

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Murray: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly the grade 3 and 4 class from Pilot Butte School, seated in your gallery. There are 55 students there with their teachers, Mrs. Gaudry and Mrs. Mayes-Wilson; their chaperon, Mrs. Pat Bialowas; and their bus driver, Ruth Betteridge.

I had the privilege of teaching these children, Mr. Speaker, as well as teaching in Pilot Butte School for 17 years, and I ask you all to join me in welcoming them here this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and through you to the House, 17 grade 8 students from the Glaslyn School. They are in Regina today to tour and as well to tour the Legislative Buildings. I expect that they will have had an interesting day so far and I hope that the remainder of the day will be interesting as well.

I'll be meeting with them after the question period for pictures and to talk to them and answer the questions if they have any. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the legislature, the grade 6 class of the Redvers School. Redvers is a town in my community down in the very south-east corner. And I'd like to welcome them here today and I'd appreciate it if everyone else would welcome them also. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Carlson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, a constituent of mine and a friend and a worker of mine that helped me out in my political aspirations, Morris Elfenbaum from Tullymet and his father Jack Elfenbaum.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Budget Provisions

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a short question to the Minister of Health. Will she confirm today, the *Leader-Post* article of a week ago and once more this morning, that there will be a \$100 user fee applied to chiropractic services in Saskatchewan?

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, I will not make any comment on what may or may not be in the budget as a result of media speculation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A new question. Mr. Speaker, that minister is doing an admirable job of explaining how the budgetary process works in our legislature and the importance that an announcement of a line budget item to the public before this legislature has a chance to deal with it and the real significance of that. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a new question to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Finance, is it not true, sir, that you personally gave the order to provide this line item information outside this Assembly in the hope that you could avoid an attack by your own MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) on user fees? Is it not true, Mr. Minister, that this specific budget leak was done by your own instructions?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer to the member from Rosthern's question is no. He is now into the realm of speculation in the same way as some of the media stories. As a matter of fact, my colleagues are saying probably fantasy. The answer to the question is no.

The budget will be presented on May 7. All of the facts in the budget for this fiscal year will then be known. And I ask the member opposite to just be patient for a few more days and he'll get all that information provided to him and then he won't have to speculate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A new question to the Minister of Finance again. Mr. Minister, we know as a matter of fact that the instruction to inform chiropractors came directly from you. And the intent was that you would be able to avoid an attack from your own members when you are imposing these user fees. We know, Mr. Minister, that you personally gave the instruction and that your purpose in leaking this budget information was to draw a distinction between user fees and premiums. That was your objective.

And I ask you directly, Mr. Minister, if your budget does in fact contain a deductible on chiropractic's services on the May 7 budget, will you do the honourable thing and resign?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should know a great deal about misleading the public and about not informing the public.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — When those gentlemen were

in office just a few six months ago, they wrote the book on that. And it's now reported very clearly, Mr. Speaker, in one of the recent publications of the Provincial Auditor, the special report, where all kinds of things which I might say might verge on the cliff of corruption, were done by the former government. And so they should know about that.

I say to the member again: the budget will come down on May 7. All of the information about the budget will be provided. He will know then in the same way as the public will know, as they have a right to know. I am not going to at this time get involved in speculation to the extent that he does or some other people do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the same minister. Mr. Minister, I'm trying to assure you that this is not speculation. Mr. Minister, a source in your department informs the opposition that you intend to remove optometrists from the medicare system for the majority of Saskatchewan people.

I ask you to confirm that your government will now demand that Saskatchewan people not go to the eye doctor even once every two years as is now the system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I repeat again to the member opposite that I will not speculate on what's going to be in the budget until the budget is formally presented. That would be inappropriate on my part. The member can rumour monger all he wants and speculate all he wants. He will have the information a few short days from now, and he's just going to have to wait until the budget comes down.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A new question to the minister. I assure you it is not speculation, and I assure you that when this budget comes down on May 7, we are going to be asking you the question that I will ask you once more. That when these so-called rumours, what you're calling rumours and we are finding out now are actually fact, that when that materializes you will now commit to this Assembly that you will do the honourable thing and resign, as is a long-standing tradition and practice in the Canadian parliamentary system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, let me assure the member opposite, I will do the kind of honourable thing which former government . . . Finance ministers in the former government never did. I will present here on behalf of this government the true picture of the finances of this province. We will present a picture of the mess that the members opposite created when they were on this side of the House. I will present a budget that's open and honest and accountable, and that will be a fresh, new start — something which we haven't had for the last 10 years in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I direct a new question to the Minister of Health once more. Madam Minister, you and your leader knew the financial difficulty this province was in while you served in opposition. You knew, and the former government implored you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, the nerve that I'm hitting is obvious and I would just implore government members, just cool it while I ask the Minister of Health this question.

You knew, and the former government implored you to restrain your demands for even greater spending. You knew that health costs were exceeding our capacity to support them and that the deficit situation was extremely serious. You knew and your leader knew. And in spite of that, you swore in this Assembly that you would never, ever allow user fees or premiums.

Madam Minister, I understand. I understand that you have succeeded in convincing the Finance minister to opt for higher taxes instead of health premiums, so I ask you now: will you keep your word and oppose user fees, no matter who proposes them?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I want to respond to this question because the member from Rosthern says falsely that we knew. I say to the member from Rosthern that I wrote to the former premier, the member from Estevan, and the minister of Finance three days after the election campaign was launched. I said on behalf of myself and the Leader of the Liberal Party, have an independent audit of the books because we don't believe that \$265 million projected deficit. I got a four-page letter back from the minister of Finance saying: don't worry; it's on track. It turned out to be a total falsehood. That deficit was over \$900 million because of your cover-up and your cooking of the books.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, thank you. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance, and please, Mr. Minister, no more opposition speeches.

Mr. Minister, a source inside your own department has informed the official opposition that the budget contains a provision — and listen carefully, Mr. Minister — contains a provision for a \$1 per package increase in the tax on cigarettes. Will the minister confirm this information today and share with all the people of this province instead of your friends?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I simply want to say again to the members opposite that this government is committed to dealing with the kinds of financial mess that the former members had left behind which the Premier just spoke of. There will not be the kind of cover-up that was perpetrated on the Saskatchewan legislature and the people for the last 10 years. There will be a forthright and honest budget, and the member will find out what's in

that budget when it's brought down on May 7.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, as usual the answer comes back, and I believe it's more smoke and mirrors. I believe where there is smoke there is fire.

Sir, while smokers around this province are running out to stock up on cigarettes before May 7, people have inside information. Others in our province are not so fortunate. Mr. Minister, if the information coming from within your own department confirms on May 7 that this is true, will you do the honourable thing and resign?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member from Thunder Creek that if there is smoke, they are the arsonists because they put this province on fire with a deficit for the last 10 years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — It is those kinds of irresponsible deficits that have created the kind of debt that we have in the province today, which is almost \$14,000 per individual person, young and old.

Mr. Speaker, that can't continue. The budget that I'm going to present on May 7 will steer a new course. It will bring a new direction. And it will bring responsibility — something which the members opposite never heard of or knew about when they were on this side of the House on the treasury benches.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Well it seems, Mr. Speaker, that the minister is saying that there is no tax increase on tobacco in the May 7 budget.

New question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, if in your May 7 budget you think you can escape by having that tax at 95 cents or 85 cents or 80 cents, then I think, sir, you have been smoking something other than tobacco.

Mr. Minister, are you telling us today, are you telling us today that there will be no increase in the price of tobacco in this province on your budget on May 7?

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I am not going to indicate to the member or to the House what might be in the budget, because that would be quite inappropriate. The member opposite knows that. He's going to have to wait until budget day to get that information.

But I'm going to tell him this. I'm going to tell him this, as I did yesterday. If there are any tax changes in the budget that comes down on May 7 or whatever reductions in spending that there are going to be, Mr. Speaker, they are going to be the responsibility of those 10 lonely members over there because of what they did to the province when they were in office for those 10 years. It will be on their heads that the people of Saskatchewan and future

generations will have to pay the kind of financial mess which those members did create in this province when they were here for their own selfish and irresponsible reasons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. New question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, everyone in this province knows that these leaks are not a normal budget consultation process. This opposition agrees with an open budget consultation, which you haven't done, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — What we do not accept and will not support is a Minister of Finance who picks and chooses when to leak information, and who will be informed and who will not be informed.

Will the minister confirm that on May 7 his budget includes a personal income tax increase of approximately 10 per cent?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, it was those members opposite who the auditor reports in their open process, as the member says, who paid \$5 million to 130 employees who were not working for the departments that paid them, 19 of them which nobody knows what they did.

It was those members opposite who, in their open budgetary process, had free liquor delivered to their offices from the Liquor Board. It was those members opposite, Mr. Speaker, on whom the auditor reports all kinds of wrongdoing that was done in Saskatchewan Transportation Company.

If that's the open government that he wants us to employ, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member opposite it's never going to happen as long as we are on this side of the House and on the executive benches.

Mr. Speaker, I say again to the member, the budget will come down on May 7 and on May 7 we will announce in this House what the provisions of the budgets are.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — New question to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the major elements of your budget are now known. A 10 per cent income tax increase, \$1 a pack on tobacco, de-insuring of optometry, de-insuring of chiropractic services, a freeze on capital projects in health and education.

Mr. Speaker, considering that the details of this budget are now known, and considering that the member from Churchill Downs, the Associate Minister of Finance, or in the Premier's words, the toy minister of Finance, told an April 20 scam in this building that if such details became known, he would have no choice but to resign.

Is it your position, Mr. Minister, that you are immune, and

that if these details do in fact be confirmed in the budget, that the member from Churchill Downs is going to take the fall for you leaking information on a selective basis?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — I'm not sure what the question was, Mr. Speaker, but I want to repeat again to the member opposite that the budget will be coming down on May 7. And on May 7 we'll provide the information that this legislature has a right to have. We're not going to provide the information in advance. I'm not going to comment on speculation that the members opposite raise in this House or through the media, because that would be inappropriate.

Tax Increases

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, on a visit to Moose Jaw last fall, in the campaign you were quoted as saying that if you and your colleagues were elected, you would — and I quote — would not go back to taxing people.

Now despite your assurances, your government has increased rates on telephones, on electricity, on natural gas, and auto insurance. How can you justify a tax grab of these kinds of rates when you assured the voters of this province that you would not go back to taxing the people?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is very simple. And I would have thought the Leader of the Liberal Party would have understood it, and I'm sure she does.

The Leader of the Liberal Party, as I, was campaigning on a set of facts which turned out to be totally false — books which had been totally cooked. We know that via Gass; we know that via Ernst Young, the report on the Crown corporation's board.

If there had been an operating deficit for '91-92 of \$265 million as these people had projected that there would be, there would be no need for tax increases. We could have found that 265 in reductions. The fact of the matter is, it was a total and complete fabrication for the last 10 years. We are in a financial crisis and you know that as well as they do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. You too, sir, know . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I didn't recognize the member yet. Now I recognize the member from Saskatoon Greystone.

Ms. Haverstock: — I remind the Premier that he went throughout the province saying that there was a probable billion dollar deficit. And he also said that \$4.5 billion should be enough. And I want to remind you as well, sir, that the Minister of Finance in his own news release last December stated this, and I quote: Government should lead by example and exercise restraint before asking taxpayers to pay more.

How can you call this leading by example when you announce increases before ever attempting to show us, with a plan, any restraint that is going to be coming forward in a budget.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Liberal Party of course makes a totally false accusation. She says leading by example. We have the smallest cabinet in 20 years in the province of Saskatchewan as restraint.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — She asks that we lead by example. We've taken a 5 per cent cut in cabinet ministers' salaries — by example.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — She says that we should . . . And she wants more, she wants more money of the taxpayers' dollars. She says, lead by example. We have cut \$28 million of advertising and polling and budgeting expenditures that these people are involved in. We lead by example. And that is even before we have introduced the budget.

I say to the hon. lady, you wait until the budget is introduced. Because of the jackpot that these people have placed all people in this House and everybody in the province of Saskatchewan virtually having bankrupted this province, because of this financial fiasco, we're all going to have to have restraint. We have to turn this province around. And I expect the Leader of the Liberal Party to join us in this cause because of that mismanagement of 10 years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Changes to GRIP

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Agriculture tried to tell the farmers of Saskatchewan that he had all the necessary approvals to make his misguided and ill-conceived changes to the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) program. Will the Minister of Agriculture tell us in the legislature and the farmers of the province if he had agreements, whether they were verbal or otherwise, of the other provinces or the federal government, the agreement to make changes to the farmers' contracts without notifying them prior to March 15, 1992.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, the department contacted the required number of provinces and received approval for the agreement after a promise from the federal minister that he would support those changes if that condition were met.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that he contravened the contract. He knows that. Because he

forced his deputy to make an affidavit before the court yesterday. And he's going to change it in lieu of that. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister this question: will he table any correspondence with the other provinces and the federal government on any of the material that he has that he notified the farmers and show it to those other participants in the agreement that he notified the farmers before March 15, '92?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the members opposite, wanting the public to believe that they actually are concerned about the time farmers had for consideration of this question but voting against the motion to extend that time for consideration, stand here in the House self-righteously and make comment about consultation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — If the minister doesn't have an approval in writing and only a verbal agreement, then you need to table that information in a written statement equally with the court in Melville and provide that information to them indicating that you have verbal agreement.

But did you provide them with that same information that you provide to this Assembly — that you're going to force the people of this Assembly to legitimize the untruth that you perpetrated on the people of Saskatchewan. Are you going to tell them that on March 15 they received a letter when they in fact didn't? And as the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) reporters told us today: you legalized lying in this Assembly?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order! I will ask the member to withdraw that last statement indicating that the minister lied and that we are . . . I'll ask the member from Morse to withdraw the last statement.

Mr. Martens: — I will withdraw the last statement about legalizing lying.

However, I want, Mr. Speaker, the minister to provide . . .

The Speaker: — The member has withdrawn. He's rephrasing his question. And I ask the member to put his question.

Mr. Martens: — Will the minister provide to this Assembly a reasonable assurance that you will not force members of this Assembly to legitimize your incapacity to lead the GRIP program in the province of Saskatchewan by saying to the people of the province that you had a letter that you deemed to have sent out when you did not?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite by now surely know the process by which the GRIP program was to be reviewed. The committee brought its report forward, the report was taken to a federal ministers' meeting in February, it was taken to the national GRIP

committee meeting in February, and by the middle of February that report was ready to be implemented.

I would like the member opposite to stand here and tell me they did not co-operate with the federal government in obstructing the progress of those revisions designed by the farmers of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, in light of the meeting that we had out here regarding the GRIP and the farmers earlier this week, will you provide for those farmers, who have the wind blowing at their backsides these days with dust flying all over in a GRIP that doesn't guarantee anything, will you legitimize the passing of this Bill that the Minister of Agriculture is going to do?

Are you going to stand in your place in this Assembly and legitimize, as a former attorney general, legitimize the truth that isn't the truth? Are you going to legitimize that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — I don't know what more needs to be said, but I want to quote an article that appeared in the paper in the last couple of days: There is also a feeling that some of the public expressions of displeasure with a new GRIP are being orchestrated for partisan political purposes. Enough said.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. People know that the Clerk has already read special orders. Could we please have order. I'd ask the Clerk to please read the special order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this afternoon to stand in this House and support the government's Speech from the Throne. It's been the first time I've had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to say a few words in this Assembly since the election, so I want to take a couple of minutes to extend my congratulations to some people who deserve it.

First of all, to all of my colleagues who were elected in the New Democratic Party to this Assembly, I wish to express my congratulations to them for a job well done. I look forward to working with them over the next four years.

I'd also like to congratulate the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the member from Meadow Lake; it's indeed an honour to do that. Those of us who have had the

opportunity, including the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden at Christmas, who did an excellent job, and the member from Meadow Lake who did an excellent job.

The Speaker: — Order. Could I ask the government side to just tone it down a bit. I can't even hear the member's speech from here.

Mr. Solomon: — Both movers and seconders, Mr. Speaker, are given the privilege of participating in the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, which is very rare and indeed is well deserved. I would also like to extend my congratulations on a job well done, not only to the member for Meadow Lake, but to the colleague from Regina, the member from Wascana Plains, on her excellent job in seconding the motion.

Also, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to congratulate the Lieutenant Governor on giving what I would, I think most people would, agree with, as the best Speech from the Throne that we've heard in this Assembly in at least 10 years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — The Lieutenant Governor is indeed a very gracious person and undertakes her position very well and is respected by all the members of this Assembly.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Premier on his election of course, and on his selection of a cabinet which I believe is second to none in this country. It's a cabinet that will provide the leadership that this province requires to get out of the massive financial crisis that the former Conservative government put us into. And I look forward to working with them in that objective as well.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I want to thank my constituents for bestowing upon me the privilege of representing them in this Assembly. The constituency of Regina North West is unique to Saskatchewan. It's unique in many ways, not just the fact that my constituents are very hard-working people, but that 80 per cent of the voters in my constituency are 44 years of age and under. And that means, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of young families, a lot of young children living in this constituency, and in my view, the future of our province in my constituency is going to be very, very . . . in very good hands I believe, because of the fact that there are so many hard-working people there and honest people as well.

There are many, I think, individuals that I'd like to single out, but I won't do that this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, because of time limitations. But I want to thank all of my constituents for their support over the years. I'm honoured to represent them, I'm proud to represent them, and I commit to work hard on their behalf in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I want to get to the Speech from the Throne now. I want to talk about three or four matters. I want to talk about the PC (Progressive Conservative) record, which I believe people have to be reminded of, in a very brief way. I want to talk about the last election campaign,

what the New Democratic Party government has done since the election campaign, and some comments on the actual speech.

I want to start this afternoon by saying that I've had the responsibility to represent the government on the CBC radio open-line show last Tuesday. And it was a traditional call-in show which had a participant, the House Leader from the Conservative Party — the member from Rosthern — and myself. And we had a couple of words about some of the issues of the day.

The primary purpose of the call-in show, Mr. Speaker, was to allow the public of Saskatchewan to call their elected representatives, and to answer the question: what issues do you want your government to tackle?

And, Mr. Speaker, I think I can summarize the callers concerns and the callers focus in that afternoon show in two words. They want a government that is accountable and they want a government that is responsible.

And, Mr. Speaker, they talked about oh, six or seven items that I want to share with my colleagues in this Assembly, which I felt were quite important, and actually tie in very well with what our program has been during the last campaign, and what our accomplishments have been in the last four or five months.

They talked about cleaning up waste and mismanagement. And I'll say more about that shortly. They talked about getting our financial house in order. They asked the government to get our deficit under control in many ways, but to be more efficient, to be more streamlined, and to institute a fair taxation policy.

They're asking Saskatchewan people, and in particular those members of the opposition, to lower their expectations of what government can do because times are far different than what they used to be.

They're asking working people to work together, and all people in this province to work together, to ensure that jobs are available to the people in this province. They're asking to improve their working conditions for those that are holding down jobs at the moment. And they're asking to improve agricultural programs.

The message, Mr. Speaker, was very clear on that open-line show as it has been in the last election, as it has been over the course of the last four or five months. It's consistent.

The people of this province want a government that is accountable and responsible to the people of this province, and will be open with respect to the finances and compassion with respect to some of the laws that we implement. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the intention of our government through this throne speech.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech addresses those concerns plus others. But before I get into that I want to talk to the members here and to the people of Saskatchewan about a little history.

Someone once said that those of us who forget the lessons

of history, or do not learn the lessons of history, are doomed to repeat them. And what I want to share with the people of this province right now is some history as to what's happened in our province, how we got to where we are, why we're in the situation with respect to our financial condition and with respect to our population drain in the tough economic times.

I want to talk about four things the PCs did that got us to this point. The four things I want to talk about are their broken promises, their privatization initiatives, the building of their debt, and of course their mismanagement techniques.

And I think everyone will concur that the last 10 years under a Conservative government there's been a severe lack or a large lack of integrity and certainly no accountability or responsibility to the taxpayers of this province.

But we heard under the Conservative regime a number of promises that were made that were broken. And I want to talk about the broken promises because what this throne speech does, Mr. Speaker, is confirm what commitments we made in the last election and starts out by giving I think a very significant direction to fulfilling the commitments that we made in the 1991 campaign.

But the PCs, they talked about in their 10 years of government and during the course of election campaigns their interest and their commitment to balance the budget. Of course we know that never occurred after 10 consecutive budgets.

They talked about a business-like approach to government, and we've seen the Gass Commission and we've seen the Provincial Auditor reveal so often over the past four months and in so many instances in every financial transaction they undertook that that was as far away as you can be with respect to being business-like in transactions. They were far from business-like.

They promised to cut the cost of government. We've seen the cost of government expand by leaps and bounds over the last 10 years.

And they promised . . . of course everyone remembers the four famous promises of free telephones for seniors and the elimination of the gas tax and the elimination of the 5 per cent sales tax and of course the 10 per cent reduction in income tax. We saw, Mr. Speaker, those promises broken in spades.

But more importantly, I think what's happened in the last 10 years is the privatization programs of the former government have driven this province into a very significant debt situation.

In February of 1988 the deputy premier, who was then minister in charge of the Crown Management Board, the member from Souris-Cannington, said to the Crown Corporations Committee meeting — and it's in *Hansard* for everyone to read, in response to a question as to what his intention was with respect to privatizing the corporations — his response was: our plan as a government is to ensure that when you guys get back into

power you will never, ever be able to retrieve those Crown corporations or undertake to exercise economic authority or economic decisions with those instruments. That in essence is what the premier . . . the deputy premier, the Conservative deputy premier committed in *Hansard* in response to questioning that his government intended to do.

And the sad part about that commitment, Mr. Speaker, it's the only commitment that they made that they kept. And what resulted in this commitment, as we've seen in the privatization of the Potash Corporation which last year alone took the taxpayers to task for another \$361 million in losses.

During the campaign, the Potash Corporation shares and the Cameco shares, which was part of Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation before it was privatized, both of them lost \$527 million on the sale of shares that this former government, the Conservative former government, sold during the election campaign of last fall. And that tacked on another half a billion dollars in debt to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, which I'm sure is going to be viewed very, very badly by the taxpayers.

We've seen, Mr. Speaker, the deficit and the debt increase from a balanced budget of 1982 after 10 consecutive balanced budgets by the former Blakeney government where we had little debts in terms of Crown corporation capital debt — it was self-liquidating, it was like a mortgage; and plus we had a billion dollar Heritage Fund of surplus budgets from time to time, to a point where we've run, according to the Gass Commission, a deficit in the last 10 years of \$8.7 billion. And this, Mr. Speaker, is historical fact confirmed by the Gass Commission.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, we saw the government through their 10 years exercise the best examples of mismanagement and waste and greed with respect to taxpayers' money of any government in the history of the world, I think. We saw, you know, the former premier, the member from Estevan, we were spending a thousand dollars a night for his hotel rooms. That's what taxpayers were paying.

We were spending for the minister responsible for the Crown Management Board, the deputy premier who said he was going to gut the Crown corporations and leave the debt with the taxpayers, he was spending \$50,000 on personal out-of-pocket expenses that were paid for by the Crown Management Board, which was unprecedented by former governments.

An Hon. Member: — Unconscionable.

(1445)

Mr. Solomon: — It was very unconscionable, as my colleague from Wascana Plains says. We saw the Crown Management Board pay the salary and severance of Otto Cutts, the former president of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, \$322,000 for 13 months work. When we asked the government about this, they never answered because they didn't call the Crown Corporations Committee to answer these questions for a

year and a half. But when we finally met last February, we asked these questions and we were told this amount, \$322,000, was paid to Mr. Cutts for 13 months work — \$120,000 in salary; \$120,000 in severance; \$51,000 for one year's out-of-pocket expenses with no receipts. He had \$35,000 in moving expenses. We're wondering if he moved a couple of houses to Ontario when he moved because that's what it would have cost to move a couple of houses. And the taxpayers got stuck with the bill.

And you know how that was paid? It was not paid by an order in council or paid by any legitimate means, it was paid on the instructions and the order of the former deputy premier — a verbal instruction — which is amoral, aghast, and illegal at worst.

And you think that's bad. When the privatization crew from England came over, we paid them \$705,000 out of the Crown Management Board — 531,000 of that was out-of-pocket expenses. Nice job if you can get it, but the taxpayers are stuck with \$531,000 out-of-pocket expenses, no receipts.

Why was it paid? Because the minister said: oh yes, pay the bill; everything's okay here. I'm not sure why the minister said that. We can guess. Maybe he's got a briefcase full of money somewhere.

We saw the Crown Management Board pay Wolfgang Wolff \$401,000, with a severance package of over \$236,000. These are unconscionable expenditures by the former government, Mr. Speaker. Unbelievable. And I have pages and pages, and so does the auditor, of other examples of waste and mismanagement.

Now, Mr. Speaker, accountability and responsibility is what I started out with. This is what the people of Saskatchewan wanted. But accountability means governments, no less than individuals, must stand behind their actions and their decisions. Everyone learns at an early age when they are a child that we must be responsible for our own actions, that there are consequences for our actions.

And it's a sad comment on the sorry record of the previous government that today people all over Saskatchewan are asking the government that we must restore what was once assumed — that governments should be accountable and open. And our message in this throne speech is clear. We will restore public trust by acting responsibly, reasonably, and boldly. We will be an accountable and open and honest government, Mr. Speaker.

If I may coin a phrase, we are acting with visionary practicalness. Of course I'm not the only member in this House to create new phrases by combining opposites. The member from Saskatoon Greystone is quite good as well. And I want to just raise this. Remember, Mr. Speaker, she called all MLAs in a December 26 *Leader-Post* story "vindictive sheep". She called all of us in this Assembly "vindictive sheep". All members of course except herself.

Now if you're the self-proclaimed moralist of your profession, such characterizations always except the

accuser. Fortunately if you are a flock of one, you can speak independently, follow your leader slavishly at the same time, and then come back and demand more money from the Board of Internal Economy for your flock of one.

But once you cast the logic aside, as the member has consistently done from Saskatoon Greystone, then you trumpet your ethical purity by calling all your colleagues, and I quote in a newspaper story, quote, "liars," end of quote. She's called us all that name. And of course she says our profession is a waste of time.

Then after this she goes back to the Board of Internal Economy and asks for more money again to help get her self-proclaimed but mistakenly labelled ethical message to the public. That's not my idea of accountability or responsibility. That's not the taxpayers' idea of accountability or responsibility. It's the same sort of garbage we've seen from the previous government.

So Liberals have the same ethics as the Conservatives. That's the conclusion of this remark, Mr. Speaker. Liberal, Tory, same old story. You've heard that phrase before. People in this country have said it from coast to coast. Liberal, Tory, same old story. And all they want to do is find out what the taxpayer can pay next for themselves. That's their credo. That's the old-line parties' priority.

Mr. Speaker, we have, as a government and a party, been very responsible and accountable. In the last campaign we've heard the Liberal Party private member here today say in the House that we made some commitments and some promises that we aren't keeping. And of course the Premier told her very directly that she is not on the right track and has made false accusations.

But I want to remind the people of this province and the members of this Assembly that in October 1991, during the campaign, the New Democratic Party issued a 19-point program card. And I have a photocopy of it right here. It's call the Saskatchewan way. Let's do it the Saskatchewan way. And we talked about renewing the Saskatchewan community. Working together, we can turn our economy around in the 1990s and ignite the spirit of community which built Saskatchewan.

We talked about the values of co-operation and compassion and fairness and how it can help build the future of hope and opportunity and prosperity for all Saskatchewan people. The 19 points we talked about opening the books, and what have we seen, Mr. Speaker? We said, when we get elected we're going to open the books. And did we do that? We struck the Financial Management Review Commission and the Gass report came down; we opened the books, Mr. Speaker.

We talked about a comprehensive review of all PC privatizations and business deals to determine if they're in the public interest. And that's an ongoing thing. We're doing that now. It'll take us some time to do that, but we're working on that commitment, Mr. Speaker.

We're talking in this platform card, Mr. Speaker, about working towards fiscal responsibility and a balanced budget over our first term, and we're working towards

that, and I would expect that when the budget comes down on May 7 that that'll be one of the steps we're taking towards that objective.

We talked about eliminating the 7 per cent provincial sales tax that was being harmonized, which would save 7,500 jobs over the next four years. We did that, Mr. Speaker, the day we got elected.

We talked about working with local manufacturers and businesses to increase the value added processing of our resource and commodity sectors for manufacturing purposes for domestic and export markets. We are starting to do that, Mr. Speaker. We've undertaken a number of initiatives already, and we've seen about 700 different companies from across Canada make inquiries to work in a co-operative manner to undertake to locate in Saskatchewan or to enhance their businesses here already.

We talked about and committed to work towards jobs and savings through a comprehensive energy conservation strategy. We've already announced one of our first elements of that.

We talked about a better quality of life, working with students and families and educators to develop a world class, accessible education system. That is under way. It's not complete; it'll take some time.

We talked about our commitment to a new, community-based health care system based on the wellness model. That is now in the process of being implemented.

We've committed to Saskatchewan's aboriginal people to honour land entitlements and promote self-government. We've committed to honour land entitlements, Mr. Speaker, and we're on the road to self-government.

We introduced an environmental bill of rights, or we promised to do that, and submit environmental legislation to guarantee public access to information and so on. That has been done. We have . . . or that will be done, I understand, in this session.

We have talked about fair labour laws and our commitment to them. That is in the Speech from the Throne. We talked about fighting Ottawa in terms of agriculture.

And I'd go on to all the 19 points, Mr. Speaker, but I don't have the time to pursue it entirely. What I want to do here is to remind the people of this province that the Conservatives and their governments made promise after promise that they failed to fulfil, except the one about destroying the Crown corporations and leaving the bill for the taxpayers.

In contrast, Mr. Speaker, the New Democratic Party government has made 19 commitments that in this throne speech have either been completed or are commenced or are starting to be completed over the term of our government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — When the budget comes down, Mr. Speaker, on May 7, we will see further many of these points in the Saskatchewan way program of 1991 be fulfilled, at least being on the road to being fulfilled.

The further contrast I want to draw here, Mr. Speaker, is that not only do we keep the commitments that we make in writing, but that we do it as quickly as we possibly can in the best interests of the people.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, that's honourable to go. And of course the Liberal and Conservative parties, they like to talk about promises they never keep; whereas our party take action to the commitments that we make and fulfil them as soon as we can.

The government has undertaken a number of initiatives, Mr. Speaker, on top of what we made commitments to do. And I want to take a couple of minutes to outline them to the people in this Assembly and to the people in this province. The opposition, the Conservative opposition, stand in this House and say, where is your plan? What are you going to be doing? Why don't you clean up this waste and mismanagement that you keep claiming that's out there? And the members opposite who are not too keen on listening to this, who are in the Conservative Party, because it hurts them a great deal to be reminded of history . . .

But what we've done, Mr. Speaker, some of the things I've mentioned already in our program we've committed to undertake and we've completed. We've opened the books. We've rolled back and eliminated the expanded 7 per cent PST (provincial sales tax). We undertook to make this legislature and government more democratic by having by-elections every six months. That's now by law. We've cancelled Fair Share. We've saved 15 to \$20 million there.

The Premier indicated today in question period we've got the smallest cabinet in 20 years which will probably save a couple hundred thousand dollars a year. We have cut government travel and advertising as the Premier indicated; that'll save about \$28 million.

We've closed the trade offices that the Tories set up in Zürich and Hong Kong and Minneapolis. That's saving the taxpayers \$2 million a year. We started mailing the SaskPower and the SaskEnergy bills together in one envelope. That's going to save about \$725,000 this year and more as postage rates go up on an annual basis.

We took a 5 per cent cut in our cabinet ministers' salaries. We froze MLAs' salaries for the second year in a row, and probably it'll be frozen for the next year as well.

We've eliminated \$8,000 a year that the Tories paid their legislative secretaries. They had 12 of them. There's another big saving of \$96,000 a year to the taxpayers every single year.

We've cancelled severance packages of \$12 million that would have been paid to the senior executive officers of this government and this Crown sector. MLAs have taken

a 25 per cent cut in their communications allowance. We've closed the Premier's office in Prince Albert, saving \$150,000 a year.

People forget this, but we reduced the president of SaskPower's salary from 455,000 down to 150,000 a year, a saving of 355,000 each year or \$1.2 million over the next four years. That's a responsible approach.

We froze out-of-scope government employees' salaries for the next year. And we're in the process of reviewing all these extra perks which we commend the president of SaskPower on bringing to our attention. But the other Crown executives will be making some initiatives in that area perhaps to reduce them as well.

My uncle used to say if you can save the pennies, the dollars will look after themselves. And what this government is doing, Mr. Speaker, is making a number of initiatives — in many cases saving millions, but in some cases saving 10 or 90 or \$100,000 here and there. When it all adds up, when the pennies all add up, we'll be saving the taxpayers of this province over \$140 million each year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — That, in my view, Mr. Speaker, is a responsible first-step approach to efficient and effective and accountable government and one which will in my view make the taxpayers less cynical about what happens with the Conservative and Liberal governments. And that's why I believe they voted for the NDP (New Democratic Party) in the last election, Mr. Speaker, because they're fed up with the type of cynical responses and cynical attitude that the old-line parties have practised in their undertakings as government.

The Speech from the Throne here, Mr. Speaker, puts forward a blueprint, in my view, of the next four years. It launches us in sending off and committing . . . or fulfilling the commitments of our election program. It's a responsible and an accountable approach towards government.

I support this Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, for four reasons. It's a major step toward: number one, bringing the task . . . or beginning the task of deficit reduction; number two, it sets a new, refreshing standard of open, honest, and accountable government; and thirdly, it provides hope for the disadvantaged; and fourthly, it renews the Saskatchewan spirit of co-operation and community which has been so sorrowfully lacking in the last 10 years.

This is the first major step and it reveals the plan and the direction, Mr. Speaker, that our government will take to restore common sense and competence to the management of the public treasury and to restore public faith in the ability of MLAs to serve the public interest and not their own, to provide hope for the less fortunate, and to reunite people in the challenging rebuilding task of our devastated province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to stand on this side of the House in support of this Speech from the Throne and I'm proud

to be a member of the New Democratic Party government. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1500)

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has now been six months since I had my first opportunity to speak in this Assembly as the member for Saskatoon Greystone. In my reply to the Speech from the Throne that day, I expressed hope that the government would prove itself worthy of the enormous trust placed in it by the Saskatchewan people. This government was elected because of the people's desire to rid themselves of the previous government and because of what they were told by the NDP.

Saskatchewan voters were told by the now-Premier and by his 65 NDP candidates: first, that \$4.5 billion has got to be enough; second, the deficit could be as much as \$1 billion; third, no new taxes — the PST ends at midnight, he said. Four, an NDP government would proceed with the recommendations of the Billinton inquiry. Five, that the NDP were the protectors of medicare. Six, there would be no patronage, no massive firings. Seven, that they have the experience, after years in opposition, to run the province.

Valuable time has passed, Mr. Speaker, since the election and that opening Speech from the Throne. Unfortunately, I'm far less hopeful about our new government than I was that day. In November they were beginning a new job, a very tough job, and I was willing to convey my support and the support of the people as they laid to work a course of action for the future of our province.

But now after six months of secretive decisions, after six months of dithering about the budget and GRIP, and the AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd) agreement, I see a pattern beginning to emerge and I am much less optimistic. I see evidence that the NDP really has little of a plan. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it was just as I suspected. The NDP was so interested in victory that they did not care what they said during the election. And I'm concerned that what people thought they were voting for was truly quite different from what they're actually getting.

The government members all campaigned, all of them campaigned, against what the Conservatives did while in power. In fact the NDP MLAs are still campaigning, if one is to listen to the paid advertising on the radio over the last two days that tells us that really it isn't their fault the mess that the province is in.

The NDP MLAs all talked about the terrible things the Conservatives had done — refusing to bring in a budget on time, using special warrants to cover their spending. Terrible, they said; would never happen under the NDP. Patronage, they cried, it's despicable — hiring your friends and party faithful at the expense of competent people. The NDP will clean up this situation, they claimed, to restore merit and competence to our civil service, they said.

Well, well. Not six months into this new government and

we have hundreds of people who've been hired to make room for whom? The NDP party faithful. And just how much did the taxpayers pay for the executive search, Mr. Speaker, that justified hiring the new president of SaskPower who we all knew had the job the day after the election?

How do they explain the pages and pages of members of government boards and agencies who were replaced because they did not have an identifiable affiliation with the NDP — the new criterion, it appears, for selection.

This is a government that bemoaned the lack of compassion shown for employees of the SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union) during the Fair Share debate.

Well let's really talk about compassion for a moment. I've received countless calls from government employees, many of whom have worked for various administrations, worked for many, many years long prior to the last 10 years, who have lost their jobs, received callous treatment from this government.

How much time do these members opposite spend worrying about the people? They have shown total lack of respect for the legislative staff of this very building who get virtually no notice of the opening of this session. This is a government, Mr. Speaker, that wants the people to give them six months to get together a budget, six months for them to get their plan together, but they can find it in their hearts to give the people in this very building 12 working days notice for an event that takes three weeks to organize. And that, sir, was over the Easter break.

Is this a government that really cares about people? If this is how they treat the people on the front lines, how much do they really care about the people that they don't see every day?

I'm fearful that this new administration has thrown Saskatchewan back into the hands of old-style politics once again. Now they can say that they're something different. They can actually say it so often they really begin to believe that they're something different. In the field of clinical psychology, what they do is called cognitive dissonance. Any information that comes their way with which they don't agree, they simply expel.

But hear this, Mr. Speaker, and the ladies and gentlemen of this Assembly, the evidence is already mounting. And no matter what you say and no matter what you believe, as Lincoln stated, you can fool some of the people some of the time; you can fool some of the people all of the time; but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. No matter what you say, no matter what you believe, the people will know the truth. They can see that you are beginning to be no different from those people you tried to replace.

Now what causes me greatest concern with the Speech from the Throne is the opening statement that the people have given the Premier's ministers "a mandate for fundamental change." Well any time a government receives a mandate, Mr. Speaker, it has really received orders from the people to do what it promised to do. I

think it is becoming crystal clear that the NDP misled the electorate of Saskatchewan during the fall campaign.

I represent thousands of voters who are not only wanting this government to succeed, they're counting on this government to preserve our province and to protect our institutions. And I was looking to this Speech from the Throne for a plan for the future of Saskatchewan, and like many people, I'm not seeing the part that tells us how to get from prosperity from here. The fact is that much of what is being proposed is really the opposite of what this province needs right now.

Although I am favourably impressed and indeed flattered by the NDP move to implement many of the suggestions of the Liberal Party platform, I'm also deeply concerned that taking part of our plan and strangling it with NDP Party policy is not going to produce the results our platform was designed to produce. And I'm fearful because we have no more time to waste in Saskatchewan. We have no more opportunities to squander, no more second chances at starting over.

Saskatchewan is a unique province. We all talk about its uniqueness, and it's because of the spirit of the people who live here. We are a people of courage, of optimism, of trust. We have opened new horizons, pioneered new technologies, and explored new approaches because of our willingness to take risks.

It must be remembered that an important catalyst for risk-taking is trust in government, trust in its sense of direction. If ever it were important for a government to know the value of the people's trust, it is now after so many years of abuse. And anyone can see the evidence of the abuse that we're left with in 1992 of the previous administration.

As this new government deceives people when it breaks promises, when it makes misleading statements or attempts to hide from the media or the people, the level of cynicism will absolutely soar in this province and the jobs of all governments everywhere become more difficult.

That's why it is critical not to just talk about open and honest and accountable government. It is crucial to be open and honest and accountable. That means opening up the Board of Internal Economy, improving upon the freedom of information legislation, allowing citizens' groups to appear before legislative committees, three-party committees in this very House, to express their opinions.

Open, accountable government — don't tell us, show us. And for those who don't want to listen to me, listen to the words of a woman who is a lawyer in Saskatoon, an officer of the New Democratic Party of Canada, one Sandra Mitchell. Quote:

What can we do to get the Saskatchewan economy moving again? I tried to contact the minister of economic development to see what he would suggest but got no answers. In fact, it took 10 days to get my phone call returned and then a promised fax never arrived. So much for open, accountable, accessible government.

Mr. Speaker, it is a time that we realize that the people of the province are the owners, the landlords who permit us to be the tenants of this building. And it is not the other way around.

Government reform can put a stop to farmers having to rent the Agridome to get a point across to the ministers in this government and to the members of opposition. Government reform is the tool that will demolish the barriers between the government and the people so that we can invite them into this building through the front door and make them feel welcome and important to the process.

If this administration truly wants openness, truly wants accountability and ethical behaviour, then it's going to require real courage, real leadership, and real reform.

And it is time, Mr. Speaker, that this government stopped blaming the previous government and present a clear course of action in which people can participate in a positive way. It takes courage to do what is best for society as a whole with no regard to one's own political future.

If this government is truly committed to doing what is best, then it will allow its members to participate fully. It will allow me to participate fully. It will allow the people to participate more fully in the process. It will hold up its code of ethics to full scrutiny, bring in anti-corruption legislation, and politician-proof the system.

I applaud the government's commitment to the concept of all-party committees and democratic reform and to the rights of minorities, Mr. Speaker. The previous government completely ignored all three of these areas, and the time for action on these fronts is long overdue.

At the same time I see evidence that this government may also believe that it is above public scrutiny, simply by the manner in which crucial decisions affecting this province have been made with little or no discussion in this Assembly.

There's evidence that now that they are in power the old way of doing things seems to be more acceptable because of the beliefs of many seasoned veterans. And there is considerable evidence that many of the new faces we see on the government side will indeed remain voiceless in this House, regardless of the opposition they may have to some of the decisions that are made in their caucus.

I want to concentrate my remarks on what I and the Liberal Party believe must be the focus during this session if we are to have a stronger, more productive Saskatchewan. I'm under no illusions, Mr. Speaker, that I will not be able to bring forward the kinds of things that I would like to have happen in the next four years. But my colleagues opposite are indeed in the position to do so, and I would like to share some of these ideas with them.

There are many issues facing government — health care, education, agriculture, the environment, social services — but the one which is of greatest concern to my constituents and to the people that I've talked with all over our province is the issue of jobs and economic

activity in our province.

The government faces an admittedly difficult task in dealing with a deficit which appears to be approaching the \$1 billion mark that the hon. member from Riversdale predicted during the campaign. It should therefore come as no surprise to him that this must be dealt with. And the way in which we must tackle this problem is far different from the approach being used by the New Democratic government in the information they've brought forward to date.

(1515)

If we are to have wealth, the tax base and the tools necessary to repair the damage done to the financial foundation of our province, we cannot simply turn to the taxpayer and say: more, please. The new Premier openly stated time and again that we would face a billion dollar deficit. He should have been preparing for at least a few months of the last nine and a half years in opposition and his total of 25 years government to come up with some solid fiscal ideas.

The new Premier, throughout the campaign, also repeatedly stated that \$4.5 billion simply had to be enough revenue on which to run the province of Saskatchewan. It baffles me to see the NDP now acting like the Premier never made those statements at all — talking about how large the deficit is, how we simply must have more money. It appears that even the NDP didn't believe their own campaign rhetoric.

So here we are, just months after they have taken power, and we're facing increased power rates, increased telephone rates, increased car insurance rates, and I'm certain a round of tax increases and increases in the cost of doing business in Saskatchewan on May 7 as soon as that budget comes down.

So what signal do you think this is sending to the 700 businesses who may be considering locating here with their potential 16,000 jobs as cited in the Speech from the Throne? What this will mean in the long run is less money for the Saskatchewan treasury. What it will mean is less jobs for Saskatchewan people, less profit for Saskatchewan business on which to pay taxes.

The Speech from the Throne gives no indication that the government understands how to create wealth or stimulate economic activity whatsoever. Whatever may be gained in revenue, Mr. Speaker, through the imposition of tax increases or increases in utility rates or minimum wage increases will simply stall the economic recovery, paralyse consumer spending by reducing disposable income and throw cold water on any lukewarm investors who may be considering Saskatchewan as a place to relocate.

The Gass Commission, which reviewed the financial state of our province, clearly indicated that any move to increase taxation levels would be counter-productive in that it would stall the economy and would not produce the necessary revenue anyway, making it absolutely the wrong approach.

Deficit reduction is a priority and I support the commitment of this government to consolidate departments and agencies which may be duplicating services. I also believe however that we need to create money with which to pay the deficit, because we cannot get blood from a stone. We cannot get another dime from the taxpayers of this province.

And the NDP have given no indications in this speech how they will create an environment which will encourage growth and wealth creation. There is talk about the concept of creating jobs through the Crown corporations — the old NDP stand by — government job creation through government jobs. All this does is to re-route some of the profits from the Crowns, which would normally come to the treasury as tax revenues or dividends to government, in order to put a few people to work.

In order to pay for this, power rates have already been increased. The net result is not wealth creation, but more government jobs and less profits on which the Crowns can pay taxes. There really is no new money, no new wealth. This is simply recycled government spending and more evidence that the NDP does not understand wealth creation.

The most disappointing and crucial evidence of this is the completely ill-advised decision to cancel the memorandum of understanding with AECL. Twenty-five million dollars in federal money which would have been spent largely on jobs for the next five years has virtually evaporated before our eyes.

Countless opportunities for research and development have gone down the drain. And I cannot tell you the frustration many of my constituents are feeling over this, particularly students who are looking for one reason not to leave this province. And I'm going to quote from a gentleman in my constituency.

Dear Mrs. Haverstock, I am a fourth year engineering physics student at the University of Saskatchewan, and a greatly disenchanted citizen of your riding. On March 11 of this year, it was announced by our no-mind government that a study into the possible development of a CANDU 3 . . . reactor would be rejected.

Thirteen students, (Mrs. Haverstock, are) in (the) engineering-physics (class that) will be graduating this year. ONE student found permanent employment out of province. Ten of the students are intending to eventually attend graduate studies at universities outside of Saskatchewan. Many other engineering students will also be graduating this year, all looking either for employment or continuing their studies in their respective fields. I am sure that it is no surprise to you that a vast, vast majority of these students have NO employment realities upon graduation. What is this saying to you?? Well let me tell you what this is saying to me. Firstly, this says to me that Saskatchewan is afraid to modernize itself by remaining in the dark ages. While the rest of the world is fighting to be competitive, i.e. research and development, we

decide that it is O.K. to sink into oblivion. Secondly, I am sure that you are aware of how much the government funds a university student's tuition. If there are no opportunities in the province, how does anybody in their right minds expect the graduating student to remain in the province? Ideally, a good government wishes to maximize its rate of return on the dollars that it dishes out. How does a zero rate of return sound to you (Mrs. Haverstock)? With the AECL proposal, we had an opportunity to invoke economic and . . . (research and development) interest into this province that it desperately needs. Don't you think that the government is the largest hypocrite of them all? It was the NDP government that brought uranium mining to this province . . . Now, the opportunity to build . . . (to have research and development) presents itself. From a practical point of view, the best place to build . . . would be in our own province. The fuel is here, the technology is here — lets do it. (But) "No" says the voice from above. As far as I am concerned, by not even carrying out a study shows that we in Saskatchewan do NOT have a democracy, we DO have a *dictatorship*. In my opinion, and in the opinion of many other students in this college, this road block on our highway of technology is going to lead to a poorer standard of education due to the huge lack in funding for research and development. (And he goes on) . . .

As well, we can talk about business people, business people who had hoped for some outside stimulus . . .

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

Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, with apologies to the member from Saskatoon Greystone, some students from Saskatoon have arrived and I'd like leave of the Assembly to introduce them to you.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Cline: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, with us today are 28 grade 7 and 8 students from Henry Kelsey School in Saskatoon, along with their teacher, Ms. Kathleen Pryor-Hildebrandt, and their chaperons, Michael Kohle, Jim Finnigan, and Karaas Tayler. And these are students at Henry Kelsey, which is a French language school in Saskatoon. They've had a tour of some of the sites in Regina and of the legislature.

I'm going to be meeting with them, and I know that all the members of the Assembly would like to join with me in welcoming them to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, I began to talk about business people and how much that the proposed memorandum of understanding had meant to them as well. Disappointments, of course, arose because there was no attempt to even revise this memorandum of understanding. And some of the concerns that I've had, Mr. Speaker, are primarily because this had little to do with simply building a nuclear reactor in Saskatchewan; that's something that would have given me some pause.

This was about sending a message to our country and to the world that we wanted to be the world leaders in technology, in developing safe technology for the use of uranium in energy production everywhere. And it said although we in Saskatchewan may need only a portion of the energy that we might decide to produce, we're willing to sell the knowledge. We're willing to sell the technology. We're willing to sell the equipment to the world so that other countries with fewer energy options than ourselves can benefit from what we've learned.

And it's a very arrogant thought when we go into our homes every night, Mr. Speaker, and turn on our lights or use microwave ovens or use stoves that there are people all throughout the world who had that same opportunity for energy. And that is not the case. And there are many, many places that have unsafe nuclear reactors. We should take a lead role, truly a lead role in making sure that this has changed.

The memorandum of understanding said, and now the people of Canada and the world are hearing us say, no to opportunity. You cannot imagine the negative impact that this kind of decision is going to have on our future.

During this session thousands of young people are going to be graduating from our high schools, from our universities, and from our technical institutes. They need jobs, Mr. Speaker, opportunities to put their knowledge and their skills to work. This government has provided nothing in the way of quality jobs for most of our mobile, least renewable resource — our young people. And as a result of the impending budget, hundreds more people in Saskatchewan are sure to lose their jobs as the result of cut-backs and down-sizing.

While this may be the quickest way to save in the short term, the true savings could only be achieved if each department had been subjected to efficiency and productivity audits, as was suggested in the Liberal Party platform, to ensure that we're cutting in all the right places.

With every budget cut, jobs will disappear. And much of that cutting will be necessary, I agree. All of it will be painful, particularly if there is no hope on the horizon. Hope is the anesthetic which allows us to bear the short-term pain of dealing with our deficit. Destroying hope, as this government has done so many times in the 1970s and continues to appear to do in the 1990s, will eventually kill the spirit of Saskatchewan's people.

Now there are rumours that the government is considering increases to the minimum wage as a solution to the problems of many of our poorly paid.

Talk as I have, and I request that they talk as I have, with members of the restaurant association. Talk to the people that so many government members were so concerned with when they spoke last session about the devastating effect of the PST on that particular sector of the small-business community.

Talk as I have to the rural hotel owners who are desperate for revenue to keep their businesses alive and their employees employed. Ask them first what impact raising the minimum wage will have on their staff levels.

In extremely difficult economic times for Saskatchewan business, it really appears as though this government has spent little time or no time consulting with the business community as to whether it can withstand the shock of this legislation.

The Liberal Party of Saskatchewan proposed during the election that a joint business/labour council be created to explore the minimum wage question, to make recommendations on the government as to the timing and to the amount of increase that would do two things: stimulate the economy and protect our competitive position in the market-place while protecting jobs.

The government has now wasted six months. If only it had been able to propose, based on solid plans, this consultation strategy on minimum wage could have been implemented by now.

I am disappointed that the government, while borrowing ideas from the Liberal platform, didn't choose this one of a business/labour council as soon as it took office. But I hope that it will work to consult with both sectors before making any changes to the minimum wage.

I understand what they're trying to do for those individuals who have to try to live on a meagre income, but they must be extremely cautious of the effect this will have on the very people that they are trying to help.

(1530)

Large chains have ravaged Saskatchewan's retail base and independent small businesses are struggling every day to keep their doors open in both rural and urban Saskatchewan.

One more tilt to the balance between risk and profit could tip the entire small-business community over the edge. And always remember that the only option for a small business facing an increase in its fixed costs of wages is to end up laying off staff to keep within its budget. That hurts everyone. It really doesn't matter what the minimum wage is for people if they don't have a job any more.

This is a very delicate matter which requires timing, and it requires a long-term strategy before any implementation can take place.

In the area of economic development, we clearly have a defined statement in our Liberal Party document about an economic advisory council that would include business, labour, agriculture leaders, academics, to develop

strategies for economic development for the province. And I am truly pleased to see that this government has followed and put forward in their Speech from the Throne that they will have a council. I hope that the government will listen, however, to its economic council's advice and work to implement its strategies.

I'm suspicious, however, of the government's willingness to act on the recommendations of such a group if the suggestions are not in favour with the NDP party policy. This was clearly the case when the Premier blatantly broke a promise made to the Saskatoon business community and ignored the wishes of SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) and SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), the FSIN (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations) and others, by rejecting the AECL memorandum of understanding. And although he admitted that the NDP party had problems with the nuclear research issue, he gave his word that the NDP government, if elected, would implement the recommendations of what he called, and I quote: the blue chip Billinton panel.

Without consulting with the business community, without discussing the issue in this Assembly, the Premier bowed to party political pressure and forced the unilateral decision to cancel the AECL memorandum of understanding, which would have brought \$25 million to the Saskatchewan economy in federal research monies. The swiftness with which the government moved to cancel that deal, despite the recommendations of the Billinton panel, the swiftness with which the Premier bowed to pressure from the NDP Party was quite frightening for everyone. Without ever bringing this crucial issue to debate in this Assembly, the government showed its lack of respect for the democratic process far earlier in its term of office than any one of us would have suspected.

To me this does not bode well for the panel of experts and advisors that will be asked to participate in other processes, particularly if they recommend something that contradicts the grass root policies of the NDP.

There is a great deal of fear in Saskatchewan, a great deal of fear about taxes and unemployment and poverty. People in Saskatchewan need work if they are to pay taxes. People need work if they are to escape the poverty cycle. Students in Saskatchewan need quality jobs when they graduate if the money we invest in their education is to be worthwhile. The government itself cannot create jobs. The government itself cannot create wealth. They can only establish an environment in which private capital wants to take the risk in order to profit. This is called free enterprise. And free enterprise will disappear in Saskatchewan if this government does not send a different signal to the people of this province and to potential investors across the nation and around the world.

Wealth, Mr. Speaker, is not just measured in dollars and cents. It is a measure of the skill, the initiative, and the spirit to succeed, in a people. Our people have the instincts to create wealth in Saskatchewan. Our province has the resources. The problem with the last government

and this one again, it seems, is that neither understands its role in the creation of wealth and in the generation of economic activity.

I believe that the Tories went too far in their attempts to pick the winners by propping up bad investments like Trinitel in Melville with government money. I believe that they took an excellent concept like community bonds, proposed by the Liberal Party and Ralph Goodale in 1986 in the election platform, and ruined it. And I applaud the efforts of this new government to salvage this concept, not because Liberals proposed it, but because it is a good and workable idea.

I want to point out that when I refer to ideas that have been put forward by my party, it is because of the visionary and committed people who put countless hours of thought and discussion and process into the development of our platform document and our strategy. These people were not just Liberals — and we're proud of that — they were Saskatchewan people who care about our province and care about its future.

And I acknowledge and want the government and the people of Saskatchewan to acknowledge, that it is invaluable for all political parties to put their good ideas on the table, not just during a campaign but after a campaign. And it's one of the reasons why I meet with ministers in this government to share what I believe are valuable ideas.

What concerns me in seeing parts of the Liberal platform implemented with the code of ethics, the business advisory council, the wellness model in health care, is that they are crucial elements of the strategy that Liberals would have implemented. The NDP are showing us once again that they have no sense of what the role of government should be in creating wealth.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the NDP did not save appropriately during the most prosperous times in our history, and they could not create wealth either. They simply rode the commodity roller-coaster when oil and grain and potash prices were high — at an all-time high — never sensing that there was a steep drop ahead, never caring to put the majority of profit into long-term programs that would sustain this province through tough times. This government, unlike the last administration, does not appear to have any economic policy. And the Tories poisoned a reasonably sound economic approach with patronage and corruption. The NDP have no approach whatsoever, and I believe our province is truly in the worst danger that it has ever faced because of that in these difficult times.

Whatever we may choose to do in education, in health care, in social services, in agriculture, depends on a sound and productive economy to generate the incomes which pay the taxes and the bills.

Education absolutely has to be a priority for this government. There has been a great deal of rhetoric turned out about the value of education, but the bottom line is that education is our only weapon against poverty and unemployment. Access to quality education, tailored to prepare our children for the challenges of the world, is

something which cannot be negotiable.

And we must offer that access to people no matter where they live in this province. Our rural families must have an education model with which they are comfortable. If changes are made, they must be changes which do not compromise the access of rural children to quality education equal to that offered our city children.

And first nation peoples must have a fast track to educational opportunities and improvements that they have been denied for so long. Our future in this province depends largely on how successful the aboriginal population becomes, and believe me, we have a tremendous amount of lost ground to make up in education and health care with first peoples.

The costs of not educating aboriginal children, of not offering equality of opportunity in the work place, will become unaffordable. If we do not strive to eliminate the problems aboriginal peoples are struggling with through increased education and improved quality of life, we will suffer the consequences for ever.

Everyone is searching for leadership that will steady the course and give people the long-range plan so that they can understand how they fit in and what effect it will have on their ability to pay their bills, whether they are municipal governments trying to budget, or home owners and parents grappling with taxes and the costs of their children's post-secondary education.

I had hoped to see far more of a concise approach to health care in this throne speech as well, Mr. Speaker. Talking about a wellness model and hinting at health care premiums and increased drug plan deductibles is hardly what I would call strong leadership toward a new medicare.

This is a life and death issue for Saskatchewan people. Many seniors are extremely worried about the rumours that they hear. They felt that electing an NDP government would guarantee that they would not have to worry about such things as premiums. People with chronic conditions are calling my office pleading to have this government reconsider plans to implement perhaps chiropractic charges and warning of the dangers of increasing the deductible for the drug plan.

During the campaign I was accused of scaring people about health care, Mr. Speaker, because I frankly discussed the possibility of health care premiums if all efforts to eliminate waste and duplication of services were still not enough to protect universal medicare.

I believe that it was my responsibility to be open. I believe that it is the responsibility of politicians always to be honest about what it is they believe may have to happen even if it is the slightest possibility.

Well I got it in both ears, Mr. Speaker, the night of the debate, both from the now Premier and from the previous premier. What is happening here with all the behind-closed-door discussion and the NDP Party fractionalism over premiums is creating a real scare in people because they have no information one way or the

other.

And I want to go on record as disapproving of this approach, disapproving of the approach that the NDP are using in not making people less concerned and quelling their fears. It's an abominable way to discuss such an important issue and this government, if it were really committed to openness and honesty, would have cleared the air on their health care strategy by revealing its complete plan in the throne speech to put people's mind at ease.

No matter how or when the wellness model eventually emerges, quality health care and preventative medicine only work if you have the income with which to buy the balanced diet which can help you avoid the cost of prescriptions and other treatments. And one will not get far promoting wellness with people on fixed incomes if you make it impossible for them to choose between the food they need to stay healthy and the medications they need to stay out of hospital. The bottom line is that this government cannot create all of these stabilities for people if it does not encourage and reward members of society for producing wealth.

This government, the NDP party, has always been driven by what I've understood to be, take from the rich and give to the poor mentality. And I believe that is admirable. But they have come up short in realizing that there aren't that many rich left in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and that their government is far more adept at creating the poor than at creating the wealthy.

If there is no wealth, there is no basis for taxation in revenue. That is what is wrong with leaving out major chunks of what they have borrowed from other places. When you examine the pool of taxpayers in Saskatchewan, you will find that there are very few rich to tax. You will find that 11 of the top 13 corporations in Saskatchewan are Crowns or co-operatives which we must assume are already paying their fair share of taxes.

This government should be particularly careful, in reforming the tax system, not to lead people to believe that there is an enormous pool of wealthy people who are forced to stay here and pay whatever taxes this government decides to impose. The resource companies, the profitable businesses, the people with upper-level incomes, will be the first to leave if this administration goes on a seek-and-destroy mission through its tax policy. And they will go out, Mr. Speaker, and tell the rest of the 700 businesses with their potential 16,000 potential jobs to avoid Saskatchewan like the plague. It happened in the 1970s when the times were good. These businesses will not hesitate to leave this sad state of affairs now.

In the Speech from the Throne I had hoped to see evidence of legislation that would bring more accountability to our system. But I fear the government has chosen not to include such measures as free-standing votes in our legislature, set budget dates, set commencement dates, and many other necessary reforms. I fear that they have done only the minimum, the least threatening to their stranglehold of power over their caucuses.

(1545)

The government has alluded to some reforms being introduced, but I believe that they have carefully chosen those which do not threaten an autocratic style of governing. In fact I sit on the Rules and Procedures Committee, as you well know, Mr. Speaker, charged with making recommendations on many of these issues such as the sitting hours of the legislature, the days allocated to private members' Bills, and so on.

I've been a strong advocate for all-party committees, and the most encouraging thing about my legislative experience to date has been to see what can emerge as the result of parties putting politics aside and working to improve the system. The work of the Rules and Procedures Committee has produced recommendations for some very positive changes to the system. It has been a pleasure to come together with my colleagues from the NDP and the Conservatives to create a more workable legislature.

What has been most unfortunate for us all, I think, is to see recommendations developed after hours of intense discussion, paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, to see those recommendations overturned by the NDP caucus. It gives one some idea of how the blue-chip experts on the Billinton panel or the Murray Commission or the Gass Commission must feel when their proposals are overthrown in favour of, quote, party consensus developed in the caucus chambers.

All-party committees would be the best thing that could happen in this legislature in terms of de-politicizing the process. But they will only be of real value if the results of their work are not re-politicized by giving the NDP caucus the ability to overturn committee recommendations in favour of party politics. That, I'm sorry to say, is the present reality. And it doesn't create great optimism for those of us like myself who want fundamental reform.

Why should people care about political reform? Why am I still here talking about it months after the campaign has ended? Well I'll tell you why. Because people want to see the individuals they elect to this Assembly do something besides nod their heads in unison to every party policy trotted out by the government. That's why. The citizens of Saskatchewan want a system in which people vote for things that make good sense for this province and against those things which are not in the best interests of people.

For example, how can 55 MLAs possibly all agree to cancel the AECL deal or to implement health care premiums or to increase drug plan deductibles? They don't agree. And that's the truth. So why in the world shouldn't they be allowed to stand up in this House and say so?

Well I'll tell you why that is, too. Because our system presently allows for a handful of power brokers — the cabinet and the inner circle — to carry out whatever it invents under the name of democracy, Mr. Speaker, simply by hiding behind the mask of consensus worn by back-benchers given skewed information to bring them on side. This is a sickness that must be cured if you're ever

to proudly say to Saskatchewan that we are governed by a true democracy.

With a massive majority, they have the power to implement reforms that will ensure that the information handled by this government is made available to all. They have promised that they will approach things more fairly. They have the power to entrench that promise in legislation, and in this session I will be looking forward to — I will be counting on — these reforms to become reality.

If they will honour their commitment to reform this system, to make it more responsive, more effective, then we will have a government that is better equipped to deal with the concerns of its people. And isn't that what this is really all about?

I remind the government that the wishes of its own party, the policies and the resolutions, reflect the wishes of only a particular percentage of the electorate. I remind all of them on the government side that half the people of Saskatchewan did not support their party and that of those who did, many did so simply to rid themselves of the previous government.

And I remind them therefore that when they meet with their party organizations, when they close the doors of their caucus chambers, they are closing the doors on the majority of Saskatchewan people, closing the doors on democracy in this province. And I hope that they will not make this a customary practice for the rest of their term.

And they did make a considerable number of promises. They promised to open the books and they did — the Conservatives' books. The Gass Commission did an excellent job in showing us where our money went for the last 10 years. But now the onus is, guess where, Mr. Speaker? It's on them to complete their promise, not only by leaving the books open, but legislating that they will remain open from here on. There can be no accountability without information and access to financial information is crucial to ensuring that this government remains answerable to the electorate.

The Premier spent 25 years waiting for the opportunity to take charge of this province and I hope he gets on with it. Many of the members opposite have spent between nine and a half years and 25 years getting ready for this. Surely they have something in mind for our province now.

People want to see the jobs, they want to see political reform, Mr. Speaker, and they want to see no more taxes. They want to see the new, de-politicized public service, the end to patronage hirings; the energy institute, which has been kept so much under wraps. Almost half the people voted for prescription drug plan improvements, Mr. Speaker, and school-based dental care and more resources for local municipalities.

I didn't promise those things. The Liberal Party didn't promise those things because we didn't believe they were feasible. And I wasn't in this legislature — they were. And so I say to them: deliver.

No one in Saskatchewan wants to hear any more from the

government about what the last government did wrong. We'll read the book or we'll watch the movie when it comes out. What everyone wants is the government to stop pointing its finger into the past and start leading the way into the future; save the money its spending on radio advertising, cancel the half-hour television announcement.

The NDP are wearing out their credibility by whining about the problems not being their fault and the people decided it was already the fault of the Conservatives and threw them out. It's over, so let's get on.

We are tired of marking time, waiting for the budget, waiting for the health care plan, waiting for the energy institute, waiting for this commission and that commission. The waiting is over and it is time to get down to the business of leadership and governing. And that is the job of the Premier, not the Leader of the Opposition, not mine, and not the taxpayers and the business community of this province.

He wanted it and he's got it, so he should quit ducking the press and the people and the legislature and make some decisions and explain the plan and put it into action before one more person leaves this province.

An Hon. Member: — How much more?

Ms. Haverstock: — I'm going to cut some out, you'll be pleased to know.

An Hon. Member: — Thank you, but we've got all day.

Ms. Haverstock: — Well I thought, Mr. Speaker, that I would give all these people some pleasure, and I would not continue to point out all of the enormous deficiencies in the Speech from the Throne. I will get on here.

Agriculture is a major component of our future, Mr. Speaker. For the past 10 years or so we have had a government and a premier who believed that they alone had the answers for agriculture. And we've all seen the folly in that; at least I think we have.

I truly regret not having the power to implement the Liberal plan for agriculture because I think Saskatchewan farmers would have been further ahead, and they would have had . . . we would have had a chance to do so. I will restate the Liberal Party vision for a national agriculture plan which brings all producing provinces together to develop a long-term strategy for farm debt, subsidies, addressing the international trade wars, marketing boards, as well as transportation.

And Saskatchewan is not just an agricultural province. It's a community of families joined together by ties to farming and a dependency on the productivity of our rural communities. And that is more than an industry; it is a society. And this government, by its lack of leadership in agriculture, is threatening the continued existence of our society as we want to see it preserved.

Canada needs Saskatchewan farmers to be a healthy, productive resource. The world needs not only our food production, they need our knowledge and our

technology in agriculture. And it is the government's responsibility to see that we market not just what we grow, but what we know. Farmers don't need help with farming; they need help in managing their industry on a national and international scale.

It is the Premier's job to be the first at the national and international bargaining tables to speak for our farmers. We can't solve the agriculture problems in Saskatchewan in the NDP caucus. We will not solve them around a table . . . We will solve them, pardon me, around a table with Manitoba and Alberta and putting pressure on the federal government. And I suggest that this government hurry up and get back to that table.

I know how very, very pleased, Mr. Speaker, all the members of this Assembly will be when I add these two words: in conclusion. Let me say that every person in Saskatchewan is waiting for this government to perform up to the expectations it created. They may think they kept people's expectations low, but they did not. They set themselves up for a very difficult job. They made many promises and they've already broken some of them. The people did not expect miracles, but they were promised, and expect, certain fundamental changes.

This NDP government has a debt to the people of Saskatchewan that must be repaid. In exchange for the people's trust and their endorsement, they owe them honesty and dedication to implement the changes they promised. They owe them access to information; they owe them a compassionate approach to people and their problems. They owe the people of this province a detailed explanation of what it is they are doing to preserve health care and education.

They must be committed to creating wealth because they said they could do it, Mr. Speaker. They are obligated to government reform and deficit reduction. They owe the people open, honest, accountable government, because they promised that they could deliver.

I don't expect miracles, nor do the people of the province of Saskatchewan. We do expect action and we do expect results. We expect to see a concise plan and we expect to see it on May 7. I hope that we will not be disappointed.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join this throne speech debate. I want to point out that in the Legislative Assembly we welcome divergent points of view. And before I get into my comments as I had intended, there's a couple of things I want to deal with for the member that has no problem maintaining caucus solidarity, being one person, one vote — the only vote.

The member for Saskatoon Greystone indicated in the speech moments ago, that the government, the now government, broke a campaign promise in cancelling the SaskPower AECL deal. Mr. Speaker, that just has no element of reality. It is a fabrication, a figment of the imagination, the fertile imagination of the member for Saskatoon Greystone.

The now Premier in press conferences said, what we are committed to is energy conservation. We're committed to alternate energy, we're committed to co-generation,

wind generation, solar or photovoltaic. Even the now Premier went so far, Mr. Speaker, as to speak of potentially fuelling government vehicles with alternate fuel such as propane, liquid natural gas, and even hydrogen, as quickly as it can be developed on an economical basis. We're not there yet in the world, but we will be on the forefront of that as opposed to dealing with an obsolete technology, that obsolete technology being nuclear power.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1600)

Mr. Trew: — I am proud of my Premier. I am proud of the fact that my Premier kept that campaign commitment — that commitment to look at other alternatives. That's why we now have the conservation and alternate energy office announced for the city of Saskatoon to do work on these other areas of energy, as I've outlined.

In terms of keeping the commitment of the government and of the party, I am very intensely proud of the fact that we have done just that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal a little bit with that AECL SaskPower deal. I want to point out that nuclear waste is around not just for a few years, not just for a few generations, but a hundred thousand years some of the nuclear isotopes still are radioactive — a hundred thousand years. Put in a different context, that's 50 times the length of time it's been since we could have shaken hands with Christ in the flesh 2,000 years ago.

But let's leave the nuclear waste question and the fact that after well over 45 years the nuclear energy industry has not been able to come up with a safe disposal of nuclear waste.

Let's deal with weapons proliferation. We've just witnessed in the past year one of the most fundamental changes in our world in our lifetime. Of course I'm referring to the breakup of the USSR. And I'm referring to the ongoing questions now about who has control of what used to be the second largest single source of nuclear weapons, but now is controlled by a multitude of countries, some of them as I speak involved in civil riots and war and some question as to who is going to ultimately be in control — there's some question whether there's going to be a democracy, whether it's going to be a dictatorship — who has control of the button to send those nuclear weapons anywhere that they happen to be aimed.

But leave that aside. Let's assume that we can deal with the nuclear weapons proliferation. What about the safety of nuclear power plants, Mr. Speaker? They have, to put it mildly, a very checkered record, not even counting Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. Leave those aside. Look at the many nuclear power plants in existence, and there's hardly a handful in the world that aren't experiencing radioactive leaks, that aren't having problems with the ongoing operation of those nuclear power plants. And there's not a nuclear power plant in the world that hasn't required emergency repairs at an accelerated rate to what the designers said it would be.

But leave that aside. Let's assume that we can develop a perfectly safe nuclear power plant. Let's assume we have the technology — somehow between yesterday and today we developed the technology. It took 45 years and we weren't able to develop it, but overnight somebody got a smart pill and we can now develop a totally safe nuclear power plant.

Mr. Speaker, focus on the economics of nuclear power, and I just refer people and invite them to check out the situation with the Darlington Nuclear Power Plant in Ontario. Here we have a power plant initially projected to cost three and a half billion dollars. By this summer they will have spent \$15 billion building the Darlington Nuclear Power Plant in Ontario. That's only multiplied by a factor of roughly four — crazy Tory math.

And worse yet, the chief engineer was on national television on a documentary saying, well this summer after we spent \$15 billion we think we can make that Darlington Nuclear Power Plant work. We think we can make it work after \$15 billion spent — outrageous!

And here we have a situation, the New Democratic Party is on record, has a long-time policy of no nuclear power plants. Why? Because of the reasons I'm outlining. The economics of nuclear power are atrocious. CANDU, the AECL, Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd., have not to my knowledge been able to build a nuclear power plant for less than at least a minimum three times their original projection — three times.

AECL told the people of Saskatchewan that for \$1 billion they could build a nuclear power plant. But what is it? Is it 1 billion or is it 3 billion?

Mr. Speaker, just look at the economics of nuclear power — that's why. Leave everything aside. The economics of this obsolete technology are so atrocious, that's why the New Democratic government cancelled the SaskPower AECL deal that would have seen us squandering and sinking untold billions of dollars into yet another Tory megaproject.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, I want to address the member for Saskatoon Greystone's piousness in saying we should be leading by example. Publicly the member talks about government cabinet ministers should take a cut in salary; the Premier should take a cut in salary. Privately the member for Saskatoon Greystone says, ah but I need more money to run my office. You guys do with less, but I need more to run my office.

In the media the member for Saskatoon Greystone says, oh we're in troubled times; oh dear, we must cut back. Oh dear we must spend the taxpayers' money very cautiously, very carefully. It's a public trust. Privately the member says exactly the opposite thing. She's asking and has consistently asked in private and in committee meetings has consistently asked for more money to run her office. My question to the member for Saskatoon Greystone is, why the double standard? Why the public call for cuts, the media call for cuts, and the private call

for more money. Lead by example, yes. I think that the member for Saskatoon Greystone could heed those words.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with my view of the throne speech now. And I want to express my gratitude to the people of Regina Albert North, people in north end of Regina that have graciously re-elected me to this legislature so that for the first time I've been able to sit on the government side and effect some changes. And many changes are needed. And the people of my constituency and in fact the people of Saskatchewan deserve the changes.

The good ship Saskatchewan was heading just like the Titanic, heading straight for an iceberg, and we've got to steer around that iceberg and prevent us from sinking and the tragic loss, the economic loss that would result.

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech is one that I am very proud to stand up and speak to. I had a former constituent call me yesterday and he had nothing but praise for this throne speech. He said to me, he said the press have been telling us there are problems. They've been leaving the impression that this government, the New Democratic government, has been doing little or nothing. And in fact they leave the impression at times that this government has been hiding.

In praise of the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, my caller said, and I quote: this is a document to be proud of, and it shows the plan in a number of areas. This throne speech commits our government to create a Saskatchewan education council, to advise on improvements to our education system, a soon to be appointed inquiry into university education, and a complete evaluation of the structure and the programs of the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology.

And that is already under way, Mr. Speaker, as we are here today. That review is already under way.

The throne speech includes directions for our natural gas utility. We're going to be introducing legislation to mandate them and allow them to get on with doing the job that SaskEnergy has through the introduction of the SaskEnergy Act. That's to give the statutory power for SaskEnergy to carry out its mandate more effectively.

This throne speech is all about putting people first. We have in this throne speech hunger and nutrition programs that have been enhanced. We have in this throne speech a blueprint for employment and a training program that will employ a thousand people in the local government, in non-government organization sector, for the betterment of all of Saskatchewan. Certainly for the betterment of those thousand people that will be employed, but for the betterment of us all.

This throne speech, Mr. Speaker, deals with the Metis Justice Review Committee. It deals with an Indian justice review committee and says the recommendations will result in changes that are an important step in the achievement of self-determination.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech deals with settling, and a

commitment of this government to settling outstanding treaty land entitlements. It deals with northern works program and it deals with housing, particularly in northern Saskatchewan. My colleagues, the members from Cumberland and Athabasca, have done their work and they have been heard, Mr. Speaker. I take my hat off to them for their work on behalf of their constituents, and I am proud that this government is responding in real and meaningful ways to some of the concerns of northern Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, this throne speech deals with environmental issues. There is an environmental charter of rights and responsibilities Act. This Act is to give greater public access to environmental information. There's also included whistleblower protection for people who report environmental accidents or — and this is significant — environmentally hazardous practices.

The throne speech, Mr. Speaker, deals with Parks Act amendments that are going to add over 215,000 hectares of land to our provincial park system. This is a move that we have advocated for a number of years when we were in opposition, and it's now coming into reality with this throne speech and subsequent legislation. I want to commend the Minister of Parks and the Premier and all of my colleagues for this major initiative towards meeting the Saskatchewan parks system objectives.

I also want to, while I'm at it, congratulate mainly the same people. The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act amendments dealt with in the throne speech are going to add 607,000 hectares of Crown land under protection of this Act.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech and what the New Democratic government is all about is about faith, about compassion, and about working together. Working together for our collective co-operative future. Mr. Speaker, the thrust of what we have been doing is getting the financial house in order. And that's going to continue for quite some time. Not because it gives any joy to members on this side, on the government side of the House, to point fingers or to say, well it's your fault. But because like a family that is very near to bankruptcy, you don't turn that around in one pay cheque; you don't turn it around in one month; you don't likely turn it around in one year. It is a prolonged period of time until you can turn around a near bankruptcy into a situation where that family is again solvent financially and can again control its own economic destiny and can make some major financial decisions.

But that's where we're at right now. The province is like a family that is just teetering on the verge of bankruptcy. And we're at the fork in the road. If we take the wrong turn, we're over the edge. Nothing would make me happier, Mr. Speaker, than to be absolutely wrong when I say that. Nothing in the world would make me happier than to be wrong about the seriousness of Saskatchewan's fiscal and financial situation. But I don't believe that I'm wrong. I don't believe it at all.

(1615)

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech and what this government is all about is also open and honest government. In the throne speech we talk about jobs and economic opportunities, we talk about streamlining 27 different government departments and agencies that offer over 200 separate programs for businesses. We want to reduce the duplication and the frustration and the lost productivity that results from 27 different operations delivering 200 programs. We want to have some money for actual program delivery as opposed to simply managing the program.

In this throne speech for the first time we see co-ops are going to be eligible for community bond support. Mr. Speaker, I think it's a great signal to the co-operative movement in Saskatchewan that we have focused in this way on co-ops, enhancing their ability to raise funds for the worthwhile things that co-operatives can do. And I'm not going to start listing it because co-operatives can do literally anything, from community health clinics to housing to farming to literally anything — job co-ops, literally anything. I'm very pleased, Mr. Speaker, that the throne speech includes this . . . allowing co-ops to be eligible for community bond support.

I'm also pleased that we are rather strengthening the review and approval process for the community bonds program. Much has been made of the Trinitel situation in Melville, and frankly it is with some regret that I've seen that — with a lot of regret — that I've seen that operation drop out of existence. But it comes, frankly, as no surprise. The former member for Melville dragged the business in, in his desperate, last minute attempt only at getting re-elected. Grant Schmidt did it simply for his own re-election, and it didn't work. His re-election didn't work and Trinitel certainly didn't work, and we knew, Mr. Speaker, we then in opposition knew it was not going to work, but there it is.

Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, according to the throne speech, Crown corporations are going to be used to stimulate economic development. That is one tool we have some limited control over and ability to use now, and I'm delighted that we will be doing it.

There are, Mr. Speaker, some positive initiatives that we've embarked on in this throne speech, and there are initiatives that have not been started yet. Why? Because the government's attention has been focused on finding out the truth about Saskatchewan's fiscal position. We have to know where we're at before we can chart the economic course to where we are going.

In recent months I have, on one hand, have been really intensely proud of this government, the cabinet, some of the moves that have been made. But I confess, Mr. Speaker, that all too often I've been frustrated. I've been depressed, and I've been angry. I became angry when the Gass Commission report was released and some of the problems were released to the public.

I've been depressed, and I've been angry as the Ernst & Young report on Saskatchewan's Crown corporations was released to the public, and we find a mess at every turn.

I have been angered, Mr. Speaker, at the report the Provincial Auditor tabled two days ago here for the year ended March 31, 1991.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that distresses me, Saskatchewan Transportation Company. If it ever got more than three paragraphs mentioned in a provincial auditor's report in previous years, if it ever got more than three paragraphs, we knew it was in really serious trouble — things had really gone askew. In this document there's not three paragraphs; there's 31 pages of documented report of wrongdoing at Saskatchewan Transportation Company — 31 pages.

So, Mr. Speaker, the anger that I've been feeling about our Saskatchewan situation, I want to point out, it's not directed at my friend and colleague, the Minister of Finance. It's certainly not directed at my friend and colleague, the Premier. It's not directed at any of the now government members.

My anger, Mr. Speaker, is directed at the former government, the people that brought us into this mess, the people that created such a massive millstone, such a massive debt, and hung not only us but our children are going to still, if not be paying for that deficit directly, they will be paying for that deficit because of the things we could have done had the money been available now.

Not one bit of remorse have I seen from the government members opposite. The only thing I saw was on last night's news one of the members saying, well gee, it's hard to believe that somebody could eat \$17,000 worth of meals on an expense account, but that's in this auditor's report I referred to. That same member, the member for Thunder Creek, earlier today said in question period, and I quote: where there's smoke, there's fire.

Well, Mr. Speaker, where there's smoke, there's fire, and we have an auditor's report well in excess of 200 pages. We have a Gass Commission report that has a lot of smoke and a lot of fire — all of it directed at the former government. All of it came from their compliance, their see no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil attitude, their ostrich-like stand that said, put your head in the sand at every opportunity. If you think something isn't going right, just duck and hide and run.

And you can do that for a while. But the time ran out. The time ran out and there's nothing more for anybody to grab. The time ran out, Mr. Speaker, and unfortunately it is time for us to pay the price. The former government added nine and a half billion dollars debt in their nine and a half years in operation — nine and a half billion dollars. That's a billion dollars a year they added to the provincial debt. Worked out another way, it's \$2.8 million a day — \$2.8 million a day new debt every day they were in office, or \$2.80 for every person in Saskatchewan — \$2.80 a day additional debt every single day for nine and a half years.

Now that should give us all a bit of an idea about just how severe this situation is. And we're paying interest on the debt, and that interest is going to go on and on and on until we can achieve a balanced budget, until we can achieve a one-year balanced budget and start paying

back those former deficits and start paying back all of that debt.

Mr. Speaker, the government is a major force in our lives because it's not possible for man to live separated from others. We are involved in each other's lives not by choice, but by necessity. This government, through the throne speech and our actions previously and in the future, prove that our lives are intertwined. We are in this life together.

We Saskatchewan people are a hardy group; we have overcome difficulties in the past. We overcame difficulties in 1944 when Tommy Douglas was called upon and the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) was called upon to drag Saskatchewan out of an economic morass. We were called upon in 1971 when Allan Blakeney and the NDP were called upon to lead this province out of an economic mess, and we did it both times. The people of Saskatchewan have called upon the New Democratic Party for a third time, 1991, to yet again straighten up the mess. Yet again we've been called upon.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that we are going to be proven historically to be up to the challenge. I am confident of that. There is a light at the end of the tunnel. We will be working diligently to cut the frills and pay the bills; that's part of this government's mandate, and that's what we intend to do.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the throne speech offers us a blueprint for the future, some immediate action and some much longer-term direction.

I am pleased to support this throne speech, and I want to conclude by saying what my view of this government is, how we will be viewed.

The measure of this government or the measure of any government, after all, is not the duration of that government but its donation to our society. Mr. Speaker, it has been my distinct pleasure and my honour once again to participate in debate. I am fully in support of what is the best throne speech in a decade to be introduced in this House, perhaps in more than a decade to be introduced in this House. Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to enter into this debate on the Speech from the Throne delivered by Her Honour on Monday of this week.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure first of all to offer my congratulations to the mover and the seconder of the motion to adopt the Speech from the Throne, the fine members from Meadow Lake and Regina Wascana Plains.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for any member to ever be able to be the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne. It is one that those of the rest of us in this Assembly envy. And I simply want to congratulate those two fine members and at the same time predict, Mr.

Speaker, that not only did they make excellent addresses here but that they will have long and distinguished careers in service of their constituents and the people of Saskatchewan in this the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously I rise to support the Speech from the Throne that's before us. It seems to me that is a speech which reflects the political will of the people of Saskatchewan today. And I believe as well that it is presented by a government that strives to be as good as the people who sent us here.

And as I rise to support the Speech from the Throne, there are six sections specifically in this speech about which I'd like to comment. And let me begin with one of the early sections of the Speech from the Throne and appropriately so: "Open, Honest and Accountable Government."

And let me say right off the bat, Mr. Speaker, contrary to the sentiment and the cynicism that exists around the province of Saskatchewan, I stand in my place in this Assembly today proud to be a politician, proud to be an MLA. There is a cynicism after nine and a half long, lean years of Tory government in Saskatchewan and seven long, lean, troublesome years of Tory government in Ottawa. There's an understandable cynicism about politicians and politics in government that exists in the land today.

And we've all heard the stories. I think one of the kindest ones . . . I walked into a meeting, Mr. Speaker, a couple of months ago. Someone said to me, Hagel, what's the difference between a politician and God? And I said, I don't know, what is the difference between a politician and God? And they said, God doesn't think he's a politician.

Well, Mr. Speaker, sad to admit, but there is a cynicism that's reflected in the stories that people tell. But I stand in this Assembly in response to the Speech from the Throne, in defence of the Speech from the Throne, in support, proud to be a politician, proud to be a New Democrat, proud to be associated with the government which puts first and foremost its dedication to return open, honest, and accountable government to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1630)

Mr. Hagel: — You know, Mr. Speaker, the great-grandmother of my children, who grew up in the province of Saskatchewan over in Webb, west part of the province . . .

An Hon. Member: — Hey, that's my seat.

Mr. Hagel: — The member from Morse has the good fortune of representing the good people of Webb.

When she was a young woman, Mr. Speaker, she had the opportunity to baby-sit Woodrow Lloyd. And I remember

as a young lad, even long before I became twiggled about my interests in politics, her talking about Woody and the kinds of things that she said Woody stood for, for the people of Saskatchewan. And she's one of those people who are few and far between these days who truly believes that to be an elected member is a noble calling.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there are 55 members in this House today who are of the view that the public treasury deserves to be the public trust and not the public trough; who are dedicated to renewing the faith of the people of Saskatchewan that to be an elected member, to represent them, is a noble calling because you come here to serve your province and to serve the people who sent you, and to serve them openly, honestly, and with accountability, with the trust that they sent to us on election day.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, when I look at the Speech from the Throne, when I look at the Speech from the Throne and I summarize what this Speech from the Throne says, I can boil it down to four words — four words, Mr. Speaker. What this Speech from the Throne represents is a plan, a plan from a government that is dedicated to working today for tomorrow together. Today for tomorrow together, Mr. Speaker. That's what this speech is all about.

It means that we have in Saskatchewan today, Mr. Speaker, a New Democrat government that's dedicated to doing the right things for the right reasons. And dedicated I would add, Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of the roots of the history of our party, of those CCF and New Democrat members, both elected as well as volunteer, who were part of building this great province. Consistent with that spirit, Mr. Speaker, dedicated to preserve that spirit with the commitment to work today to build a new tomorrow for our children.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have at home a couple of children who have over the years become a little older and with whom, Mr. Speaker, we're no longer in the habit of sitting down before bedtime to read a bedtime story. But you know, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to share with the Assembly just an excerpt from the story that we used to read in our household when bedtime story was apropos.

It's a story called "The Mouseland Fable," which was told by one of the greatest people, one of the greatest politicians this province has ever known, in fact that this country has ever known — by Tommy Douglas.

Many people in Saskatchewan will remember through the 1950s hearing the story of "The Mouseland Fable" as an explanation of what politics should be about, and will recall the story, and I'll just summarize, Mr. Speaker; I won't read it verbatim. I've got the story before me; I'll come to the conclusion in a moment.

The story essentially went like this. In this land called mouseland the mice had a habit of electing themselves a government, but unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, a government always made up of cats. Oh there were white cats and occasionally there'd be black cats. Now and then we'd have white cats and black cats together. That

was a coalition. Sometimes we had white cats with black spots and black cats with white spots and cats that tried to look like mice. But you know, Mr. Speaker, there was a problem in mouseland.

And if I can conclude this story as Tommy did in the 1950s, Mr. Speaker, he said it this way. Ah the member from Morse understands the story well. He understands, he has understood. He understands why he is a member of a small rump because he knows that the cats got caught in the trap on October 21.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — The cats got caught. The people of Saskatchewan belled the cat on October 21, Mr. Speaker. They belled the cat. Them cats they were eating like cats. That's what the rules were all about.

But as Tommy finished this story, Mr. Speaker, let me put it in his words because he says them so much better than I. You see my friends the trouble wasn't with the colour of the cats, the trouble was that they were cats. And because they were cats they naturally looked after cats instead of mice.

Presently there came along one little mouse who had an idea. My friends, watch out for the little fellow with an idea. And he said to the other mice, look fellows, why do we keep on electing a government made up of cats? Why don't we elect a government made up of mice? Oh, they said, he's a Bolshevik; lock him up. And so they put him in jail. But I want to remind you that you can lock up a mouse or a man or a woman or a little girl but you can't lock up an idea. The words of Tommy Douglas in the 1950s in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, what we have in the Government of Saskatchewan today is a government made up of members of a party that has an idea. It's not a complicated idea, and the idea is simply this: that the government elected by the people and for the people has a responsibility to be the equalizer, to ensure that it can intervene in the natural forces of the economy which are made for the rich and the powerful, to ensure that the people of our province have equal opportunity and equal security. It's the equalizer.

Government as a noble, ethical vehicle for the people of Saskatchewan to realize their aspirations, to have equality of opportunity and equality of security — a government, Mr. Speaker, with an idea.

We all understand, Mr. Speaker, what happens when we have government that refuses to intervene, to allow unfettered market-place to have its course. What happens, Mr. Speaker, is what has taken place in Saskatchewan and is taking place in Canada these days. The rich get richer, and the poor get poorer, and the middle class shrinks away.

You see, Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting coincidence. In fact, it's not a coincidence; it is an interesting characteristic of social democratic government in our land that when you have social democratic government operating with conscience for the will of the people, what

you also have is a growing middle class as part of that government dedicated to equalizing opportunity and security for the people of the province.

And, Mr. Speaker, clearly, clearly it can be said that that objective is only achieved when you have a government that is dedicated to working today for tomorrow, together.

Mr. Speaker, about two years ago we had an important family chat in our house. We sat down to decide whether I was going to offer my name for nomination to run again in the 1991 provincial election. And true to form, as we started our conversation . . . and those who know my wife will understand — perhaps it comes as a consequence of living with the member for Moose Jaw Palliser, Mr. Speaker, but she's a woman who comes to the point.

As we sat down to discuss our family's future involvement in politics, she started with a question, with this one-word question: Why? Why? she said. Why do you even want to be there? You know what it's going to be like. After nine years of Tory government, you're going to have the treasury that has been plundered, you're going to have people in this province who have been suffering for nine years. And people are going to want to have every bona fide injustice that they have experienced under the Tories remedied in the first six months. And the cupboards are going to be bare. You know that. Why do you even want to be there?

Well, Mr. Speaker, there's nothing profound about the answer. It's the same answer in our household as it is in 54 other households, I know for sure, of members who serve in this Assembly. The answer, Mr. Speaker, is that it's for our children. Not to make life easy for me, but to provide some imitation miracle cure today, but based on the reality, Mr. Speaker, to come — to serve for the welfare of our children.

Mr. Speaker, there's no hiding the fact that we have a harsh reality to deal with. It's referred to in the first section of the Speech from the Throne, entitled: "Putting Our Financial House in Order", which is a pretty kind way, Mr. Speaker, of saying this place is in a mess.

And how did we get here, how did we get here? Well, Mr. Speaker, let me refer you to some information provided to the people of Saskatchewan as recently as just last week, Mr. Speaker, in Public Accounts, when the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly which received a special report from the Provincial Auditor.

And what did the Provincial Auditor tell the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly? When he looked at the 1989-90 and 1990-91, the final two fiscal years of the PC government, what did he say? He said there's a few problems, Mr. Speaker, and he pointed them out.

He said well, the PC government in those years, their departments and Crown corporations, paid \$439,000 for advertising to agencies, to advertising agencies, for goods or services that they never received. Wonder where the money went. I wonder if there ever was any advertising delivered to somebody other than those departments, Mr. Speaker.

The *Special Report by the Provincial Auditor* said as well . . . you know sometimes I remember a former colleague, Gordon Snyder, former member of Moose Jaw South. I ran together with him shoulder to shoulder in 1982, and I can remember standing on the platform when he'd refer to the ideas of the PC Party at that time and their plans to spend like drunken sailors. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor said he's right. He said he's right. The Provincial Auditor said the Saskatchewan Liquor Board paid expenses totalling \$16,162 for PC ministers to attend the Big Valley Jamboree — expenses for passes, for food, for trailer rentals, and for booze. Spending like drunken sailors, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, he went on to say, well bet it wasn't just at the Big Valley Jamboree that they had a party at the expense of the people of Saskatchewan. No. No, they didn't have to leave home. It came right to their offices in this building, Mr. Speaker — \$19,285 of liquor to ministers' offices from the Liquor Board.

Well, Mr. Speaker, he said, well there were 130 people who were working for the Government of Saskatchewan in a department or a Crown corporation who didn't even show up where the pay cheque was coming from — 130 of them. In fact when he looked for them he found that over half of them were working for the premier — were working for the former PC premier, the member from Estevan. Over half of them. Oh, the pay cheque was coming out of departments and Crown corporations but the work wasn't being done there. It was political work in the office of the premier.

But the ultimate indignity, Mr. Speaker, the ultimate indignity from the special report, the Provincial Auditor says — you know what, Mr. Speaker? — he says 19 of them, 19 of them they couldn't even find them anywhere. Not only were they not working where the cheque was coming from, they didn't know where they were. Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor says they had ghosts on the payroll — ghosts. Ghosts. Ghosts.

And so what that has meant, Mr. Speaker, is that in the Legislative Assembly and the Public Accounts Committee, it has been turned into the ghost busters. That's what they are these days, Mr. Speaker. Ghost busters.

Nineteen people being paid for by the PC government who they couldn't even find.

(1645)

Well you know, Mr. Speaker, it's kind of interesting. The former minister of Social Services, Grant Schmidt, he had this notion. I remember him standing in his place in this Assembly and saying what a wonderful idea he thought it was that the poor of our province should have to show up at the welfare offices every month to collect their cheque. It never dawned on him, Mr. Speaker, that people who were collecting those PC contracts should ought not to have to show up every month to collect their cheque. They never showed up at all and they collected their cheque. Over \$600,000 they collected their cheques.

Mr. Speaker, Grant Schmidt and those members opposite were paying ghosts, and I say that they are sitting where they deserve to sit, having been determined by the people of Saskatchewan just what kind of responsible government they provided for us back in October 21, 1991.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Ghosts. Ghosts on the payroll, on the PC payroll. Well, Mr. Speaker, what's the reality? The reality is that in 1991, on October 21, the people of Saskatchewan for the third time in our history turned over the mess to the NDP.

Tommy Douglas in 1944 inherited a deficit, Mr. Speaker, \$185 million. It took him 21 years; in 1965 the last dollar and that debt was paid. In 1944 the people of Saskatchewan turned over the mess to the NDP.

In 1971, following the month in which the people of Saskatchewan, sad to say, Mr. Speaker, were the butt of jokes across the nation, we all remember the stories that people would say, will the last one out of Saskatchewan turn out the lights, at the end of the Liberal Ross Thatcher years. In 1971 premier Allan Blakeney inherited a deficit of over \$700 million.

And in 1991 the Premier of Saskatchewan, the member for Riversdale, came into this building, Mr. Speaker, being turned over a deficit of 14 billion — 14,000 million dollars. For the third time, Mr. Speaker, in the history of the province the people have decided to turn the mess over to the NDP.

And so where do we start? As it says in this Speech from the Throne on page 1, Mr. Speaker, by "putting our financial house in order." And why is that? Why is that, Mr. Speaker? The answer is one word. Simply put, the answer is freedom — political freedom, financial freedom, to make the decisions that you want to make. Government serving its noble purposes, the equalizer of opportunity and security for the people who sent it.

And so, Mr. Speaker, objective number one: to put the financial house in order. Will it be easy? The answer is no. Will it be quick? The answer is also no. Will it involve sacrifice? The answer unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, is yes. We all understand that. Will the budget that will follow this debate on the Speech from the Throne be without sacrifice for the citizens of the province? The answer is no.

Will we succeed? Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. We will succeed because we will do the same things that the New Democrat governments did in 1944 and in 1971. We will go to work; we will roll up our sleeves. We will make our plan to resolve the financial errors of the government before us; dedicated to achieving the objectives of a society in which there is equal opportunity and security, Mr. Speaker, with the hard decisions being made by ethical people on this side of the House. We will go to work. We will succeed like we did in the governments that came to office in 1944 and 1971 before us by working, I say, Mr. Speaker, today for tomorrow together.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, on July 1 of this year, Saskatchewan is going to celebrate a very important anniversary, the 30th anniversary of the introduction of Saskatchewan's finest gift to the people of Canada — medicare.

There will be people in this Assembly and there will be people around the province of Saskatchewan who will remember what went on in 1962 prior to the introduction of medicare on July 1. They will remember the work of the CCF and the NDP, of people like Woodrow Lloyd, Allan Blakeney, Bill Davies, the member from Riversdale who looks back to that time, Mr. Speaker, as one of the motivating forces that brought him to politics, and thank God for that.

And the people of Saskatchewan will remember the rallies against medicare, and they'll remember who inspired and who led those rallies against medicare. Was it the black cats or was it the white cats, Mr. Speaker? It was both of them. This was a coalition. This was a coalition. They will remember the leader of the Liberals of the day, Ross Thatcher, coming up to this building and kicking the door in his opposition to medicare. They will remember the keep-our-doctors committee organized by the Tories in opposition to medicare.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in those days there was only one party with the courage and with the vision and with the will to bring medicare to the people of Saskatchewan as part of the will of the people of Saskatchewan; that was the CCF, the NDP, Mr. Speaker. And that commitment remains just as strong today as it did on July 1, 1962.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — But did Tommy Douglas at the time, Mr. Speaker, look at the introduction of medicare and say, there it is; the vision has been achieved. We've done what we set out to do. No, Mr. Speaker, he didn't. Even in those days, Tommy said there's three steps. There's hospitalization for the people of Saskatchewan in 1947. There's medicare for the people of Saskatchewan in 1962.

But Tommy told us all there's one more step. The third step in the vision of health care for the people of Saskatchewan is what Tommy called preventive health care. The word in the '90s, Mr. Speaker, is the wellness model — wellness. A belief, Mr. Speaker, that a healthy society, healthy people, and a healthy society are even stronger than people who see their health care system as purely a sickness remedy system.

And it was under the NDP, Mr. Speaker, that things like public health were allowed to grow and to flourish with a belief that an illness prevented is worth even more than an illness cured. Well, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the difficulty of the financial situation that has been roped around the necks of this government and the people of Saskatchewan by those irresponsible members opposite, this government, Mr. Speaker, is prepared to move.

It's prepared to move forward in health care for our

people, and we have announced our commitment to the wellness model, to preventive health care, Mr. Speaker, which is community based in both its planning and its delivery, which is co-operative in its structure. It involves people and communities working together with the incentive to prevent illness.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? Let me point even further to this political commitment of the government, this New Democrat government, to the wellness model. Because you see, Mr. Speaker, when you're dedicated to the wellness model that doesn't involve just health care — certainly that it does. But it involves as well a commitment to dealing with things like poverty, with the environment, and to occupational health and safety.

And so I point out, Mr. Speaker, that in addition to, and I quote from page 7 from of the Speech from our Throne:

Our view of health care must become much broader. The wellness approach stresses the need to improve our collective well-being by enhancing our social and physical environment, adopting healthier lifestyles, working to prevent disease and disability, helping the elderly to live more independently, and encouraging people to be more responsible for their own state of health.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, and I quote from page 6 of the Speech from the Throne:

The Environmental Charter of Rights and Responsibilities Act will be introduced to guarantee public access to environmental information, and protection for people who report environmental accidents or environmentally hazardous practices.

And I point out as well, Mr. Speaker, on page 8, the Speech from the Throne says, and I quote:

Ten years ago Saskatchewan had one of the lowest child poverty rates in Canada. Today we have one of the highest. One child in five (in Saskatchewan) grows up poor.

(The) government is committed to tackling poverty. The cost of children growing up on the outskirts of hope is too high, both in terms of human potential and increased demands on taxpayers. Hunger and nutrition programs will be enhanced in co-operation with local communities.

It goes on to say, Mr. Speaker:

(The) government is also reviewing all income support programs.

And man, has that been long overdue. And it says on page 9:

Breaking the poverty cycle also means creating opportunities for training and employment.

And I compliment the Minister of Social Services for her

announcement of that very program last week, which will provide some hope for employment for the poorest of the poor in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And on page 10 of the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, it says:

Amendments will be made to The Occupational Health and Safety Act to better protect working people on the job site.

Mr. Speaker, if I can be permitted to go about three or four more minutes, I'll just wrap up my comments, if that's acceptable.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I say that this government is committed to wellness, I say that proud to be an MLA, proud to be a New Democrat committed to wellness in our health system but in the care of the nurturing of the environment on the work place and for the poor of our province as well.

And so I remind the members of this Assembly of the words of the former premier, Tommy Douglas. As we wrestle with the ability to implement this vision in these times for the people of Saskatchewan, Tommy said: Courage, my friends. It's never too late to build a better world.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And with that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I conclude by stating my support for this Speech from the Throne, drawing from page 11 the conclusion of the speech itself, and state my personal and political commitment along with my colleagues in government to begin the task of deficit reduction, to set new standards of open, honest, and accountable government, to provide hope for the disadvantaged, and to renew the Saskatchewan spirit of co-operation and community.

And along with my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, I ask my constituents and the people of Saskatchewan to judge our government, as it says in the Speech from the Throne, by the success over the term of office as to whether we have restored common sense and competence to the management of the public treasury, whether we have restored public faith in the ability of politicians to serve the public interest, whether we've given new hope to the less fortunate, and whether we have brought people together.

It's with a commitment to those objectives, Mr. Speaker, that I stand proud to support this Speech from the Throne. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.