speaker — rural jobs. Crop Insurance needs to know what's going on to assess the claims.

And these people said, well . . . and I can imagine. And the minister if he gets a chance to speak, I'm sure he'll say, well in cabinet I know we don't talk partisan politics, and it had nothing to do with the NDP and nothing to do with who — you know — appointed these people. And I'm sure that conversation never took place, Mr. Minister — never, ever would take place among the NDP.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they're gone. They're not here. They're gone. And we know the reason why. And it's dangerous not only for partisan reasons and for this Legislative Assembly and not just because of rural people, but, Mr. Speaker, the integrity of the GRIP, NISA, Crop Insurance — just Crop Insurance alone.

Mr. Speaker, the reputation of the province and the years and years of all administrations, Liberals, CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation), NDP, Tories, have put together in building the integrity — of whether it's Crop Insurance or Power or SGI or others — is at risk because of sheer politics and the most hollow Speech from the Throne that you could imagine.

Mr. Speaker, they have stopped further decentralization, and they don't even debate it here in the legislature. We got out of them in question period today that they're going to stick up for the decentralization we did. And now, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly hope that if they thought Crop Insurance was all right in Melville, well then Department of Rural Affairs could be all right in the rural and the Department of Agriculture somewhere where there's agriculture. And I hope, sincerely hope they consider that, whether it's in northern Saskatchewan, southern Saskatchewan, or all over the province of Saskatchewan.

But it's cancelled and we've got quotes after quotes of the Premier's running around saying, well I'd never cancel that and if the Tories say that, it's a lie. Well, Mr. Speaker, we're going to hold him to it. He said he's not going to cancel it. Fair enough. Tisdale — fair enough, you're not going to cancel it; you show us where it is. But they cancelled it, Mr. Speaker, without anything in the Speech from the Throne.

And we look, Mr. Speaker. They've stopped community development bonds — can you imagine? — people's capitalism; if you ever found it any place in the world, and we initiated in the province of Saskatchewan. Local people worked together in a co-operative fashion, raised money, Mr. Speaker. They build their community and the province guarantees it. We don't have to borrow money. They put it up, Mr. Speaker, and they stop it, Mr. Speaker.

Right now, Mr. Speaker, there's about a \$5 million project in the city of Moose Jaw with parks and tourism tied to community development bonds and the NDP have stopped it — won't endorse it. You've got an NDP MLA.

You've got another NDP MLA. As far as I know they have NDP mayor in Moose Jaw. I don't know how they're going to be happy with the cessation of a \$5 million tourism project. And everybody knows that golf courses are demanded all over North America, but they stop it.

And nothing in the Speech from the Throne that says here's my diversification, here's my building, here's the kinds of things that I would do.

Well, Mr. Speaker, then just at the spur of a moment a minister shows up; the Minister of Education says, but we found money. Well we found money. There's no money for agriculture. There's no money for diversification. There's no money for this, no money for that. But all of a sudden the day after they're elected they can go make a speech and say, but there's money for a third school board. We'll be able to tax rural communities.

I can hardly wait for the Minister of Education to go to the next SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) meeting, the next SARM meeting, and say well I just thought I'd inform you folks that there's going to be a brand-new third school board financed by farmers on property tax here. A third school board — we're struggling to keep two there, Mr. Speaker. But they said that they're going to have more money for education, more money for health care. They're going to have more money for this and more money for that. They're going to cut taxes to rural people. They're going to do all of those fancy things. But politically what do they do? They announce they have money for a third school board and they haven't told the SARM. They haven't gone to the meeting and said well, Mr. SARM director, here's what you're going to get.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in this hollow Speech from the Throne we also see complete patronage taking place as the throne speech was given, and today we're right up to here in it all over; day after day after day in the media, in the newspapers and other places — firing of people who were Progressive Conservative, firing of people who were Liberal, firing of people who didn't have the right ticket.

Mr. Speaker, they said they'd never do that. They said cut taxes, spend more money, balance the budget, create new jobs, eliminate the food bank and poverty and no patronage. No patronage — they're above that, they wouldn't do that. Well you haven't seen such patronage in your life, Mr. Speaker.

Is that the reason all these people were elected? Eh? So they could sit there and watch the big 10 here, the big 10 play the strings. Like give me the credentials of Jack Messer, whether they're academic or political or other things, business, compared to previous cabinet ministers of any political persuasion. What are his credentials?

If you look at any of the criticism that the NDP level against any position, they said: but, but, but, but they were PC or they were cabinet ministers. As soon as they get into power, former NDP cabinet ministers are what? Are doing the very thing that they said they wouldn't do — no patronage, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's also interesting to note, and I'm sure the new members realize this, within days of the brand new NDP administration coming in, the law firm in Saskatoon — and the name of the firm, Mr. Speaker, and the reason I use the member's name, is Romanow Mitchell Ching, is the name of the firm — changed its name. There's nobody left in the firm. They're all working in government. They're gone.

It's Taylor Incorporated or something else, because there are so many of them in the government now right up to here. They had to change the name of the firm because if you went there and asked for one of them by name, you couldn't find them because they're now in government — right up to here.

What are their credentials? What are their credentials? Not patronage. Is there anything in diversification, what they're going to do for farmers, how they're going to reduce poverty, how they're going to make better government? No. You see firings, firings, firings, firings, firings. And the firm is gone, under that name.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they've criticized us or other administrations for saying well, you have some patronage. But I have never heard where the Premier's law firm now has to change its name because there's nobody left. They're all in government, the whole operation.

Mr. Speaker, they're about to introduce, or have introduced, retroactive legislation that change contracts. Now, Mr. Speaker, people all over Canada and the free world and the British parliamentary system detest retroactive legislation. Who does it come from? The very people that nationalize potash mines, take over property, and they're going to introduce retroactive legislation that says, well that's not in the Speech from the Throne, not part of our diversification plan, but we'll get you guys. We'll get you. We'll just say what you were doing in the past doesn't count any more, and by law we'll make it retroactive and we'll change it.

So you sign a contract. If you're a nurse, if you're a teacher, if you're a farmer, if you're a deputy minister, if you're managing a corporation and you sign a legal contract, doesn't matter in Saskatchewan. How's that for your reputation in New York? Or in Ottawa? Or in Japan? Or in Great Britain? Or in France or any place else?

Well there's one jurisdiction that will apply retroactive legislation all of the time, Mr. Speaker, and it's in the province of Saskatchewan under a socialist administration, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Clearly, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons that an awful lot of people in this province and across the country and in North America and others are saying no to socialism. Because they know, you give a group, a small group, that kind of power, that's not just patronage. But they will exercise power, because you know what their attitude is? Oh, this is too small a group to be important. The rights of the individual are not as

(1515)

important as the rights of the group. All of that sort of thing just sort of pervades the thoughts. Mr. Speaker, you didn't see any of that in the Speech from the Throne. You didn't see that. But that's going on in the first few days of this administration.

There's a witch-hunt. You set up, Mr. Speaker, set up a witch-hunt to look and examine all the activities in Crown corporations and management behind closed doors. And then when they're finished with the witch-hunt they said they'll bring it back here and they'll talk about it in public.

Well, Mr. Speaker, imagine, we're worried about patronage, worried about people who might be NDP sympathizers reviewing and then they get to vote in secret? We don't get to vote on that, if they're going to review it. Two, they don't let the media in. And this is the same organization that says retroactivity is okay; small groups don't matter in democracy. And they compromise this Legislative Assembly so as much as possible you can hook them into this review.

In the first few days, Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of thing that we see in this legislature. Anything for farmers? No. Anything for northern Saskatchewan? No. Anything for Indian people? No. Anything for women, anything for the poor, anything that they've promised? Not a thing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, then they go on and say, well I'll tell you what we will do. And the plan is on top of all, they say, well I'll tell you what we will do really fast, Mr. Speaker. They say this: everybody that has anything to do with government in the province of Saskatchewan has to join a union. How's that? Everybody that does any business with this government has to join a union.

So the word goes out and people all over the province are getting calls. Do you belong to a union? Is your company, your trucking firm, your highway, your construction people?

Mr. Speaker, do you know what they've done? Before they've even got into the Speech from the Throne, they've closed trade offices world-wide and they've decided that they're going to have unions do everything in the province of Saskatchewan to compete.

Now talk about putting a wall around Saskatchewan. The NDP government in Ontario has offices in the Pacific Rim, the NDP government in British Columbia has offices in the Pacific Rim, and they even have partisan people in them, Mr. Speaker, NDP supporters. The NDP in B.C. and the NDP in Ontario don't even say you all have to be union to participate. But, Mr. Speaker, not the NDP in Saskatchewan. Hey, this is the old school. This is the same outfit that the NDP Premier says, I'm not a socialist, he says. The member from Riversdale says, I'm not a socialist. Well, Mr. Speaker, if the last few things I've just mentioned aren't socialist, I don't know what they are. Holy smokes!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — You have to be union to join the

operation. You have to be union to do business with the government. You close international trade offices that bring in investment, anti-American, anti-Pacific Rim, anti-Great Britain. European economic communities have 300 million people, a complete market; these guys close the office. And it's not in the Speech from the Throne. There's no plan there.

Mr. Speaker, there's no bonds. There's no budget. There's no budget. There's no idea, Mr. Speaker. There's no budget. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance is going to be coming in here and says, well I want some money. Well we're going to look for his plan, Mr. Speaker.

The new Minister of Finance goes to New York and he says, well I didn't take \$200 million. I won't do equity. I won't have people invest. And the *New Yorker* says, holy smokes, your triple-B credit rating is going to look pretty good compared to what it's going to be by the time the NDP are finished, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Within days, Mr. Speaker, within days of them taking office, the credit rating starts going down. And what are the New York bankers say? What do the New York bankers say? They say they're going to have retroactive legislation. They're looking at nationalization. They closed foreign trade offices. They won't bring in the kind of revenue that's necessary, and they go to New York without a plan. And what the New York bankers says, go home boys; your credit rating is going down because you won't participate. You won't have a \$265 million deficit. They said, no ours is 800 or \$900 million.

Mr. Speaker, you can't go to New York or Toronto or to Tokyo and say, I'm going to cut taxes, spend more, balance the budget, create new jobs, eliminate the food bank, and have no patronage, and then come in and do what they did and expect to have a professional credit rating. They were laughed out of New York, Mr. Speaker, like they were laughed out in the late '70s and the early '80s. Mr. Speaker, they have lost the potential for massive uranium development, and they know it. No good investor, whether they're French, German, Korean, Japanese, American, are going to run the risk of investing in uranium in Saskatchewan with the NDP here. You know that and they know that. So they've cut off a major source of revenue — billions of dollars — and they say they want some money, and they've cut off major sources of revenue.

Because who would trust them, Mr. Speaker? The oil industry doesn't trust them. The gas industry doesn't trust them. The uranium industry doesn't trust them. Their party caucus, Mr. Speaker, have said they don't want any part of it. The leader says, well he'll have control. And the NDP leader and the new Premier doesn't have any control of the NDP caucus or the NDP Party. They said, I don't want any uranium; he tried to stop it. It's in the media, it's in the public, it's in New York, it's in Tokyo, it's all over — Saskatchewan is anti-uranium with the new NDP administration.

That's the case, Mr. Speaker, and nothing in the Speech from the Throne to talk about the diversification that is

lost. The member from Athabasca knows, members from all over Saskatchewan should know, you're forfeiting billions of dollars, and no other source of money. What are you going to do, Mr. Speaker; what do you expect?

And without a Speech from the Throne and now without a budget, we don't know if they're going to raise sales tax, raise income tax, a payroll tax, succession duties, the death tax, new flat tax. What is it, Mr. Speaker? They've got to tell the New York bankers something. What are they going to tell them? The credit rating, Mr. Speaker, is going down. And there's nothing in the Speech from the Throne and no financial statement, not even a statement to tell us and tell the public what they're about to do.

Mr. Speaker, they've stopped one of the major programs that encouraged people on welfare to go to work. The critic has raised that, that 11,000 people who left the welfare roll into the work force, training, education. Gordon Currie initiated much of that — great teacher and sports-minded individual in the city of Regina. Mr. Speaker, that's a program that is very important, and I'm going to talk about that in a minute because I'm going to put forward several things that I believe should be in a Speech from the Throne.

And, Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne there was nothing about the plebiscite questions — nothing at all. And the public spoke. It's the best petition you can have here in the legislature, the best petition. The people spoke. They said clearly that they want balanced budget legislation, Mr. Speaker, and we haven't even heard a word from these people. They don't want abortions funded publicly, Mr. Speaker. And they want to vote on the constitution, and they said so, not unanimously, but a large majority across the province — the first time they've had a chance to do that, Mr. Speaker. And they expect this Legislative Assembly and that government, because they have the majority, to honour their wishes, Mr. Speaker.

Well I mention those points because the excuses we heard today in question period, Mr. Speaker, and the excuses that we've heard in the last four or five days don't cover up for the fact that they misled the public, and they don't have a plan and the Speech from the Throne is hollow. And behind the scenes we see all of these things: firing people, retroactive legislation, closing offices and, Mr. Speaker, the credit rating of the province going right through the floor as a result of no plan for New York bankers, no plan for anybody else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, in my remarks I want to put forward a handful of suggestions that I sincerely believe could be in a Speech from the Throne, and I'm certainly encouraged by the motion that the member from Moosomin put forward.

Mr. Speaker, in this session the only positive suggestions to be presented to the Assembly have come from this opposition. We've heard nothing in the Speech from the Throne. Therefore if we are to discuss a positive agenda in this House, somebody has to put forward some plans, some ideas, and some suggestions regarding things like the private motions we put in place and the emergency

debate on farm aid and farm income.

The emergency resolution, Mr. Speaker, was not a trivial matter. Although both the government and the Leader of the Liberal Party dismissed it, it was not trivial. There is an agricultural crisis. In fact most everybody acknowledges that there was a crisis and there is a crisis. And we put forth a motion, an emergency resolution regarding farm income and things that we could do, and it was dismissed out of hand by the NDP and the Liberals, Mr. Speaker. In fact the Leader of the Government called it . . . the Premier, the minister of Riversdale called it a small message — a small message — from a small caucus. Well, Mr. Speaker, we may be relatively small in number, but the message we're delivering was for a very large number of farmers, 60,000 farm families in towns and villages across Saskatchewan. And that's no small matter. And that shouldn't be backhanded out of this legislature because members are afraid to debate it. Why would they be afraid to debate it? And why would the 10 not allow the rest of them to debate? There's a crisis. You go to their communities . . .

An Hon. Member: — No plan.

Mr. Devine: — No plan, exactly. You go to their communities, what's the agriculture plan coming from the NDP? Well we had a trip to Ottawa and we're back. And then what?

Mr. Speaker, the arrogant fashion that that cabinet and the Premier took in dismissing the message was frankly quite shocking, that they would stand in their place and not allow a debate; that the Leader of the Liberal Party felt debating this throne speech, which is vacant of any positive proposal for addressing the farm crisis, is a sad reflection indeed.

I mean I wouldn't encourage anybody to vote with the NDP in saying there's no farm crisis. I ask all members of this legislature: if you don't think there's a farm crisis, then you stand up and say there's no crisis; we don't need any money here.

(1530)

Maybe the president of the Wheat Pool is right, Mr. Speaker. He has no expectation of any financial assistance from the provincial government at all. He's just thrown up his hands and says, I don't have any expectations of the government with respect to agriculture. He doesn't expect anything, Mr. Speaker, because he knows these people have no plan and they wouldn't debate.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important. It's important that we have all members of this legislature and their executives and the party — whether it's the NDP Party or the Liberal Party or the Conservative Party — stand in their place and say, there is an agricultural crisis and farmers need assistance and they need co-operation from governments.

And again I point out, it's odd, I find it odd that the NDP and the Liberals would say there's no need, not even for debate, and there's nothing Saskatchewan can do. Well

I'll tell you, there was a lot Saskatchewan did in the last nine years, a lot we did, Mr. Speaker — billions and billions and billions and billions of dollars.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — So far, Mr. Speaker, the record is about 13 billion, 300 million to zip, to zero. And they're standing in their place, Mr. Speaker, and say no, there's no crisis. The NDP and the Liberals stand here and say there's no crisis and they won't debate it. And they haven't got a dime — not a penny. Mr. Speaker, they don't have one red cent to offer to the farmers of Saskatchewan.

And I want to review the record, for the record, what the emergency assistance proposal entails, and then ask again for the government to reconsider its intransigence in this matter, or at least explain why it will not accept a proposal for any other reason that it's just not an NDP idea.

The member for Riversdale has said if farm families do not receive immediate cash assistance, 20 per cent of them are in danger of being lost this winter. Mr. Speaker, the Premier says if the farm families don't get cash immediately, 20 per cent of them are going down this winter. Well, Mr. Speaker, there was a commitment by the previous administration and the federal government for \$800 million. Half that money is coming now.

And the NDP leader said, if they don't get more before Christmas, all of that and more than 20 per cent of them are going to be lost by this winter. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is his contention, not one invented by the opposition. That's what the NDP leader says, the Premier of Saskatchewan — 20 per cent of our farmers at risk this winter, Mr. Speaker.

We also know that the federal government is willing to pay out only a portion of the \$800 million. The member for Riversdale has made it clear that this is not enough to avert a disaster this winter. Now, Mr. Speaker, given all of that and given the escapable arguments of the Leader of the NDP, the issue becomes one of getting as much money into the hands of farmers as quickly as possible. Rural families need it.

And there's a very, very simple way for us to do that. And the government can do it with the precious little money. To put the remaining 3 or \$400 million into rural Saskatchewan before the end of the month would cost the government 3 or \$4 million in interest payments at most.

Now imagine, 3 or \$400 million could go out there right now. You just phone the federal government and you'd say, we'll pick up the interest tab on that. I know you're going to pay it all, but let's get the whole load out there right now — 3 or \$4 million. That's what it would cost, they say, initially for a third school board that they promised.

Now go to the SARM executive meeting or go some place else at agriculture and say, well we've made a priority. We're going to come up with a third school board as opposed to helping farmers and ranchers and fishermen and people who are poor all over rural Saskatchewan

beyond their . . . not their fault. They say, I can't come up with 3 or \$4 million to put 3 or 400 million in the hands of these rural people prior to Christmas — for Christmas, Mr. Speaker, a time of caring and sharing and giving and responsibility; reaching out beyond your partisan needs or your political needs.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Riversdale has refused to even debate it. He says 20 per cent of them are going down this winter unless they get money now. And he's got access to a budget of \$5 billion — \$5 billion, Mr. Speaker — and 3 or 4 million would put hundreds of millions into the hands of farmers. And he refuses to talk about it.

Mr. Speaker, we put forward that and he could have said so in a Speech from the Throne. He could have backed it up. He would have unanimous consent of this House, at least as far as I can speak for the members in this opposition. But, Mr. Speaker, he didn't do that. He refuses to even discuss it.

And, Mr. Speaker, when we look at those in this House and outside who are expecting something to take place, we see no support from the Liberal Party for this, no support from the NDP Party. In fact, Mr. Speaker, what we find is the president of the Liberal Party said there's no need for farm assistance. Did you know that, Mr. Speaker? And the executive members out there in the NDP, I don't know them all, but I would suggest, are they saying that too? No need? Just because we're in power now, there's no need to help.

Well it's fine to fund a great big plane trip. All go down to Ottawa, travel around for two or three days and speak, have your plane fare paid and your lodging paid and whatever else paid, Mr. Speaker; come back home empty-handed and then say, oh but there's no crisis, there's no need to debate it and no need for money.

Mr. Speaker, either the NDP leader is not being forthright in his assessment of the dangers and he was just talking prior to an election, or he was just blowing some steam in Ottawa, or he doesn't care. What is it, Mr. Speaker? Does he care?

He says 20 per cent of the farm families are going down this winter and there's not a dime from the provincial government to help them, and 3 or \$4 million would put 3 or 400 million out there. And he says he doesn't have any money. Either, Mr. Speaker, he exaggerated the problem — and I don't think he did — or he doesn't care. The grinch that stole Christmas for thousands and thousands of rural children, farm families, people all over Saskatchewan, who believed that this government would care. And not a red cent. At the Christmas of 1991, not a dime from the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, it's so reminiscent of 1981. Ten years ago today, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, interest rates were 22 per cent in this province — 22 per cent 10 years ago this afternoon. And not a dime of help, not one red penny to protect the farmers and ranchers. And they said please, Mr. Provincial Government, do something. And you know what Mr. Blakeney did, and the member from Riversdale who was deputy premier? They said, oh it's

very serious but you'll have to work it out yourself because the federal government's got to fix it. Do the best you can. That's what they said. It's so reminiscent — talk and talk and talk.

And then when they were losing their farms, you know what they did, Mr. Speaker? They said, I'll take your land. We'll put your land into the land bank and then we'll tell you who can farm it. And that was the worst piece of patronage in the history of Saskatchewan politics — the worst in North America. People were in trouble. People hurting, losing their land, and 22 per cent interest rates, and that administration, the NDP said, no help; go to the feds, and if you do get into trouble, come to me and I'll take your land.

Retroactive legislation, nationalize, squeeze them out, let the government run it and then have a few partisans in there saying, you can have that quarter and you can have this quarter and you can have those three quarters and you can have this. And they came from 40 or 50 miles from the land to farm it if they were NDP. And we all know that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, either they're heartless or they do have a strategy that isn't in the Speech from the Throne. The strategy isn't in the Speech from the Throne and they won't tell the public what it is. This little hollow document, Mr. Speaker, has nothing to do with what they're really doing, which is nothing for farmers and a whole bunch of patronage and a whole bunch of retroactivity, whole bunch of nationalization.

Mr. Speaker, is that what they told the public they were going to do? Well, Mr. Speaker, I say the farmers and ranchers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are worth 3 or \$4 million to get help before Christmas. We are very serious about this.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — We're going to endorse that motion because that motion is responsible. It's going to be paid back by the federal government. It gets money out there for the children, moms, dads, parents that are worried for Christmas of 1991.

Mr. Speaker, they can be hardball with the bankers. They can take on these people, take some others and they can force unions and others, but at least they could think of the people.

Another idea we placed before this House is contained in motion no. 5, Mr. Speaker, under the sponsorship of the member for Arm River. That motion urges the government to amend the necessary laws to give farmers the right of first refusal to lease or lease to own their land if it is foreclosed by financial institutions.

And we recognized that in the campaign, Mr. Speaker, and recognized it before. Give them the first right of refusal; give them a chance to own the property, because they're being pushed aside.

What happens right now is when a farmer is foreclosed on by a financial institution, and for the record, the NDP is

still seizing assets, Mr. Speaker. Foreclosure happens. The farmer has the right of first refusal to buy that land.

Very often the financial institutions choose to lease the land out rather than sell it outright. And in that way the farmer's first refusal rights are lost. Mr. Speaker, at least they can protect the farmer under these circumstances.

So we have high hopes that the government would listen to this suggestion and accept it without the partisan bickering and bloodshed that seems to accompany everything that they do today.

Three, Mr. Speaker. Motion no. 3 seeks public input of importance to Saskatchewan families. Motion no. 1, my motion, seeks the continuation of an energy agreement that would provide 50 million worth of knowledge, research, learning, and education. Diversify the economy. Research money for training, health, education.

Mr. Speaker, the knowledge industry and the research industry has always been a very important part of Saskatchewan. Nothing in the Speech from the Throne here. Not a thing. No plan.

Motions 9, 13, and 15 seek action on the people's democratic decisions in regard to the plebiscite questions. Why couldn't they after an election, when it's clearly accepted by the people, address that right up front, Mr. Speaker?

We're not going to forget that. We're going to hold it to them. We're going to hold this government to family values, to the plebiscites, to the people who said yes, I want to see balanced budgets; and yes, I want to protect life; and yes, I want a vote in the constitution; and I'm not going to stand up there and just trade \$4 an acre for Canada.

They know, Mr. Speaker, they need to tie these people's hands. The folks didn't just run to the NDP because they liked all these old programs I've just been through. You know it and I know it, Mr. Speaker. You know it and I know it.

Motion 19 seeks to extend a short-line railway network and provide the co-ops with some real support. Well, Mr. Speaker, that's a good idea. They could have suggested that and moved on it. By contrast, the motions of the government members are modelled on the throne speech in that they contain nothing of substance. They have no proposals of anything that solves anything in the throne speech. We see no suggestions, no plan, no target. In fact they've thrown up their hands and say, we just don't know what to do. Except, Mr. Speaker, behind the scenes, we know the NDP well.

And I say to all the back-benchers and the new ones that are in here, you'll learn the NDP well too once you're in here. You'll watch. You'll learn. You'll watch. You'll watch and you'll stay in your place. And you'll stay in your place and say, well, well, is this what it's all about? — the patronage and the pay-offs and the retroactivity and the nationalization.

Mr. Speaker, the 55 people across the way may have a big caucus that generates some big egos, but they've got to accept responsibility. And we can only pray that they do not repeat the disasters of the previous experience and the previous administration. But they're well on their way. They're well on their way.

And as some members know that have been here for some time, they lost because of the very tricks they're pulling off — the arrogance, the retroactivity, the patronage, and no plan. I'll take your farm. I'll take your building. We'll run it under the Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations. Listening to members in the debate leaves you with the impression that they are looking backwards longing for the days of T.C. Douglas.

Mr. Speaker, isn't it interesting that when the new members get up to speak, they don't talk about the Blakeney administration and the exciting diversification and all the good things that the member from Riversdale did. They go back to the 1940s after the war, and they'll talk about the former premier, T.C. Douglas. And that's it.

Mr. Speaker, that's the reason they're here is to say, well this is it. We'll make it like the 1940s. We'll make it like the 1950s. Mr. Speaker, we're going into the 21st century. What's the plan now in the Speech from the Throne for the 21st century? Where's the vision? Where's the direction? Where's the help for farmers?

Tommy Douglas would've stood in this legislature and said, it's time we helped the farmers at Christmas in 1991. He would've said that. You should be ashamed of yourself, the whole bunch of you. Tommy Douglas would not have let farmers hurt like this after promise after promise that you would help them. You haven't done anything. You've succumbed to 10 leaders over there saying, we won't do anything. There's no money. There's no help.

And then you have the — what is it? — you have the audacity to stand in your place and talk about Tommy Douglas helping people in a recession, in a depression. What are you doing? Mr. Speaker, he would've stood here. He would've said, I wouldn't have gone with party ranks. I'd have stood in my place and said, farmers need help. Farmers need help.

Mr. Speaker, Tommy Douglas was a realist. And he said, when farmers need help, you better be there. And he would've said, the CCF is one thing, but the NDP is something else altogether. He said that.

Mr. Speaker, Tommy Douglas came to one of my fund-raisers in Calgary when he was on the board of directors of Husky Oil. And he talked about diversification and he talked about the future and he talked about oil and he talked about all of the things. He said he wouldn't have even under . . . He'd understood the praise, but he wouldn't understand what most of these members were talking about — that in the 1990s and the 21st century that we're going to relive the '40s. These folks are back in Pearl Harbor fixed that way.

(1545)

Mr. Speaker, Tommy Douglas, if he was alive today, with the greatest respect, would have stuck up for rural people, stuck up for farmers. He said, I'll find some money; I'll do what I have to make it work. Well I'm going to remind people this Christmas, and all over Saskatchewan, that this NDP administration on the very memory of Tommy Douglas gave them nothing. Not a dime. Not a penny. Not one red cent. And you should be ashamed of yourselves.

And the history of T.C. Douglas, who everybody in this province has time for, great deal of respect, but you are letting him down. Politically you let him down, professionally. And most importantly, at Christmas time when people need help, a social administration, a socialist administration, says no. We're too fat cat, we're too arrogant, we're too big. We have a majority. This small number of people who are talking about farmers don't count because they're too small.

Do you think Tommy Douglas would endorse that kind of arrogance from the leader? For any of the back-benchers, anybody else says, the individual farmer doesn't matter; it's the whole bunch of you. Boy oh boy oh boy, is this province in for some surprises in the next few months and the next few years.

Mr. Speaker, not only are the 1940s gone, but the kinds of solutions that are necessary today are not the kinds that were in the '40s, except for compassion and caring and love and affection for your neighbours and for people and your constituents. I don't know what all of you are going to say when you go home for Christmas, when they say, well what did you do? Oh, sent a bunch of the leaders to Ottawa and they had a nice time.

Well what about us? I can't make my payments. I'm losing my land. My kids are upset. My wife is upset. My folks are losing their property. What are you going to do for me? You're supposed to be a CCfer, an NDPer, somebody with compassion. You're much kinder. You're supposed to be kinder than the Conservatives. And they only give \$13 billion. What are you going to do?

Well, Mr. Speaker, the former government of the member from Riversdale was almost criminally destructive of this province's opportunities when he had a chance. And now when he's got a new chance, Mr. Speaker, he will not take on his responsibilities seriously.

Even when, Mr. Speaker, we look at the possibility . . . and they never would, although I've got some documentation that says that they thought about it until they thought politically they wouldn't be able to do it. Even, Mr. Speaker, if they would help people in the community raise money and they would back it up in the whole sense of bonds, replacing debt with equity. Figure that, Mr. Speaker.

Lots of people have debt, and provinces and power corporations and others can have debt. And if the people could be investing in it, Mr. Speaker, replace the debt with their equity and the return goes to them.

Now many of these members probably haven't heard about that. But, Mr. Speaker, just let me give you a couple

of examples because it should have been in the Speech from the Throne because we have money in Saskatchewan — 13 to \$15 billion dollars on deposit any one day. And we could use that money, and we should. Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, for example, is looking at equity as opposed to debt; getting shareholders to participate.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP administration always went to New York and borrowed money to build something. And then when they had to pay the interest, the interest always went where? Back to New York.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation is going to build a new power project for \$500 million, Mr. Speaker. Do you know what we would do? SaskPower bonds. We'd go to the people of Saskatchewan and say, would you like to invest in SaskPower bonds? And they said yes, and they always sold out, Mr. Speaker. Always sold out.

So you need \$500 million to build a Nipawin project or something else. You go to the people and say, I don't want to borrow from New York and let all the interest go there. Saskatchewan people on the foundation of what Tommy Douglas talked about in participating in a co-operative way, we'll invest and buy power bonds. The province guarantees it, and 10 per cent money on \$500 million is \$50 million a year that went back to Saskatchewan communities, not to New York bankers.

An Hon. Member: — Even Allan Blakeney did.

Mr. Devine: — Now even Allan . . . good point.

Mr. Speaker, we did that over and over again. And I'm sure some families in this room participated in power bonds, telephone bonds, and got a lower rate. Kept the interest in the province of Saskatchewan, which is a good thing to do, Mr. Speaker. All of those things, Mr. Speaker. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, we did it in allowing people to participate more and more and more and replace the debt with equity, Mr. Speaker. And it happened time and time again.

In fact the former premier, Allan Blakeney, Mr. Speaker, admitted that he had to buy Saskoil shares — Saskoil shares, Mr. Speaker. Now they condemned it and said, oh it's not good to have equity here, Mr. Speaker. But I'll tell you, Allan Blakeney bought equity in the province in Saskoil. People all over the province bought bonds, TeleBonds, reduced their telephone rates. All of those community development bonds that use equity, not debt. And we are going through a recession, Mr. Speaker.

That's the kind of instrument that Tommy Douglas would talk about — use the people in the co-operative fashion to help build in the community. Mr. Speaker, we did that in community after community after community and hundreds of millions of dollars in Power and TeleBonds that were very popular and kept millions of dollars in Saskatchewan when in fact, Mr. Speaker, the previous administration — no, we'll just send it all to New York.

Mr. Speaker, that kind of concept was discussed prior to 1982, and the new members probably don't know that. If

we look back at 1981, Mr. Speaker . . . In fact there was a board of directors meeting January 14, 1982. The current Minister of Finance, there was Elwood Cowley, Allan Blakeney, Walter Smishek, Ted Bowerman, Don Cody, the current Minister of Finance, Eiling Kramer, Mr. Beatty.

The board of directors of the Crown management investments corporation said we should do a bond project. And do you know what we should do, Mr. Speaker? It says here, to encourage Saskatchewan residents to invest in a provincial industrial developments, to generate a new pool of capital to make strategic investments thereby allowing Saskatchewan to take advantage of opportunities for large industrial projects. We should privatize. We should let the people invest. Other Saskatchewan political parties will undoubtedly make similar proposals in the future, they said.

Imagine — at a time when you need money and you need investment and you need equity. They called it SHAR (Saskatchewan holding and reinvestment) or share, S-H-A-R proposal. And it was passed by the board of directors of the cabinet ministers that were there. SHAR would be initiated by issuing a prospectus outlining a list of potential investment projects that have current, dramatic interest such as Aspen newsprint, Aspen market pulp, a heavy oil upgrader, a fertilizer plant like ammonia, direct iron ore reduction, tertiary recovery projects, a potash mine, a uranium mine, natural gas exploration.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when we want the opportunity to build and develop, in the Speech from the Throne and without any financial paper at all the NDP have said we have no . . . (inaudible) . . . with community development bonds. We won't do any of this investment. We won't even look at equity as opposed to debt, Mr. Speaker.

And yet they were the very people that knew that it made sense in the long run. And they go on to say, we could do it with IPSCO, Prairie Malt, Agra, Intercon, SED, Cablecom, the Cornwall Centre, PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company), Nabu — although they said a good possibility, but will not yield early dividends. Well Nabu wouldn't; it was a big loss. It lost about \$5 million.

Mr. Speaker, I raise that point because, Mr. Speaker, at least in the Speech from the Throne you could put together a financial target, Mr. Speaker, that would allow . . .

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

Mr. Lyons: — Ask the member whether he would be willing to table that document in the House at this time.

The Speaker: — Is the member willing to table the document? Okay, after he's finished.

Mr. Devine: — I'd be glad to table it, Mr. Speaker. I might just prefer to refer to it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if we just take a moment and we look at the strategy that could have been presented in the Speech from the Throne for diversification, having people

participate in the province because we have billions of dollars on deposit in credit unions and financial institutions.

Look at PAPCO. It would be wise, Mr. Speaker, if this new tribunal would look at PAPCO for more than just partisan reasons. Look back and we find a government-owned pulp mill losing \$91,000 a day. The NDP government had put \$313 million into the business and operating and interest expenses from 1981 to 1985 for 204 million.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, they put \$300 million into it and then they put another \$204 million into it. By the time the early '80s came around it was losing \$91,000 a day being run by the government.

The sale to Weyerhaeuser stopped the massive losses to the taxpayer, of \$90,000 a day. And so far, and I can hear anybody admit this in the House today, Weyerhaeuser has paid \$65 million to the province of Saskatchewan. Did anybody ever tell you that?

You were losing \$90,000 a day. You had hundreds of millions of dollars sunk into it. It wasn't operating profitably. Mr. Speaker, we stopped the loss; they paid \$65 million already, and we still have the entire principal to come. And you ask any farmer, any home owner if that's a nice position to be in. You've paid 65 million in interest, Mr. Speaker, and you still owe all the principal and interest. Mr. Speaker, did you hear any of the members talk about that?

Capital spending by Weyerhaeuser has exceeded 361 million, 50 million more than the NDP poured into its losing proposition. In other words, Mr. Speaker, the new company has spent more in new capital and economic development than the government of the NDP dumped down the hole. And on top of that, Mr. Speaker, we stopped the bleeding — \$90,000 a day. They've given us \$65 million in money already and they still owe the principal and interest, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it employees over 1,000 people, not even including those employed in the woodlands. Weyerhaeuser has the payroll of 60 million annually — pays 50 million to contractors for wood supplies; a million dollars in stumpage and royalty fees; \$1.5 million in property taxes to the city of Prince Albert; and has sold pulp and paper worth more than a quarter of a billion dollars.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you go from losing the taxpayer \$91,000 every day, each and every day, day after day after day after day after day, and you turn it into that kind of success story. And they paid us \$65 million and they still owe us principal plus interest, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the public of Saskatchewan, did you ever hear the NDP talk about Weyerhaeuser in the campaign? Did they ever tell you all the facts, Mr. Speaker? Did they walk around and say, the NDP government lost \$91,000 a day; the NDP administration had hundreds of millions at loss there. Did they say that? Did they say Weyerhaeuser's paid \$65 million in cash so far?

I see the new members, Mr. Speaker, of the NDP taking

notes. They haven't heard this. Well go to Weyerhaeuser and ask for the accounting. Look at the cancelled cheques, Mr. Speaker — the thousand people working there, making new paper worth a quarter of a billion in sales, Mr. Speaker. They couldn't do that, Mr. Speaker, because they were too busy nationalizing, taking them over.

Mr. Speaker, look at potash. Look at potash. Let's look at the Arthur Anderson report on the Potash Corporation. And I'll just touch briefly on this because I think it's important that the people of Saskatchewan, when they're looking at a Speech from the Throne, should know the management of corporations.

It will be interesting to see if the Gass tribunal will dismiss the work of a professional accountant. And with only one accountant on the tribunal and considering the political nature of the tribunal, an attack on someone's professional credentials would not be surprising.

But if we do look at the Anderson report, we find that investment of the member for Riversdale in nationalizing the potash industry — and that whole debate was lead by the Premier today — cost the province more than \$2 billion. One nationalization cost the province \$2 billion — 2 billion, Mr. Speaker. And those are not numbers made up by this small opposition or the public or anybody who's particularly partisan. This is an independent report by an accountant, professional accountant, Mr. Anderson.

So let's hope, Mr. Speaker, that all of the analyses that we're looking at, whether it's PAPCO . . . what was happening before, compared to today? What did it cost to nationalize something, even in terms of our reputation as a province? What would it cost our province now with retroactive legislation? How will investors feel about Saskatchewan? — that we're going to put billions of dollars here knowing, one, there's a history of nationalization; two, there's a history of retroactive legislation. We saw that in Europe and in Germany in the 1930s and '40s. Mr. Speaker, that reputation hurts Saskatchewan, so the investment won't come in here.

Let's look at Saskoil for a moment. Before it was sold to the people of the province it employed 220 people. After it was taken out of the government sector, it now employs 600 people. That's almost threefold, Mr. Speaker — 300 per cent increase in employment, right in downtown Regina with its head office in a brand-new building. It was 2 or \$300 million mostly debt and it's now over \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, with a very large percentage of equity.

Well I just make the point, Mr. Speaker, that in the Speech from the Throne in the financial analysis for the province of Saskatchewan, we would expect from the NDP not only help, but something of substance to say this is how we'll diversify. We'll use community money. We'll have co-operatives. We'll use community development bonds. We'll let people invest in paper and pulp and gas and oil and a combination of things. But we didn't see it.

So I would remind the members opposite of a very important thing. The people of this province didn't just

vote, Mr. Speaker, didn't just vote to get patronage from the NDP. They didn't just vote, Mr. Speaker, to say, well I'm sure you can balance the budget and cut taxes and do all of these things without some sort of a plan.

(1600)

Mr. Speaker, there's got to be more to the administration than what we saw in the Speech from the Throne. If we look at welfare, Mr. Speaker, it's rather stunning that we would lose the Saskatchewan Works program. I don't know why an administration like the NDP wouldn't at least have in a plan in a Speech from the Throne something with respect to employment for welfare people. But to cancel one that has three important parts, the first leg of which is skills development; the second is an entire network of counselling services; and the third is new careers in Saskatchewan — works that put them together like three legs on a stool, Mr. Speaker — why they would just kick them out and say no, you can just go on welfare; we'll use \$300,000 just for welfare payments. No more training, no more new careers, no putting you into a process. It's irresponsible, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they've ignored health — not a word about how they're going to expand the health care budget, make it more efficient, make it more effective. They talk about community health care services but nobody knows what that means.

We haven't heard an awful lot except from behind the scenes, Mr. Speaker, where they're going to stop hospitals. And our members are hearing it even from NDP ridings, Mr. Speaker. I think they're going to stop my hospital or stop my nursing home. Done like quiet political assassins, away from the eye of the media, they go out there and without any noise they say, we won't be able to build your hospital, won't be able to do your nursing home, we won't be able to do this.

And they've got money, Mr. Speaker, for patronage and they've got money, Mr. Speaker, for third school boards, and they've got money for other things but not for health care, not for hospitals, not for farmers. Mr. Speaker, they don't have it because they don't want it to go to farmers and to health care and education. It was all talk — all talk.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most difficult thing to endure for the public is to endorse a secret analysis of Saskatchewan's Public Accounts and indeed investments. Mr. Speaker, the Power bonds, the community development bonds, SaskTel bonds, Saskoil, PAPCO, Weyerhaeuser, fertilizer plants — Mr. Speaker, we've debated them here, and we're very happy that we can finally make fertilizer and make paper for the first time and thousands and tens of thousands of people could invest. And thank goodness, Mr. Speaker, all those Crown corporations are not eligible for the patronage that's going on now in the rest of government.

What could be more fair than have all of the public participate in resource development? Why should it just be a handful of cabinet members, ministers that run a Crown corporation? Why not have the public involved? Let them be shareholders. Like a co-op, Mr. Speaker, let them have some shares.

The members opposite don't understand that. They don't understand that. They don't see why wouldn't it be all right. As Tommy Douglas sat on the board of directors of Husky Oil — T.C. Douglas stood there, and that's a publicly traded company, and Tommy Douglas is on the board of Saskoil. Why, Mr. Speaker, can't the NDP? Because, Mr. Speaker, it's because they're so tied up in that union-leader politics they can't even allow the people to participate. Why can't you allow your citizens to buy Power bonds and TeleBonds, and participate in Saskoil and Sask potash and the uranium industry so they can benefit? Explain that. What are you afraid of — that the people will actually participate? I don't know. I think, Mr. Speaker, they're afraid of the fact they won't be able to control their lives.

Mr. Speaker, while we cannot force the NDP to allow you to continue . . . us to continue and the people to continue the work they've done in participation and community development bonds and diversification, at least we can remind the public over and over and over again, Mr. Speaker, that these programs and these communities and these strategies and ideas that were built up from the time of Tommy Douglas in the province of Saskatchewan do not deserve to be killed by this administration. The NDP should give them the time of day and some respect because those communities need decentralization, they need community development bonds, and certainly, the province needs equity as opposed to debt.

Mr. Speaker, to all those that are being fired, I just want to say, to all those who are subject to witch-hunts, whether you're in department land or in Crown corporations, or whether you're a crop insurance inspector or whoever you might be, Mr. Speaker, I say to all of those people, you let the public know, you let this opposition know, you let your MLA know, you let others know that if you've been treated unfairly, then we will make sure that this government is held accountable.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — The NDP administration, Mr. Speaker, said that they were going to cut taxes and balance the budget and do all these things for agriculture and have no patronage. Well every day in the newspaper there's another person who gets fired and another. And they all say, well it's because this is an austerity program. And the media doesn't believe that. That's an excuse because they say, well I guess we'll have to have crop insurance inspectors afterwards. And guess who they might be?

Mr. Speaker, the public knows what they're doing. Anybody who's fired, all I say to them, Mr. Speaker, if they believe that they've been treated unfairly, give their names to this opposition. Submit them to the media. Submit them to this legislature and we will hold these people accountable.

That retroactive legislation that says valid contracts — whether Crop Insurance, Social Services, Crown corporations, deputies . . . Mr. Speaker, they will not pass that easily in this legislature, I'll tell you that. They will not pass that retroactive legislation easily.

It's unfair. It's wrong. It's wrong; it's undemocratic, Mr. Speaker.

There is another threat from the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, another threat. Mr. Speaker, we were elected to scrutinize the king's money, to stand in our place, Mr. Speaker. The member from Elphinstone doesn't like what I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, but he can get his turn.

This is the king of patronage here, the king of patronage, the minister of patronage.

He doesn't like it when I say that, Mr. Speaker, but all the people he fires, and people like him fires, they can come to us and we'll hold that bunch accountable.

And we'll make sure that the retroactive legislation is really debated here. Because it's wrong, Mr. Speaker, and everybody across the country and North America, and Tommy Douglas, Mr. Speaker, wouldn't have encouraged it, and he wouldn't have endorsed it.

You find all of those that spoke about Tommy Douglas. You find out if he introduced retroactive legislation to take away human rights and human dignity. You have a right to a contract, Mr. Speaker, and T.C. Douglas wouldn't do that and he wouldn't endorse this bunch doing it. It's not the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP were elected, but people expected more open government, less partisanship, less patronage. Mr. Speaker, we are looking forward to an administration that is going to live up to the promises that it made.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, in wrapping this part of my comments about the amendment up, that I am concerned about the attitude of the administration. That's clearly evident in my brief remarks here today — my concern about the arrogance of the member from Riversdale who says this opposition doesn't count because it's too small; the member from Regina Albert South who says, doesn't really matter if it's just one person; that doesn't really matter.

Mr. Speaker, this Assembly will not be compromised. We will not ignore individuals. The government has indicated it will ignore the people's voice on funding, on budgets, on patronage. Mr. Deputy Speaker, to ignore the people because of plebiscites is not the right thing to do. They say that's a small message from a small population. How can they possibly know what's right because we only represent a few thousands and tens of thousands of people.

Well in the plebiscites, Mr. Speaker, it represented hundreds of thousands of people — hundreds of thousands who are pro-family, pro-budget balanced and having legislation to do so. And they're not going to ignore that, Mr. Speaker, even though they say, well this family doesn't matter or this farmer doesn't matter or this individual doesn't matter, Mr. Speaker. The power to know what is right is not left just for those that have the majority, Mr. Speaker.

I got a comment on a matter of philosophy as it relates to the Milgaard case, to make my point. It seems that the

argument of a member for Regina Albert South has gained some credence, and it is a scary thing that members of the government might give any weight at all to such arguments. And I notice the Attorney General says that he didn't agree with it.

The case in its high sounding, better than grade 9 statement is this: are not the millions more important than one?

Does anybody in this legislature believe that? Are not the millions more important than one? Where have we heard that before? One grandparent, one mother, one child, one woman, one individual — but aren't the millions more important than just one? And if they're more important than just one, maybe they're more important than two — a husband and wife, two children. Are not the millions more important than one? Imagine a statement in this legislature, and we still haven't heard whether the Premier will stand there and disregard it.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the justice system, the answer is a loud, clear, and unequivocal no. One is very important. It's the whole reason we have this Legislative Assembly, the rights of one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — The millions can never be safe if the one is not safe. Millions could never be safe, the legislature cannot be safe, democracy cannot be safe if one is not safe.

If the police come knocking on your door, you had better pray that the system still believes the only protection for all is protection for you, the one — not the system and not the millions.

The end of the other train of logic is absolutely frightening and we've gone to war over it a couple of times, and may in the future — respecting individual rights and dignity. Do you think Tommy Douglas would have stood in his place as premier of the province of Saskatchewan and tolerated that? And all the rest of these members sit on their hands, don't know what to do with it. Well at least stand up and say, not me. Boy, have they got a lot to learn about this outfit.

The end of the other train of logic is frightening, Mr. Speaker, because if they get away with that, they get away with, well it's okay for retroactive legislation, it's okay to nationalize, it's okay to take away rights, as long as it's for the NDP system.

It reminds me of the Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations. They called a great big family of Crown corporations a family. Holy smokes! Do you believe that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Crown corporations are now a family because the system is more important than the individual? Where's the rights of the individual, the democracy, social democracy? Mr. Speaker, I haven't heard the likes of that in this legislature and I didn't hear the likes of it in the history of reading about this legislature. And I'll tell you, the history of the CCF would be embarrassed with this.

Are not the millions of whites more important than a few 10,000 Indians? Where do you draw the line? Are not the millions of Christians more important than the minority of Jews? Are not the millions of not yet accused of anything more important than the innocent man accused of something? How about the millions and millions of people who haven't been accused of anything? Children. What child? What senior? Is that consistent with the whole philosophy of the NDP, that the system is more important than the senior, than the grandparent, than the child?

(1615)

In every case the answer of our society must be no, and we must never let it pass in this Assembly. And that such an argument is credible to us or worthy of this Assembly is clearly not going to be the case. We stick up for the individual — the rights of the unborn, the rights of the mother, the rights of the grandparents, the rights of every individual. And for the NDP to say it's not, Mr. Speaker — not, Mr. Speaker — is incredible.

I want to repeat it once more for the benefit of the Minister of Justice and the former minister of Justice, the member of Riversdale. The attitude of the member for Regina Albert South — his attitude about millions are more important than one — is not worthy of this Assembly.

And this Christmas season, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me comment on this whole issue from my perspective as a Christian. When Christ was born, He was born as one man. When He was falsely accused, His accusers used the argument that it was necessary for the stability of the society that this one man should be given up. The decision to crucify Him was a decision based on the argument that the millions are more important than the one person's innocence.

And when Christ died, He did not die for the social order of the system. He died for each of us as individuals because we, by ourselves, are important to Him. And without the respect for that one single, individual soul and person, the millions aren't worth a cent.

And even if the millions abandon what is right, what we know about the spirit of Christmas is that the memory of that one individual will always protect and demand the protection of one who is right and one who is innocent. The lesson of Christmas is the importance of the single human being. And it's so important that all of us who are Christians believe the good Lord gave His only, His only Son to prove that point.

And this is reflected throughout the Old and the New Testaments, whether it's the parable of the prodigal son or the lost sheep. And as such it is the heritage of the Christians and the Jews together. It is so basic to our values that God went even further in the concept than we can imagine today. And the principles go back in parable after parable after parable in the Bible. In the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah God would have saved the many guilty but for the lack of one good person. The suffering of one innocent person was too great a price to pay to exact justice on entire cities of a guilty people.

Mr. Speaker, what we see in this Legislative Assembly outside the Speech from the Throne, which is absolutely hollow, is all of the activity and all of the endorsement of some of the worst kind of politics you could imagine in any jurisdiction in this country. We see statements that say the system is more important than the individual. We hear about retroactive legislation. We hear about nationalization. We hear about . . . Well there's no money at Christmas to help the poor. We hear about the fact that there just isn't sufficient funds now to do all the things that they thought were important, because they had a conscience.

Mr. Speaker, thousands and thousands and thousands of people in this province want to see an administration that is open, honest, without patronage, thinks about the individual and then the family and then the community and then the administration, not the other way around. Mr. Speaker, the other way around is dangerous.

I mentioned the Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations and the kind of statements we've heard in here that would make any administration, I'm sure, embarrassed.

I think, Mr. Speaker, the history of John Diefenbaker, the first Canadian Prime Minister to be from Saskatchewan . . . and if you go back and look at Diefenbaker's Bill of Rights, Mr. Speaker, and respected by people all over the province, and Saskatchewan people did support it. And I paraphrase: they said this country was founded upon the principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, the dignity of man, and the role of the family in a nation of free men and free women. Now you take those principles, Mr. Speaker, and it doesn't talk about the system being better than one individual. It talks about the individual and the dignity being paramount and the respect.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — And you have in his tradition, in the Conservative tradition, if you buy a membership on the history of John Diefenbaker, it'll say on the back of it, a heritage of freedom based on individual initiative, honour, integrity, and individual moral responsibility. And it'll say equal rights under the law for all without discrimination. Government as the servant not the master and social progress based on the needs of people, not as a means to power.

Now, Mr. Speaker, isn't that a clear difference between the NDP socialist administration — what we see from the Speech from the Throne — and John Diefenbaker's history of individual rights and individual freedoms and the supremacy of God, and the families that communities built around that concept? Mr. Speaker, we see it in the first few days of this new Assembly.

So I'm disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that I can stand here, take the Speech from the Throne — and I've read it very carefully and there's nothing in it. I can look at Christmas time when one of the most severe crisis since the '30s we face and not a dime for farmers. Nothing. No help, no hope.

It's Christmas time and I've listed over and over again --

retroactivity, the system is more important than the individual. Nationalize this, close the trade offices, on and on and on. And patronage, Mr. Speaker, like we haven't seen in generations in Saskatchewan. Fire, fire, fire, fire, and replace them with yours.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make the point that this administration, this administration will be watched carefully by the opposition. This administration and all its old tricks, Mr. Speaker, will be brought forward to the public of Saskatchewan.

And to anybody in Saskatchewan I say simply this . . . simply say this. If you have been treated unfairly either because of patronage, either because you haven't been helped and you're in agriculture, or no diversification or no jobs or they don't balance the budget or they don't live up to your promises, you bring those concerns to us, Mr. Speaker, and we'll hold the NDP accountable.

Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to endorse the motion put forward by the member from Moosomin and I'll certainly be voting for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased and honoured to be here as the representative of the people of the Saltcoats constituency.

Before I begin my response in support of the Speech from the Throne and against the amendment, I would like to extend my congratulations to the Speaker on his successful election as the Speaker of this Assembly. Over the years Saskatchewan has established a tradition of fine Speakers and I'm sure that he will continue that tradition. As a member of the Assembly I pledge to work with him within the framework of the rules which bind this Assembly. I will support him and I will endeavour to co-operate with him while serving the needs and wishes of the constituents I represent.

I also congratulate you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I also congratulate each and every member of this present Assembly and I recognize the faith and trust voters have placed in you. I congratulate the Premier on his selection of cabinet ministers. I know they will serve honourably and with distinction in establishing a new direction for this government as witnessed in the Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — Indeed a new and fresh and open era of politics in government has begun.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — As a member of a rural riding, Mr. Speaker, I agree whole-heartedly with the comments made by my colleagues from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden and Last Mountain-Touchwood who moved and seconded the Speech from the Throne. I compliment and congratulate you both.

I just want to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to point out to this Assembly some of the legislative history of my constituency, Saltcoats. This history is part of the reason that I proudly carry the voice of my constituents into this legislature.

Let me share with the members here the fact that in 1905 when Saskatchewan became a province the first Speaker of the House was Thomas MacNutt, the member from Saltcoats. As well, Saltcoats was honoured again from 1965 to 1971 by having James Snedker serve the legislature as Speaker of the House.

Further, Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pride to represent Saltcoats, and it gives me great pride to share the honour of those members who served this riding before me. I'd like to recognize the contribution made to this Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan by the man who was the last member to serve Saltcoats in a cabinet position. Many of you know Mr. Edgar Kaeding, and many of you have had the pleasure of working with him.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — As I indicated before, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have been elected to public office to represent the voice of my constituents in an open, honest, accessible, and accountable government. With that commitment in mind, I want to inform my constituents that I will have a constituency office in Esterhazy. It will be open early in the new year and I do look forward to assisting my constituents in whatever way I can.

The thrust by our government with a renewed spirit of trust, co-operation, and community indicates to me that together we will confront the problems challenging us and together we will work to solve them the Saskatchewan way.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it to be important to introduce to this Assembly my constituency of Saltcoats. Saltcoats is a tremendously important area of the province. It is a vital piston in the engine of our provincial economy. But before I get into this discussion, let me first provide you with the geographic description.

Mr. Speaker, Saltcoats is a vast constituency that stretches from the majestic Qu'Appelle Valley in the south to just north of the town of Saltcoats, a distance of some 65 kilometres. It includes the town of MacNutt in the north-east corner, and on the west it borders the constituency of Melville. On the east, it borders Manitoba, an approximate distance of 80 kilometres. The Yellowhead highway is a major access to my riding from the east and west. The No. 9 Highway provides access from the north and south.

In addition to the communities that I just mentioned, Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Saltcoats includes the communities of Spy Hill, Tantallon, Gerald, Marchwell, Bredenbury, Waldron, Dubuc, Bangor, Atwater, Stockholm, Yarbo, Bird's Point, Churchbridge, Langenburg, and my home community of Esterhazy.

These communities are separated by fertile farm land and several creeks and valleys, making it an ideal mixed

farming area, including beef, hog, dairy, and poultry production, as well as the production of grain and oilseeds.

It is also a scenic tourist area, Mr. Speaker. The strength and determination of the people in Saltcoats have resulted in the development of many attractions and facilities such as Gopherville, the Kaposvar historic site, and several regional parks.

The people I am talking about are farmers, labourers, professionals, small-business people, men and women, seniors and youth, all rallying around a cause in their own community.

As a result, we see many recreational and cultural facilities, health care facilities, churches, and educational facilities. Mr. Speaker, many of these facilities were nurtured by volunteers or by the many organizations that thrive in these communities such as youth or student groups, service clubs, church, and agricultural organizations.

You can readily see, Mr. Speaker, that Saltcoats is a busy community where lots is happening. The economy of this area is not only reliant on agriculture, but also on industry, based on potash development by IMC (International Minerals and Chemical Corporation) Canada.

Saltcoats is the melting pot of ethnic culture and traditions. This is reflected in the many museums and historic points of interest that are established across the constituency.

Truly, Mr. Speaker, Saltcoats is a vibrant community that looks to us for leadership. Speaking on behalf of my constituents, I know that Saltcoats will be there to do its share to get Saskatchewan back on its feet again. The constituents of Saltcoats want someone they can relate to and talk to, and someone who will listen to their needs and ideas and put them into action, and above all, Mr. Speaker, someone who will respect their point of view. I intend to do that.

The Leader of the Opposition says he has ideas to suggest. The former premier had all kinds of opportunity to bring forth ideas and programs and to debate them. But he chose to shut down debate and he chose to shut down the legislature and the people responded.

(1630)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — I just want to elaborate on the spirit of the hard-working, unselfish, community-minded people of my riding and their belief in democratic rights and freedoms.

Let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker. The situation that comes to mind occurred in my home town. Mrs. Bender, one of our senior women who celebrated her 94th birthday on October 20, suffered a stroke early the next day, election day. After being rushed to the local hospital and being attended to medically, her first and

foremost concern was not for herself and for her physical condition, but for her democratic right to vote. She proceeded to ask for someone to bring her a ballot so that she could participate in the election. She was able to exercise her right to vote, something that she was not able to do in her early life.

It is with great regret, Mr. Speaker, that I inform the Assembly that Mrs. Bender is no longer with us but her legacy lives on. Mrs. Bender's attitude, spirit, and determination is very indicative of the feelings and character of many constituents in my riding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address the issue of taxation. As one of the hundreds of parents and taxpayers in the Saltcoats constituency, I welcome the repeal of the expanded PST (provincial sales tax).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — Since October 21, I have received many compliments on the removal of this stifling tax. The removal of this tax does stimulate the economy by safeguarding jobs and puts millions of real dollars back into the pockets of the Saskatchewan consumers. In turn, Mr. Speaker, this money is spent in local businesses on food, clothing, books and other necessities.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you something about the confidence that the business community in my riding had in our new government even before the election. During visits and discussions with main street business owners, two days before the election, they told me of their plans to reprogram their cash registers on Saturday to prepare for Tuesday's business.

And when, on October 22, I went around to check on how businesses were coping with the change, Mr. Speaker, they assured me they had no problems and appreciated the immediate action on the part of our government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — Not only that, Mr. Speaker, many had indicated to me that they had already noticed the increase in customer patronage.

The backbone of my constituency is agriculture, Mr. Speaker. Therefore I'm happy to see that one of the top priorities, as outlined in the Speech from the Throne, is to safeguard the family farm. I also want to commend our Premier and the Minister of Agriculture on the role they played in the unique Ottawa lobby with farmers from across the province and the rest of Canada.

Farmers in my riding are anxious to see improvements negotiated with respect to GRIP and NISA, and they have provided me with many suggestions to put forward. Farmers also realize, as we in government do, Mr. Speaker, that these programs do not provide sufficient enough funding to bridge the gap with respect to falling prices on a year to year basis. There must be an adequate pay-out in the form of a third line of defence by the federal government as was promised almost two years ago now, and it must be paid out immediately.

My constituents are telling me there has to be some form of immediate debt relief or many farmers will not be on the land come spring seeding.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the situation is very serious indeed and we have to make the federal government understand that. Farm families cannot stand the stress any longer.

As a taxpayer of this province, I'm pleased to see the initiatives outlined in the Speech from the Throne to address the issue of mounting debt in the province, debt that has mounted for the last nine and a half years, Mr. Speaker. The establishment of the Financial Management Review Commission will lead to better efficiency in government spending as well as improve the financial accountability of the government.

This has to be a concern of my constituents over the last number of years, but no one in government was willing to listen. The past administration chose to ignore that concern. This government, Mr. Speaker, has the common decency and respect for the electorate to deal with the issue.

I'm also pleased to see our government taking immediate action to reduce the wasteful and uncontrollable spending of the previous administration.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — We simply cannot continue to act as if the provincial treasury is a bottomless well of public money. Our plan of bringing the annual deficit under control first and then systematically attacking and reducing the overall provincial debt load again illustrates, Mr. Speaker, the common sense, pragmatic, hands-on approach of this government with which constituents are satisfied.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, we have great support for these initiatives and people are very patient and tolerant of the situation we are facing. They are willing to give these new thrusts an opportunity to get off the ground. This government offers the people of this province renewed hope and a new vision to lead them into the next century.

Mr. Speaker, the new direction that this government has set in terms of democratic reform is to be commended. Certainly new ground must be broken in this area. I am pleased to see the public consultative process being utilized. This, Mr. Speaker, will develop and restore public trust in the political and governmental process.

Of key importance to the people of Saskatchewan is the commitment we have made in the Speech from the Throne to hold by-elections within six months of a vacancy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — It was deplorable that many residents of this province were without a voice in this legislature, some for almost two years — almost two years, Mr. Speaker — without a voice. Not one constituency, not

two constituencies, but four, Mr. Speaker — four constituencies without a voice. Where was the support for the farmers in the rural communities then, Mr. Speaker? By introducing legislation in this Assembly we will ensure that residents of this province will have a voice within a six-month period.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — This, Mr. Speaker, shows Saskatchewan people that we have been listening to them and now we are acting on their wishes.

The move to develop a code of ethics and conflict of interest guide-lines for elected officials and public servants is another example by our government to respond to the concern of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

The ward system will be an option to which municipal governments can once again look forward. Yes indeed, we are setting a clear signal to the people of this province that we are an open, honest, and responsible government.

Mr. Speaker, as an educator I see the need for our government to place education as a priority item. I know that education costs are high and likely will continue to rise, but, Mr. Speaker, we in this province cannot afford the cost of ignorance and illiteracy.

We need to seriously look at education funding in all respects. Some of the areas we have to look at are curriculum development and implementation, the delivery of new programs, and the student loan program, just to name a few.

I want to mention to my constituents that I will have input into these issues because I have been assigned to the legislative Standing Committee on Education, Mr. Speaker, and I'm honoured to serve in that capacity.

Mr. Speaker, I have several other areas of concern that I'd like to express on behalf of my constituents. One concern has to do with the delivery of the social programs and the integration of one program with another. Included in this area are concerns about poverty and hunger and a recent necessity for food banks.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about the unemployment level in Saskatchewan, the loss of jobs, the minimum wage issue, and the fact that people, particularly youth, have been leaving this province in droves. Mr. Speaker, when this happens we not only lose our tax base but also the educational investment we have made in these people, not to mention the emotional cost to families.

We also need to look closely at housing, and in particular at housing for seniors.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to express my concern about the state of roads and highways in this province. I am convinced that this government will in time restore our highway system to the same high-quality level that existed prior to 1982.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — As we rebuild this province with a renewed spirit of co-operation and community, improvements will be made in these areas, which is in keeping with our positive vision for the future.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, Saltcoats constituents are telling me that the policy of divisiveness and confrontation that has existed in this province over the last nine and one half long years has been thrown out the window. They also tell me, Mr. Speaker, that the spirit of trust and co-operation is emerging once more to provide a positive vision for the future. Together we must work to build and rebuild our communities for the betterment of all the people of this great province of ours.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, it's a special honour and privilege to take my place in this Assembly and proudly continue to enter debate on behalf of my constituents. I want to take this opportunity to thank my family and all those who worked in my campaign, especially the many young people. Finally of course, I must thank the voters of Saltcoats constituency for the support and trust that they have placed in me.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to beg leave of the Assembly to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly, Mr. Terry Stevens, Mr. Dan Wirl, and Maurice Werezak, who we actually met last week as well. They are very active not only in the trade union movement in Saskatoon, but also in various community affairs. And it's a great pleasure to welcome them to this Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

Mr. Langford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to congratulate you on your election as Speaker of this Assembly.

I am pleased to stand here today to offer a few words about the throne speech and what it means to our constituents in Shellbrook-Torch River. We are a rural constituency that stretches from Canwood to Choiceland and from Waskesiu to the North Saskatchewan River.

I believe I was elected because the people wanted a change.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1645)

Mr. Langford: — We were tired of political games being played with farm problems. We were tired of high taxes and we were tired of a government that would not listen to the ordinary people.

Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign I talked to a lot of people. I want to share that with you — some of the things my constituents were telling me that they want from a new government. The number one issue in Shellbrook-Torch River is the farm crisis. Farming is the most important industry in our constituency.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that as a farmer we are worried about what we have seen over the past nine and a half years. Over the past nine and a half years, we have seen more and more people leaving the farms. They weren't leaving the farms because they didn't want to farm; they were leaving because they couldn't afford to farm. In many cases farmers were being forced off the land by the banks and by FCC (Farm Credit Corporation), and even by the provincial government.

I am very pleased that since we were elected we have asked for an end to the farm foreclosure. We have asked for this because we want farmers to be able to get back on track.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — During the election I had a lot of farmers from Shellbrook through to Smeaton say that they need a right government that would listen — a government that will work in their interest, not those of the banks.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — I am glad to be a member of a government that has invited ordinary farmers to speak their minds on the problems that they are facing. I am pleased that we have invited farmers to speak for themselves in Ottawa. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, people have been saying at the farm gate that we need changes to GRIP. They say that it does not make any sense to have a program that isn't tied to the cost of production.

This is certainly the case in Shellbrook-Torch River. Agriculture is different across the province, and if it is different, how can we expect a rich program to meet the needs of different areas as was the case with GRIP? We must change GRIP so that it does reflect the cost of production that differs from area to area. The GRIP and NISA programs are badly flawed. They involve too much red tape and policing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — And this is both costly and unnecessary. I am pleased to be part of a government that has said to the farmers, we believe in you and we trust you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — The minister for Crop Insurance made a good point by saying that we don't need bin police in this province. It is frustrating to farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — The last thing farmers in Canwood or Meath Park need is another government official looking into their lives. Mr. Speaker, this program, GRIP and NISA, are not meeting the needs of the farmers today.

It might be the right time to look at establishing an agriculture program that are more tailored to meeting the needs of the different areas that do exist in our province.

Mr. Speaker, Shellbrook-Torch River is known across Saskatchewan for its beautiful parks: Emma Lake, Anglin Lake, Waskesiu, Candle Lake, Christopher Lake. It is important that we keep these parks alive and open. One way to do this is to make sure that our forests are protected. We also need to make sure that our wildlife is well managed. Forestry is also a major industry in Shellbrook-Torch River. We are home to the tree nursery, Nisbet northern forests, and a large number of small saw mills.

People in Christopher Lake and Paddockwood understand the importance of our forests in keeping our economy going. We understand that pulp and paper are major industries and provide many hundreds of jobs. But we also know that many of our forest deals done by the previous government were done in secret. We know that the province did not get the best deal possible for the people in Paddockwood and Christopher Lake.

Mr. Speaker, we want to know about the privatization deals and the forestry contracts that have been signed in the past nine and a half years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — That is why I am pleased to support this government that has promised to open up the books and to make public the secret deals. My constituents want to make sure that we will have many more years of forestry jobs in Shellbrook-Torch River. We want to make sure that the jobs at Weyerhaeuser are safe, but we also want to know that the government will protect the industry. We want to make sure that forest management, reforestation, and public access are protected.

Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents graze their cattle in forest areas or are small lumber operators or hunt and fish in areas that have been privatized. Indian people know the importance of our land. The people at Sturgeon Lake, Wahpeton, the Little Red (River) Reserve have been concerned about the loss of our forests and wildlife.

Many Indian people in my riding, the foresters are their way of life. It is a way of life we are coming to understand and appreciate better. But let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, the people of the Indian reserves are suffering too.

I am very pleased that the Minister for Social Services has given more freedom to the Indian bands in dealing with social service "matters". I hope this will help bring Indians, Metis, and white people closer together.

Over the years my constituency has seen a loss of forestry jobs and a loss of money from forestry. Take for example the RM (rural municipality) of Buckland. Take the land that P.A. pulp mill is on now, used to be located in this RM. Several years ago the province allowed the land to be annexed by the city of P.A. The result was a loss of revenue and tax and grants.

We can't turn back the clock, however we can work to ensure that the RMs are protected from the loss of industry and jobs to neighbouring cities. And we can work towards a better meaning of financing our RMs and school boards.

The throne speech has addressed this area. I am pleased the government is going to work on improving municipal financing. It is important to take the tax pressure off the rural ratepayers. Everyone's taxes are going up municipally, but imagine if you were losing taxpayers and the cost was still rising. This is the situation many RMs and school boards are facing now in Shellbrook-Torch River.

Mr. Speaker, we want for our families the same things that we want for everyone else. We want good schools; we want good services. However, with the loss of population from our rural areas, it is not easy for municipalities and school boards to find the money. I am pleased that our government will work to change this situation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — Small businesses are also feeling the pinch of the farm crisis. Looking at our Main Street you can tell that they have been hurt. People are going out of business and very little has been done about it. The last government decided they should increase taxes to help these businesses. That made no sense to anyone but the government. I have never understood how the PST was supposed to help bring in businesses. If you ask a small-business person on Main Street, Shellbrook if the taxes help or hurt them, they always say it hurt them.

I am glad our government is putting money back into the pockets of the farm families and the working people. From talking to people in the coffee shops back home, I know they never did want the PST. I know that our promises to bring the province back in line and to cut this tax was important to them. I was very pleased that our government has appealed the PST. I will support the original motion and I do not support the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It now being 5 o'clock this House stands adjourned until 7 o'clock this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.