

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, 40 students from one of the very fine schools in my home constituency of Saskatoon River Heights, students from Lawson Heights School, accompanied by their teachers Diane Selby and Don Bates, and chaperons Mrs. Rak, Mrs. Allchurch and Mr. Hiibner.

I look forward to meeting them on the stairs after question period and in room 218 for refreshments later. I would ask all the members of the Assembly to join me in giving them a warm welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Merci M. le Président . M. le Président, je veux présenter a toi et mes chers collègues de la Chambre dix-neuf étudiants de la huitième et neuvième année de l'Ecole Providence de Vonda. Ils sont accompagnés ici par leur enseignante, Mme Marie LeBlanc-Warick, aussi des parents qui sont venus avec la classe, Jeanie Lalonde, Madeleine Denis et Gloria Jeanneau. Je veux demander a tous les deputés de les accueillir chaleureusement.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to present to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, 19 students from the Vonda school, Ecole Providence. They're in the eighth and ninth class. They're with their teacher, Marie LeBlanc-Warick; chaperons, Jeanie Lalonde, Madeleine Denis and Gloria Jeanneau. I would ask all members to give them a warm reception. They're seated in the west gallery, to the west here. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Legislative Assembly, three constituents from the Shaunavon constituency that are here to visit and talk with the agriculture caucus committee today. It's Warren and Barry Brown and Ken Cosgrove, and I would ask that the members welcome them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly today, 27 grade 8 students from the Carnduff Elementary School from Carnduff, Saskatchewan. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery today and I will be joining with them later for refreshments. And they have with them their teachers, Art Keating and Mr. Nicholls. They have their chaperons with them, Mrs. Vanstone and Mrs. Wegman, and I would invite all of you to please help me to welcome these students to our Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You represent Saskatoon Nutana now. Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce to all members of the legislature, a constituent of mine. John Hyshka is visiting Regina today. He is the economic development officer for the Saskatoon Regional Rural Development Corporation. John has some tremendous ideas for economic development in this province, particularly in the area of food processing. I'm glad to see John joining us today and I would ask all members of the legislature to welcome him here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with my colleague from Kinistino in welcoming the students and teachers from the Ecole Providence in Vonda. As you know, Vonda was once in the Humboldt constituency. And I just would like to say to them, welcome, and I hope they had a good trip down, a good visit, and a safe trip home.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Funding for Health Care

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health. And I might just suggest to the minister that she does not get too comfortable in her seat because she may be spending some time on her feet this afternoon.

Madam Minister, you are living proof that the loudest complainers for the public are sometimes the least anxious for its welfare. Now I have in front of me volumes of yours and your Premier's promises and pledges to the public that an NDP (New Democratic Party) government would protect them.

Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health I say I have here a news clipping from March 11, 1989, from the *Leader-Post*, which I'm sure that you remember well. The headline reads: "Death blamed on waiting list." And the story has a nice picture of the minister who at the time claimed that reduced funding in health care was actually killing people. Madam Minister, you remember this claim: "Death blamed on waiting list." Madam Minister, the question is very simple. Do you still believe that reductions in health care funding lead to the death of patients?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For 10 years the member opposite and the PC (Progressive Conservative) government was in power, and for 10 years they did absolutely nothing with respect to health care reform — absolutely nothing. All they kept doing was maintaining the status quo when the rest of the country was moving towards co-ordinating and integrating services and streamlining health care services.

What this government has undertaken in the last few months with respect to health care is far more progressive

and far more geared towards producing a higher quality of health care in Saskatchewan than what we've seen in the last 10 years.

We will be moving the health care system towards a more community-based system. And had those members opposite listened to us . . . The fact of the matter is, if you move people out of hospitals and into the community, you provide not only a higher quality of health care but at reduced cost to the health care system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was giving the minister an opportunity to get it off her chest so that she could do all the blaming — blame the doctors, blame the feds, blame the Tories, blame the media, put blame on everyone else except accepting the responsibility, Madam Minister.

Madam Minister, you said on October 2, 1989 that the NDP, and I quote: . . . will fight the erosion of the principles of medicare. I feel rather certain we'll be having a change in government next time around and then the public isn't going to have to worry about these problems.

Under an NDP government, Madam Minister, you said the public won't have to be worried about these problems — your solemn pledge to the people of this province. Can you tell this Assembly, Madam Minister, how a tripling of the drug plan deductible and an increase of the co-payment from 25 to 35 per cent will ease the anxiety level of the Saskatchewan families and seniors?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have virtually bankrupt this province — virtually bankrupt it. They have just continued to spend and spend and spend over the years, Mr. Speaker, and not do anything in terms of reform or in any sort of attempt to improve the quality of health care and preserve the health care system for the people of Saskatchewan.

Instead, they chose to bury their head in the sand and spend our children's future. That's what they did. They chose to spend the future of our seniors with respect to health care by virtually bankrupting this province. They are the ones that have put the taxes on the people of this province. They are the ones who have levied these fees on people because of their irresponsible mismanagement of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as I have said before, you can always tell when you're hitting a chord with the members opposite — the louder they clap to hide their false bravado.

But, Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about choices. And you bet, Madam Minister, I say you had choices and you are showing now the people of Saskatchewan the ultimate choice that you are making, which is a betrayal of the promises you made during the election time.

Madam Minister, when you were in opposition you brought forward many cases of people you thought were going to be devastated by the former administration's efficiency measures. In fact a few short years ago you said, and I quote: You have destroyed the prescription drug plan, forcing Saskatchewan people, particularly seniors, to make a choice — you talk about choices — to make a choice between groceries and prescription drugs.

Madam Minister, you have removed coverage for the majority of people. If these people had that choice that you're talking about with a hundred and twenty-five deductible and 25 per cent co-payment, what choice, Madam Minister, I ask you, what choice do those people now have with a \$380 deductible and a 35 per cent co-payment? What choice do those people have, Madam Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the choices they had. They had choices to come forward with a balanced budget, but instead they chose to blow money on GigaText.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — And they chose to pay George Hill some 300 or \$400,000 a year. Those were the choices those members made. Our choice, Mr. Speaker, is to try and put this province on a good fiscal ground so that we can preserve medicare and preserve the future of our children.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and a new question to the minister who has the audacity to talk about George Hill when we have a Jack Messer in your group — oral contract; no one knows what the hon. member is getting; no one has any idea; an oral contract that cannot be tabled. And you talk about George Hill, Madam Minister.

But, Madam Minister, when you were in opposition, you claimed that adding a deductible to the drug plan gutted the plan and denied care to Saskatchewan families. That's what you said, Madam Minister. On budget night, in the rotunda, Madam Minister, you said to reporters, and I quote: The drug plan is still one of the best in Canada. That's what you said after budget: The drug plan is still one of the best in Canada.

So on one occasion, Madam Minister, you claim the drug plan was a horrible excuse for health care, and on another occasion you claimed an even further weakened plan is among the best.

My question is simply this, Madam Minister: on what occasion were you telling the truth?

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, when a government is pouring money into hand-outs to out-of-province corporations and friends of the Tory Party, decreasing drug payments is irresponsible and it's a bad choice.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — When a government is looking at its credit rating dropping to BBB because of the irresponsible behaviour of the former administration, it has no choice but to make some of these program cuts — no choice at all.

Now, and let me talk about . . . The member opposite had talked in terms of betrayal with respect to the population. Let me talk about what I discussed with every constituent who raised any of these questions with me on the doorstep in Regina Hillsdale.

We talked about the deficit, the horrendous situation that you put the people of the province of Saskatchewan in, and how we were going to get a handle on that. And we talked about our commitment to implement and improve programs as we could fiscally afford it, and our commitment to try and get this budget under control. That was our commitment to the people of Saskatchewan, not the kind of betrayal that you've engaged in in paying off your friends and cutting programs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — The applause increases, Mr. Speaker, as we go along, and I have no doubt as to why that would be.

Mr. Speaker, I gave the minister an ample opportunity at the beginning of this question period to get over her rhetoric so that we could sit down or stand here in our place and have a reasonable discussion about this issue. And the rhetoric continues. And I have yet, Mr. Speaker, to get an answer to any of the questions that I've been asking. Political rhetoric. No acceptance of the responsibility.

But, Madam Minister, it would be nice if you could just take on the ministerial role and grow out of the opposition mentality that you folks over there are still operating under. You are in control now. It is your responsibility to come up with solutions and answers that are in keeping with the promises that you made during election time.

Now, Madam Minister, sources within your own department inform us that the decision to create some kind of new dental plan was announced to them, without details, two days prior to budget. That's what sources in your own department are telling me. I am told that there is chaos over this so called initiative, and that all the department has been able to get out of you is that this new dental plan will include distributing tooth-brushes to the schools.

Madam Minister, I ask you, in anticipation of your denials, to prove those denials, will you table in this Assembly the actual plans for the implementation of the new school-based dental program that you asked your officials, in two days time, to come up with?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, we are putting together a working committee of a number of health care

professionals with whom we will be consulting in the months to come with respect to developing a dental plan in the province of Saskatchewan that will be more preventive and will provide services to rural Saskatchewan, unlike the former government which took them away.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Speaker, there is the confirmation. There is no plan. There's quite clear there are no plans are on table. This announcement, Mr. Speaker, I maintain and I submit to the people of Saskatchewan, was simply a quickie you had in the hallway to try to show that you had something to offer other than the devastation of the health care system.

And your leader, Madam Minister, talks about scratching plans on the back of napkins. Madam Minister, the public do not know what you are doing with the dental plan. Some media have reported that you are reinstating the school-based dental plan. That's what the media has said, and they're not quite sure either. With your government's desire to hide as much of this as possible, it's not surprising that there's confusion out there. There's total confusion out in Saskatchewan.

Yesterday we caught the Finance minister . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'd ask the member to put his question, please.

Mr. Neudorf: — Madam Minister, could you perhaps enlighten this Assembly, the members, and the people of Saskatchewan and the media for that matter. Do you plan, Madam Minister, to reinstate the school-based dental program, or are you simply going to hand out tooth-brushes and dental floss under your new program?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, we will be consulting with health care professionals in the dental field to determine what the new plan will look like. Our hope is to bring more services to rural Saskatchewan than what presently exist in rural Saskatchewan, which is when they fired 440 dental therapists. They pulled most of them out of rural Saskatchewan, and we are hoping to return some of those services.

Now there are a lot of these dental therapists who have left the province and are no longer qualified, so we aren't in a position to put 440 dental therapists back out in the rural Saskatchewan because of the way they devastated the former program. We will have to put together the best preventive dental health program we can in rural Saskatchewan, and we will be doing that in consultation with the health care professions. And of course it will also have to be done in a way that the province can afford, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — What's the plan?

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Speaker, obviously we're not going

to get an answer to that question either because there is no plan. It's a quickie, a scheme dreamed up by Madam Minister in the hallway to placate some of her supporters, from her long promises, long-standing promises that you were going to reinstate the school-based dental plan.

For a while there I thought the 440 people that you were talking about, the dental therapists, were going to get their jobs back. And then you blew it right at the end by saying, we're not in a position to do that after all.

You talk about consulting, Madam Minister. You seem to believe that the existence of a deficit gives you an excuse to do whatever you want whenever you want — blame everything on the deficit. Well here are the facts, Mr. Minister. You never consulted with chiropractors; you never consulted with optometrists; you never even consulted with your own department, as far as the dental plan is concerned.

Because you claim you're an open and consultative government, Madam Minister, so open that you refuse to table anything that does not suit your political agenda, will you, Madam Minister, will you table a list of the organizations and/or persons that you claimed just now in your previous answer that you have consulted. Will you table a list of the organizations and the individuals that you have consulted with prior, prior to your decisions to gut the Saskatchewan health care system? Will you do that, Madam Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the dental plan, what we said to dental therapists and other health care professionals is that we would look at returning to a school-based plan. I have always said that it will not necessarily look like the old school-based plan we had, nor would it be the same as the present plan. If you look at the letters that were written to dental therapists, you could see in there that the commitment is to come up with something new with respect to the dental plan. And that's what we're going to do as we consult in the months to come with dental professions, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Well we finally . . . Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister. We finally have an admission now that there was never any thought given to really re-establishing the school-based dental plan. The dental therapists have no hope. That's what you have just told them today, Madam Minister.

Madam Minister, as far as the Department of Health is concerned and the rest of it, this budget is a betrayal address. There are seven pages of political blame throwing and partisan attack — seven pages. And I invite any members of the public to read that horrendous document that the Saskatchewan taxpayer had to pay for.

Madam Minister, your devastating health changes that you and your Premier brought about are contained in a few short lines in that document. Can the minister tell us why there is no reference, no mention in the budget address, about the increase in special care homes, senior

citizens' homes, nursing homes? Why there's no mention about increases in ambulance fees and the changes to the dental plan. In fact, these significant changes are only mentioned in one of several news releases — news releases issued after the budget address. Why is that, Madam Minister? Did the partisan attack take preference, or is there another reason?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, I want to quote a statement of the member opposite in the *Star-Phoenix* of June 24, 1987. And here's what the member from Rosthern said: The alternative is to just let the deficit grow. And that would not take courage. It would just put your head in the sand and say I don't have the money and I have a deficit now and I will just continue to borrow and it won't matter.

Mr. Member, when are you going to get your head out of the sand?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A new question to the minister. I know . . . elected in 1986, '87, '88, and '89 it was always my priority to support the people of this province. That was the priority that our government has. We went to the wall for the farmers, unlike your Minister of Agriculture that is throwing the farming sector out to the wolves.

But, Mr. Speaker, getting back directly . . . and the minister almost got me side-tracked away from the important issue, which of course was her ambition here. But I will be constant in the direction, Madam Minister, that I am going, and that is the utter betrayal to the people of Saskatchewan from you as a Minister of Health that constantly said, spend more, spend more, spend more. That was your commitment to the people of Saskatchewan, Madam Minister, and we're going to hold you to that.

And now what we find is a total, utter betrayal . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order! Does the member have a question? I'd ask him to put his question.

Mr. Neudorf: — You talk about the health care system that were not announced in the budget, parts of it. And If I could just make my voice heard above that of the Premier, maybe . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Will the members please come to order. And I ask the member from Rosthern, now he's spent over a minute on this question already and we still have not heard the question. I asked him to directly put his question.

Mr. Neudorf: — I'm sorry if I can't make myself heard over the Premier, Mr. Speaker.

But I will try to get to the question directly without a preamble. Madam Minister, I'm going to ask you now: would you agree to table in this Assembly all, all of the changes to the health care system that reduces services or

imposes costs to patients?

You are doing a lot to the budget, but you're doing more through press releases. Will you table, so that all of the people in Saskatchewan know precisely where they stand, as you hack away at our health care system in Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is going to have adequate opportunity in estimates to question us on every single detail with respect to health care. And at that time I will tell the legislature about our health care reform that's going to save us millions of dollars in this province and still provide high quality health care for the people of Saskatchewan.

A new direction. And even though the members opposite have virtually bankrupted this province, we're going to save the medicare system and advance with a new direction in health care that's going to improve the quality of health care for the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A new question to the minister. And I would ask the Premier to try to control himself so that I will be . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I think the job of controlling the members in the House is up to the Speaker. And I ask the member to direct his question to the minister.

Mr. Neudorf: — And certainly you do a very good job of that, Mr. Speaker. I commend you on that.

Madam Minister, what you're telling me with the chiropractors and optometrists is bad enough. But, Madam Minister, I have to ask you a question that does not deal with back pain nor with potential eye problems. Understand very clearly that this question is for many people who are staying alive today.

Under the previous administration, Madam Minister, diabetics were exempted from the drug plan and charged \$1 for each vial of insulin in recognition of the life-saving nature of the medicine.

Madam Minister, will you confirm that you have removed the special provisions covering insulin for diabetics and that under your new, improved drug plan diabetics must pay \$23 for each and every vial of insulin. Will you openly confirm that for the people of Saskatchewan, Madam Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, diabetics have been brought under the drug plan in the same way that many other individuals who suffer from chronic illness are paying for drugs under the drug plan.

Now with respect to the member opposite's general comments, I want to say this. If the members opposite

could only accept responsibility for what they have done to the people of this province and the children of this province and the seniors of this province. What they have done with their wrong-headed mismanagement, wrong-headed priorities, and mismanagement of this province over the last 10 years, is absolutely reprehensible and disgusting.

They will never, ever be forgiven for it by the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — They have forced this province into the situation where it is virtually bankrupt and where many of our former programs have to be remodelled and changed in order to maintain the quality — something that they refused to do for 10 years because they didn't have the creativity or the wherewithal or the courage to do it. Instead . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Madam Minister, I go back to my original premise. This is a budget of fine print where one must look at the fine print of this budget and beyond in order to get the answers and what the impacts are really going to be. And that means, Madam Minister, that the cost of a bottle of life-saving insulin skyrockets from \$1 per bottle to \$23 a bottle. Including the test strips, syringes, and alcohol swabs that diabetics require, they are now looking at a monthly bill of between 150 and \$200.

Madam Minister, why have you so callously singled out diabetics for whom drugs are not an option but a matter of life and death?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Diabetics, Mr. Member, will have the same coverage as everyone else. And something this plan offers is this, is that after a six-month period when you reach the \$375 deductible, your co-payment drops substantially. So for those families who are very high drug users, they are actually in a more favourable position under this particular drug plan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 1 — An Act to amend The Clean Air Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, I move an Act to amend The Clean Air Act to be now introduced and read the first time.

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

Bill No. 2 — An Act to amend The Ozone-depleting Substances Control Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, I move an Act to amend The Ozone-depleting Substances Control Act be moved and read for the first time.

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

Bill No. 3 — An Act to amend The Environmental Management and Protection Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, I move an Act to amend The Environmental Management and Protection Act be introduced and read for the first time.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Not Debatable)

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the motion for returns (not debatable) no. 16, I hereby table the following answers or response.

The Speaker: — Tabled, no. 16.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the motion for returns (not debatable) no. 17, I ask that it be converted to motions for return (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motion for return debate.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

**MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
(BUDGET DEBATE)**

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's again a pleasure to stand in this House to speak on the budget as it's been presented. And after listening to question period today, Mr. Speaker, I can see why, as I get into my speech, you will find out that many people across this province feel betrayed and angered by the budget address that was presented by the Finance minister of this province just a few days ago.

Mr. Speaker, people feel betrayed; they are angry. And it doesn't matter where you go, Mr. Speaker, they're talking about it. They're angry, Mr. Speaker, not only about the budget address, not only about the promises that were broken through the budget address as it's been presented, they're also angry about the fact of the patronage and the feeling and the sense of betrayal that we've seen by the members opposite.

There's a sense of betrayal in Saskatchewan today, perpetrated by the NDP and the government. Each and every one of the NDP government's election promises, Mr. Speaker, we've seen have been broken. And again

today in question period as we were trying to get answers to questions, Mr. Speaker, it seems that this opposition is going to be forced to look even with a finer toothed comb between the lines to find out what the government . . . where it's really going.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at promises . . . And one thing I want to just point out for a minute regarding the patronage issue. We've brought it up before and I'm sure it's an issue that's going to come up time and time again. The government would argue, and even the Minister of Community Services when confronted by the fact that she had appointed a number of people from her campaign committee to government jobs said, well, it was done before.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated over a week ago, the question is not whether it was done by former governments, be they NDP, be they Conservative, be they Liberal — the question, Mr. Speaker, is what was promised? What do the people believe?

The people believed and honestly believed, and as the Minister of Justice and I had a little debate in this House regarding the patronage issue, the people of Saskatchewan honestly believed and gave the government of the day a 53 percentage mandate at the polls, because they believed the NDP were going to eliminate patronage.

But what have we seen, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health stands up today and talks about a former appointee to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Well they have their own member, Mr. Messer. In fact another member, Ms. Bryant. What about Mr. Ching? What about many of these people that have been appointed?

Do you think the people of Saskatchewan believe the NDP? Do you believe that they are going to believe the NDP in anything they say, even when we get into estimates? I look forward to getting into estimates with many of the members, and I think, Mr. Speaker, it will be an interesting time as we get looking at the health budget and the educational budget and many of the other aspects of the spending of this government.

But talking about patronage. Mr. Speaker, we just looked at a recent article, and I quote, Mr. Speaker: "If it walks like a duck, looks like a duck and sounds like a duck, it's not likely to be an iguana." This kind of simple logic seems lost on Saskatchewan's NDP government when it comes to appointments. The line seem to have become something like, if it looks like patronage, sounds like patronage, and has all other appearance of patronage, it's not patronage. No, it's just mere coincidence.

Mr. Speaker, according to Justice Minister Bob Mitchell, "if a competent person who is appointed just happens to be an NDP supporter, we can't help that." This pious pronouncement, Mr. Speaker, will not fly with the people of this province.

The people of Saskatchewan believed there was better. They believed Mr. Romanow . . . or the Premier of this province, Mr. Speaker. They believed the Premier prior to

the October election when he said we would eliminate many of these former proceedings that had taken place over the years.

And, Mr. Speaker, we indeed as an opposition are going to take careful note. We listened very carefully as the Minister of Justice responded to the questions last week. We also heard the Minister of Justice give the assurance to this House that the 500 positions that have been eliminated through the budget in the public sector that they will not be back-filled by NDP partisans. Mr. Speaker, this opposition will continue to continually keep our eyes out for any back-filling of any position because the government said they wouldn't do it.

Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that in the throne speech the government talked about creating 580 new positions, new positions on boards and commissions throughout the province. And yet in the budget they turn around and eliminate 500 jobs. I don't know how that adds up. It appears to me, Mr. Speaker, there are 80 more jobs than what they eliminated.

Mr. Speaker, a number of the examples I've given are old. We have seen a number, a rash of appointments in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to monitor this government. In one breath they brag about the number of appointments they've made, and the next breath they brag about the number of jobs they've cut. The point of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is the people of this province are annoyed because the NDP broke their promises. They believed the NDP would really live up to the promises they made.

Mr. Speaker, one of the major areas of contention that people in this province are concerned about is the promise of no new taxes. Mr. Speaker, members opposite said, and I quote: enough is enough. And, Mr. Speaker, who made that comment? I believe it was the Minister of Health, going back to *Hansard* of June 7, 1991, who said enough is enough, we don't need more money.

And I'm sure that anyone who reads the the *Leader-Post* saw the full-page ad sponsored by the Saskatchewan Association of Taxpayers. And allow me to refresh the members opposite of a number of other comments they made about taxation, about spending in this province. The Premier said, and I quote: I say to the people of this province, I say the people of this province are fed up with taxes and we're going to change that. In fact, another article says: not one more dollar. On his way to becoming premier, and I quote, Mr. Speaker, Roy Romanow made an excellent point: \$5 billion is enough. Mr. Speaker, I'm quoting from the . . . candidate Romanow told us in last fall's election campaign, not one dollar more be needed to run the Government of Saskatchewan, he said.

Now that he's the Premier, I believe the Premier should stick to his guns. He should still believe \$5 billion is enough. The current level of provincial revenue is enough, he said, because it is. Mr. Speaker, however we just have to look back and we find out in the budget where the government is going. And we look back at what they said. And the further we look back, Mr. Speaker, we find more and more comments that totally go against what has been happening in the province of late.

The current Finance minister said, and I quote, on March 25, '91: the problem is on the expenditure side. We have a structural deficit. Revenues cannot fix the deficit. It has to be dealt with at the expenditure side in order to get things under control. That means cutting spending.

What did the budget do? The budget increased spending, increased taxation. The Minister of Economic Diversification said, and I quote, Mr. Speaker: we've indicated many, many sources where we would see the government saving the kind of money that would make these massive taxes unnecessary. That's June 12, 1991.

(1445)

Mr. Speaker, it sounds like the same old argument: waste and mismanagement. They're going to find all these areas. But, Mr. Speaker, did they indeed find the waste and mismanagement they were looking for? Did the Gass Commission point out any waste and mismanagement? I believe, Mr. Speaker, the Gass Commission said the books were open.

The Justice minister said and I quote, regarding taxation: the problem isn't government revenues. I repeat again. Government revenues — this is coming from the current Justice minister — have increased by 70 per cent in the last nine years, and the government that can't operate within those kind of numbers is a government that doesn't deserve to be a government. That was the Minister of Justice when he was an opposition member back in April 24, 1991.

Yet what do we see today, Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister lived up to his words? The Associate Minister of Finance said, and I quote: the NDP won't raise personal taxes for four years. May 21, '91. Interesting. They wouldn't raise taxes for four years. We haven't gone a year since the budget . . . or since the election, Mr. Speaker, and what do we have — an increase in taxation.

Mr. Speaker, we all hear and we all know of the debate that centred around the harmonization of the education and health tax with the GST (goods and services tax). We all know of the debate that took place last spring when the E&H (education and health tax) was expanded to be harmonized with some of the GST, Mr. Speaker.

Now what did members opposite say when they were on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker? They kept telling the people of Saskatchewan, no more PST (provincial sales tax). No PST. Vote NDP and you will not have any PST. And what happened, Mr. Speaker? What happened on October 21? Yes they eliminated the expanded sales tax on hamburger. They eliminated the expanded sales tax on children's clothing, but did they eliminate the total expanded sales tax? No they didn't, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they gave up \$180 million in revenue which would have come into the province through harmonization of the PST.

Mr. Speaker, they gave up a form of taxation that would have been fair. They gave up a form of taxation that would have treated business and businesses and farmers fairly, Mr. Speaker, as well as the average consumer in this

province.

And then we turn around in their budget speech, Mr. Speaker, and I quote a headline from May 8: "NDP found a way to make up for the PST." It says here:

The provincial sales tax might be history, but the \$181 million it was going to bring in was picked up through other measures in Thursday's provincial budget.

. . . the 10-per-cent deficit surtax announced in the budget is expected to bring in \$120 million over a full year and the increase in the E&H tax, to eight per cent (Mr. Speaker) from seven per cent, is expected to raise \$65.1 million.

The total is \$185 million.

Mr. Speaker, it would appear to me that the harmonized tax that was spoken of by the former government was more than fair. Every time the NDP turned around they promised not to increase taxes. In fact the moment the election results were in they indeed, as I indicated earlier, eliminated the expanded portion of the E&H, only to do what we've seen today — expand the E&H tax to 8 per cent.

And, Mr. Speaker, when the NDP and the government talk about not increasing taxes, do they think that the people of this province really believe that taxes haven't been increased? Do they think that the increase in utility rates is not a tax increase? What do you think people are going to do every time they pick up their bill? What is the difference between a harmonized GST or an increase in SaskTel rates? What is the difference between the harmonized GST and PST or education and health tax and the SaskPower bill? What is the difference?

Mr. Speaker, as they pay more for their SaskEnergy bill, do you think they're going to think that they weren't taxed even more? As they pay more for insurance on their vehicles, Mr. Speaker, I believe the people of this province are going to become more annoyed every day as they look at the increases in the services that they are going to be paying for.

And they're also going to be paying more in personal income tax. They're going to be paying a 10 per cent deficit surtax — a tax on a tax, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, let me quote another article: "And now — a tax on a tax on a tax."

The Saskatchewan budget documents did not come edged in black, although they might well have been since they give taxpayers plenty of reason to mourn.

I believe this editorialist or journalist is certainly feeling what many taxpayers are feeling, and indicating in his article what many taxpayers are thinking today. In fact maybe many members of this Legislative Assembly have the same thoughts going through their minds, Mr. Speaker, with regards to this budget. It says:

The budget will suck an additional \$312 million

from taxpayers' pockets and other sources. It is an economic pill that Finance Minister Ed Tchorzewski admits may cost the province a couple of thousand new jobs — the downside of shifting income that might otherwise stimulate the economy.

Well if we're going to lose the jobs, how are we stimulating the economy?

The education and health (E&H) tax will rise to eight per cent from seven; the gas tax is up three cents per litre; cigarettes will cost an additional 77 cents per pack; prescription drugs will cost more; charges will be implemented for eye examinations; and chiropractic fees will increase.

And then it says:

An extra 10-per-cent tax is being piled on top of the total of other income taxes payable to the province. It has been named (get this) a "deficit surtax" to make it more acceptable . . .

It says, listen, Mr. Speaker:

It has been named a deficit surtax to make it more acceptable to shell-shocked taxpayers who can then hope it will go directly to reducing the provincial debt.

And, Mr. Speaker, your opposition will certainly be watching to see if indeed this 10 per cent surtax goes towards reducing the deficit, as the Minister of Finance indicates. We'll be watching.

The government also promised yesterday to provide us with more public accountability, including a mid-term report on our financial progress. (And the editorial says) It is hoped the government won't use that occasion to make mid-term "corrections" adding to our tax burden.

I believe that editorial is very indicative of the feelings of many people in this province. Mr. Speaker, every time you go and buy an article and have to put up 8 per cent instead of 7 per cent, people will be annoyed. Every time you have to fill up your fuel tank, people are going to be annoyed. Every time you take out a cheque and begin writing out a cheque to pay a utility bill or to purchase goods, each and every time you make a purchase you'll be thinking about the betrayal this government has left you with.

People feel betrayed because, Mr. Speaker . . . there are many adjectives to describe the feelings of people today, but I will just say that they are angry, they are betrayed, and they are unhappy. They are unhappy with what they've heard because of what they had expected from this government.

Mr. Speaker, as we as members of the opposition, when on the side of government over the last four years continually talked about the fact that we must sooner or later pay the bills, we tried to bring in a plan to address the deficit — a plan that would have been fair and provided

the fair finances and funding to education and health and social services and a plan that supported agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, the members of the government, then opposition members, continually accused the government of the day of not having a plan, of not being compassionate and not being considerate. Well I ask the members today, have they been compassionate? Have they been considerate? Maybe we should have been working together a number of years ago, Mr. Speaker, to address this deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I believe members opposite will find that even as they go home to their constituencies and talk to their constituents that there will be many people annoyed at what is taking place. They will be even angrier as they pay user fees for health care. When they go to the optometrists, Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find they will be angry. When they go to the chiropractor, there again they will become even more annoyed.

And then as was brought up in question period today, when they finally reach the deductible on prescription drugs and still have a co-payment of 35 per cent, they will indeed be angry. Mr. Speaker, as was indicated earlier, to have the drug plan rise to \$280 deductible and go from 25 per cent to 35 per cent has put an added load on many people in this province who cannot afford it — many people, Mr. Speaker, who do not have the ways and the means, many people on low, fixed incomes, many people who have health problems beyond their control. Mr. Speaker, I ask the members opposite if that was compassion.

Mr. Speaker, men and women across this province are going to be angry about paying the additional taxes. And they're going to be angry, not necessarily so because of the additional tax increase but because they believe that there wouldn't be any tax increases. They honestly believed that there would be no more taxes, no new taxes. The fact that there are, Mr. Speaker, is what annoys and what hurts people the most.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the members opposite have been very hypocritical, while when in opposition continually asking for more funding on health, education and agriculture, and then now in government turning the other way and spending less and taking more from people.

Mr. Speaker, let me just remind you just a little bit of what members opposite did prior to 1981. Where did they put their priorities? Where was the spending put, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, did they spend it in care home beds? Did they build hospitals throughout Saskatchewan? No.

Where did they spend it? Buying up potash mines, building grandiose liquor stores throughout Saskatchewan. I wonder if that really helped Saskatchewan taxpayers in their health budget. Mr. Speaker, during the late '70s they even had a moratorium on construction of health care facilities. People throughout Saskatchewan . . . And that was one of the things that really was brought to my attention when I first entered politics was the fact that men and women across

this province wanted to have their parents, give them the opportunity of being able to, live close to their community which they'd grown up in.

Mr. Speaker, the former government showed compassion, showed understanding by adding over 2,400 nursing home beds in this province over the past nine years, adding hospital beds and services to rural and urban Saskatchewan, working together, Mr. Speaker, with private care homes and private hospitals such as the Santa Maria Home here in Regina and St. Paul's in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, that's what working together can do for you, and many people in Saskatchewan know what it's like to work together to co-operate in order to build this province.

What does this budget have for health, Mr. Speaker? Nothing but cut-backs, except — I will give the government credit in my area, Mr. Speaker — increasing home care services. Mr. Speaker, this budget does actually increase home care services by nearly 20 per cent. And I believe my colleagues will also admit that while in government that was one of the priorities that we had, was to increase services in home care so that people could have the privilege of being able to remain in their homes as long as possible, even till as long as their life on this earth.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the government for taking a moment to look at health services and to look at home care funding and increasing the funding in that way. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that that's a worthwhile program and it's a positive comment on the part of the minister that he did take the time to at least increase in an area where people can benefit the most.

Mr. Speaker, I will also give the government credit for increasing the child tax reduction for low income families. Mr. Speaker, there again that was reaching out to people who really were in greater need; and for increasing the Saskatchewan Income Plan which is designed to assist low income people. Mr. Speaker, there are three items that have a positive influence on this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, the budget also talked of an increase of 21 per cent for child care centres, and maybe that was needed and maybe it was necessary. But, Mr. Speaker, one question I would ask is: what about the mothers who choose to stay at home? What about offering parents or mothers who choose to stay at home and those families a tax . . . a child tax credit?

Mr. Speaker, it's easy to complain and that's why I suggest that there are points in this budget that have some positive aspects. That's why I brought them to your attention. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, even as we heard today in this House, it's always easy to look at the other person, to blame the other individual, blame the other person, blame somebody else.

(1500)

I believe it's time that the government started to act like a government, not an opposition. I believe the people of this province would indeed like to hear the government

not always complaining and blaming somebody else but laying out an idea, laying out a plan whereby this province can grow. I believe it's time this government quit complaining and pointing fingers, quit looking for new people to . . . or new victims to blame and start looking at fixing things.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the . . . as we listened to the presentation of the budget speech the other day, we continually heard the Minister of Finance putting blame on the former government, and if he didn't blame the former government, looking at third parties, and most of all, Mr. Speaker, looking at the federal government.

He says, Mr. Speaker:

In 1992-93, federal off-loading in agriculture programs alone will cost Saskatchewan taxpayers over 200 million . . . This dangerous trend started because the former government caved in to Ottawa's pressure to cost-share programs that were clearly the federal government's responsibility.

In total, federal off-loading in areas like agriculture, health and education means the loss of more than 500 million . . . this year.

Mr. Speaker, we have there again an indication of this government's continued desire to continue to put blame somewhere else beside where it belongs — at their feet.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point this out. How can the government of the day blame one party and then ask someone else to pay the bills? And I read from an article that appeared in a number of local newspapers around this province and probably in the main papers as well. It says:

Roy Romanow is trying to have it both ways.

On one hand he attacks the federal government for arbitrarily cutting its transfer payments to the province. And, on the other his government tells individuals that depend on provincial government funding to brace themselves for cuts contained in this week's budget.

On one hand the premier attacks the federal government for not coming up with additional support for farmers. And on the other his government announces arbitrary, and very likely illegal, changes to the gross Revenue Insurance Plan for farmers. For many farmers it means higher premiums.

On one hand the Premier criticises the Mulroney government for not doing more to stimulate the economy, such as through tax cuts and spending increases. And on the other he plans tax increases for this province and says there was no money to use for economic stimulation.

(The article goes on to say:) This kind of double-standard approach is certainly nothing new to politics. It is all part of the effort to deflect

attention and criticism to others rather than to absorb it yourself.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that article is very indicative of the fact that the people of this province want this government to begin to act like a government, to accept responsibility for their own decisions.

Mr. Speaker, another article says:

Ottawa won't shoulder (the) blame.

(The article goes on to say:) It's not Ottawa's fault that Saskatchewan has budget problems . . .

. . . federal transfers to Saskatchewan provide about 27 per cent of the province's revenue. That is about 1.3 billion in 1992-93, an expected increase of 2.5 per cent (hear that, Mr. Speaker, an increase of 2.5 per cent) over '91-92.

On a per-capita basis, (Mr. Speaker, the federal contribution through transfers) works out to \$1,376 a person, almost seven per cent more than the national average and 40 per cent more than the amount paid to Alberta . . .

Mr. Speaker, figures also show that in 1991:

although Saskatchewan's agriculture industry accounted for 23 per cent of national agricultural income, the federal government spent 32 per cent of its total agri-food budget on this province's farm and food sector.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, this government has to accept responsibility for its own decisions. It just can't look at blaming someone else. And to blame the federal government, when we look at the support that has come to this province over the years through transfer payments and how they've grown since 1984 since the Conservative government was elected to Ottawa, I believe the minister is being very unfair in putting blame at the feet of the federal government in light of the fact that his government depends on 27 per cent federal funding to operate their provincial budget.

Mr. Speaker, everyone in Saskatchewan knows what is necessary for survival in times such as these. An economic agenda for wealth creation is one of those necessary items, Mr. Speaker. We don't need fingers pointed at Ottawa and the opposition benches. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that argument has been beaten to death. We need a clear-cut plan. We and the people of the province need to know what this government is going to do to create jobs to stimulate the economy. Mr. Speaker, where is that plan?

Mr. Speaker, in the budget, what did the government do? The government eliminated 500 civil servant jobs. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, there are many people in this province will say well, government was too big anyway. And probably that's going to be an argument that will be ongoing, that government is too large. No one will deny that fact that government has become a big burden upon each one of us as taxpayers.

But what about the men and women who held down those jobs? Where do they go for new jobs, new opportunities? Did the government create a plan to stimulate the economy and create jobs so that these individuals who were released from their civil service jobs would find jobs outside of government, Mr. Speaker?

I ask the member from Regina Elphinstone, what about the names of the 700 companies that were mentioned in the throne speech as being part of their economic activity. Who are they, Mr. Speaker? Are they still coming to the province or have they already put the brakes on and decided to go elsewhere?

Mr. Speaker, 700 companies. When I look at the throne speech and the talk of 700 companies coming to this province or looking at this province, Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of the number of companies, and I'm beginning to wonder if they weren't just the same companies, that had already been talking to the former government.

Mr. Speaker, what is the government going to do with the community bond program? — a program, Mr. Speaker, which was used by many communities to stimulate economic activity. And, Mr. Speaker, we certainly can look at the community bond program, and yes, Mr. Speaker, some of the businesses that communities used the community bond program to attract to their community didn't survive the economic climate.

But there were many small communities that today are benefitting because of this programs — communities like Lemberg, communities like Swift Current. Mr. Speaker, I believe the community bond program is an excellent program. And yes, Mr. Speaker, if there are some changes, we trust that the government will make positive changes to enhance the program.

But for the government to argue that, as in the situation in Melville, Mr. Speaker, that they couldn't pay out, pay back the people who had invested in the community bonds, Mr. Speaker, there again they are being very hypocritical as the contract gave them the option of paying out immediately rather than a five-year pay back.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the community bond program, another program that was being talked about by the former government — and here again I'll give the government a little bit of credit — the fact that they are announcing that Saskatchewan savings bonds will be introduced. Mr. Speaker, this was a topic that had been on discussion for many . . . or a number of years by the former government as to how we would implement and bring in a Saskatchewan savings bond. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is a positive way in which the people of Saskatchewan can work together to develop and enhance their problem.

But I wonder, Mr. Speaker, in light of how the community bond has been handled . . . program has been handled by this government, whether people will be interested in investing money in this province through the Saskatchewan savings bond. I guess, Mr. Speaker, time will tell.

Mr. Speaker, first of all this government is going to have to reach the trust of individuals around this province. They're going to have to gain the trust of individuals before they take a serious look at the Saskatchewan savings bond program and get involved in it, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, regarding the trust of people, take a look at programs that were discontinued by this government. And one program, Mr. Speaker, that many people in this province are angered about is the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Mr. Speaker, I believe when we look at the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and I know a number of people in my area who became involved . . . who got involved and decided to become part of that plan. Mr. Speaker, many of the people who got involved in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan were women.

An article in the *Star-Phoenix*, May 11, says women are losers in this budget. And I believe very sincerely, Mr. Speaker, that certainly they are.

The demise of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and the loss of 16 jobs is certainly a serious blow to Kindersley, where the administration of the plan was based.

(Mr. Speaker) The pension program meant more than economic activity for one Saskatchewan community. It meant retirement security for many people — mainly older women — who have very low or no incomes. Now that security (Mr. Speaker) has been jeopardized (the article says).

And the government would say the plan has been dropped because they can't afford it. They suggest there has been an unfunded liability that they can't maintain.

Mr. Speaker, we all know of the unfunded liabilities in the public pension plans prior to 1981. And the number of members across the way, including the Premier, can look forward to extremely generous pension plans when they retire. What about the women across this province? Eighty-five per cent of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan participants, Mr. Speaker, were women. They were housewives, Mr. Speaker; small-business women — women who ran small businesses; waitresses. Mr. Speaker, it didn't matter where you went, women across this province finally had something that they could put their money into and plan for their future.

Mr. Speaker, the article goes on to say:

The pension scheme was started in 1986 with the goal of benefiting farmers, homemakers, part-time workers and small business operators who didn't have access to a company pension plan and who had only small amounts of money to invest.

The plan appealed mainly to women, many of them older homemakers and part-time workers who had no other pension provisions. It was an important recognition of the social contribution of women in the home and on the farm.

Now the government says the province can't afford it. Neither can it afford pay equity in the public service. Deficit control is a priority.

Is that what this government was saying while in opposition? When they were seeking government, when they were on the campaign, knocking on the doors during the campaign, is that what they were telling people? Were they telling them that they were going to reduce the deficit on the backs of the common, ordinary person in this province?

The article says:

Deficit reduction days are dark days for women. It means the possibility of being fairly compensated for their work, in the home and in the workplace, drifts even further into the future.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, the demise of this program shows a lack of commitment from this government which stood up on the basis of women's issues, which said it stood up for women. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health spoke at length, I believe it was last Thursday, on national women's day, and spoke up and supported women, and then we turn around in the budget, demise or throw away a program that was very beneficial to women.

Mr. Speaker, what about the people who worked in the pension office? What about the pension office workers? How do you think they responded, Mr. Speaker? Do you think they responded with glee? Do you believe they were happy when they went to work on Thursday last? They went to work, Mr. Speaker, in the morning, Thursday last, as if they were entering another day at the office, another day of serving the people of this province. And an article says:

By the time afternoon rolled around those 16 employees had found out that the Saskatchewan Pension Plan was history — and so were they.

Mr. Speaker, how do you think they reacted? With shock, the article says. They reacted with shock. They couldn't believe it. They couldn't believe that they could have a job one minute, and then a moment later they were without a job. They couldn't believe that a government who stands up and speaks about being compassionate and understanding would do away with a program and a pension plan that was beneficial to women right across this province. From the youngest to the oldest person in this province, the Saskatchewan Pension Plan was a benefit.

Community leaders said the layoffs will hurt Kindersley, the struggling oil patch and agriculture centre of about 4,900 the office was relocated in last year.

Mr. Speaker, yes, community leaders have a reason to be angry. Not only were employees stunned by the announcement, they were angry and they're disappointed. They've only been there for a year and a half. Mr. Speaker, not only were they angry and disappointed and shocked, but they certainly feel betrayed.

Mr. Speaker, and I can understand why the mayor of Kindersley and why the people of Kindersley would be annoyed as well when you have a payroll of almost \$600,000 coming into your community. As the mayor said, "she couldn't understand why the government didn't revamp the program, if it had problems."

Mr. Speaker, certainly the question arises, and one wonders if politics didn't play a major role in the demise of this program. One wonders if the NDP had won the Kindersley riding, if indeed they would have gutted the Saskatchewan pension program.

(1515)

Another article regarding the pension plan, Mr. Speaker: "Killing pension backward step."

Perhaps Finance Minister, Ed Tchorzewski can explain why it is that taxpayers should pay for the pensions of politicians, but make no contribution for those of homemakers.

Could it be that politicians are more deserving than women who stay home to raise their children, or work in low-paying jobs that don't have pension plans?

Is it that rearing children is less of a public service than being elected to public office? Could it be that politicians are more important than stay-at-home mothers or women who don't earn enough to buy into a private pension plan?

Or is it because we've got better things to spend our money on, such as jobs for political cronies and soundproofed, renovated bathrooms for Crown corporation executives?

And, Mr. Speaker, the article goes on. Mr. Speaker, this editorialist also brings out the fact that many of the people enrolled in this plan were women. It was a benefit for women of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, yes you have to ask yourself, did the minister do the right thing? Why didn't the minister take the time to consult? Why didn't the minister look for other people to talk to and ask for ideas, seek out ideas as to how, if the pension plan was a problem to this province, how it could have been made better so that women across this province and the 5,400 participants in the program would have continued to have a pension plan.

And, Mr. Speaker, if my mother was here today she would be angry as well. She was one of those who entered the program and felt for once in her life she finally was recognized for all the years of service she had given to her province and to her community, not only in raising a family but being involved in the home and school program and other aspects of community service.

Mr. Speaker, we look at the budget that was presented by the Minister of Finance and we see program cuts in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan as I've just talked about, the mortgage protection plan. And I don't know how many

people over the past number of years have come to me and said thank you, and told me how the mortgage protection plan helped me when interest rates were high when the government across the way didn't care, when they were government.

Mr. Speaker, that mortgage protection plan I don't believe really had to be axed. The interest rates were down. I'm sure people were looking at ways and means of saving interest rather than just depending on a mortgage protection plan.

What happens tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, if interest rates go from 7 and 8 and 9 per cent and jump again to 17 per cent? Do we leave home-makers and young couples in a position that they can't afford to pay for their homes?

Mr. Speaker, what about optometric services? What about Law Reform Commission grants? Crimes Compensation Board? The Indian heritage trust fund? Saskatchewan Diversification Corporation, Mr. Speaker, where are we going now? I've just asked what kind of economic activity are we going to see in this province? We've done away with the Saskatchewan diversification corporation.

What about economic diversification projects? Mr. Speaker, what about counselling and assistance for farmers and the FeedGAP (feed grain adjustment program) program, farm purchase subsidy, grants to farm markets?

And, Mr. Speaker, I hear members chirping about the fact that there was patronage involved. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a good indication that many of these programs are cut simply for politics and for no other reason.

Mr. Speaker, when you look back at the pension plan, members opposite must have thought it was a good plan. After all, I believe many members sitting on that side of the House, you will find their names down as being on the yea side of voting in favour of that pension plan. Obviously they believed it was a good plan.

Mr. Speaker, I feel for my colleague from Kindersley who's been taking calls steadily. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, on Friday as I was travelling home and trying to contact my office, the phone kept ringing busy, busy. In fact when it did ring, there wasn't an answer. And I got thinking to myself, I was almost becoming a little annoyed at my secretary for not being at the office. You know what, Mr. Speaker? When I finally got through to my secretary at about 3:30 or quarter to four, she mentioned that she was on the phone from the time she opened the doors, answering calls regarding the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

You believe people in Kindersley are angry. Well what about men and women right across this province, even people who weren't involved or directly involved. They're angry that a plan such as this would be destroyed. They're angry that 16 positions would be taken away from the town of Kindersley, and they're angry at this government for refusing to create new jobs, new jobs for instance that would be created by a memorandum of understanding.

Mr. Speaker, what has or what is this government doing to create jobs? Possibly, Mr. Speaker, they'll be looking at setting up another committee as we heard today. There will be a committee set up in health. I believe the Premier of this province wants to set up a constitutional committee. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, since this House reconvened and since the throne speech, this government has committed itself to one committee after another to investigate what the other committee has done. Is that what we call economic activity or wealth creation?

The Premier's action committee. I wonder how much these committees cost or will cost the taxpayers of this province. Mr. Speaker, one wonders if indeed we're going to need an NDP membership to even have any input into these committees.

Mr. Speaker, when you talk about consultation, we ask ourselves how much did the Minister of Finance consult the people of this province. I wonder if the city of Regina is very happy with the Minister of Finance for his budget. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the city of Regina . . . we drive up and down some of these city streets and they definitely need some work on them. I wonder how many of them are going to see any work done on them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that at least when these committees are formed and these committees become a burden to the taxpayers of this province that at least these committees will travel through the province and talk to people and listen to people. Mr. Speaker, if they take the time to travel around to different communities in this province, at least they'll spend a little bit of wealth in other areas of the province, rather than the two major centres.

Why doesn't this government quit creating committees. Why does this government, it seems, have to study everything to death? Can't they make decisions on their own? Instead of pointing at Provincial Health Council, Mr. Speaker, why doesn't this government hold public hearings on health care? I believe, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are the ones who will foot the bill. Why not go and talk to them and let's see what they have to say. Mr. Speaker, we might be surprised.

Mr. Speaker, they will be annoyed at the cuts in optometric and chiropractic services. They will be annoyed in the increase in prescription drug costs. But you may find, Mr. Speaker, by talking to the people of this province, you may find that they may indeed not be totally opposed to paying a user fee as long as they have some input into it. In fact, Mr. Speaker, you may find that many of the businesses and the services that are being provided, people may not totally oppose them if they have the input and the involvement into government decisions.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, it wouldn't surprise me one little bit if the people would speak up on the delivery of health services. They might just suggest that maybe, Mr. Speaker, we don't need a hospital in every community. They may come up with suggestions certainly that would help us, Mr. Speaker, eliminate the deficit and enhance health care in this province.

I say to members opposite, you may be surprised what the people have to say if given the opportunity to speak if you'd just take the time to ask them.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the Finance minister, to the Health minister, to cabinet, that they take the time to indeed go and consult with people. I would suggest that the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Rural Development take the time just to really go and talk to . . . not just the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool or a few people that they would call together to a meeting. Just give farmers across this province, all farmers, an opportunity for input regarding agriculture in this province.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at this budget we ask ourselves, what did this budget do for agriculture? In fact I believe this budget didn't do anything for agriculture. If this budget had done so much for agriculture, Mr. Speaker, or if indeed the government of the day would have made a commitment to agriculture, I don't think they would have seen farmers marching on this legislature or meeting at rallies wondering what to do with GRIP (gross revenue insurance program). And today, Mr. Speaker, farmers in rural Saskatchewan still don't know what to do with GRIP. They still haven't had the opportunity to really assess the program. They still haven't had the opportunity of being able to speak to their representatives and let them know what they really think about the program.

Mr. Speaker, it appears that this government is more intent on bringing in retroactive legislation that would help them do what they want to do rather than listening to people of this province. I wonder if the Minister of Agriculture really is listening to farmers or if he's indeed listening to the city members in his cabinet advising him on GRIP rather than the rural members who are actually farmers and who actually represent farmers. Maybe they've been talking to too many members; they haven't taken the time to go back to their constituency to find what the rural community really thinks about the programs.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the budget and you look at the lack of a commitment to agriculture, we not only see a lack of commitment to agriculture, Mr. Speaker, but we see agricultural programs gutted as well. Certainly, as the Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association have indicated, the gutting of the FeedGAP program is going to hurt many feeders and many people across this province. It's going to hurt people in the cattle industry, people in the feedlot industry, many feedlots that were constructed and built over the last nine or ten years, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, gutting the FeedGAP program hurts people.

And it doesn't just hurt the individuals who are in the feeding business, Mr. Speaker. It hurts men and women right across the province. It hurts rural communities. It hurts labourers, Mr. Speaker, packing plants, employees in packing plants, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the FeedGAP program . . . the only reason for the FeedGAP program was the fact that in order to be competitive we had to give our producers the same opportunities that producers in other parts of Canada and the United States had, Mr. Speaker. We must be

competitive. If we're not competitive, how can we compete?

The cattle feeders say:

"the program not only supported the feeding industry in Saskatchewan, it helped other areas as well . . . FeedGAP served as an offset to the Western Grain Transportation Act. It stimulated the feeding industry, which in turn strengthened the demand to keep cattle in the province to be fed. A removal of FeedGAP and the introduction of interest on the livestock cash advance program will cost a producer feeding a 600 pound calf to finish \$30 per head."

"Reflected back to the cow/calf operator, the Saskatchewan feeder will have to adjust his feeder purchase price by a nickel a pound to compensate for the additional costs. The \$30 per head reduction in purchase price will make it almost impossible for Saskatchewan feeders to buy cattle."

And, Mr. Speaker, it just goes on and on. Where one sector of the industry hurts, it just moves to the next sector of the industry: "Reflected forward, Saskatchewan Packers need a consistent supply of local cattle to remain competitive in their industry."

As I indicated earlier, the packing industry is hurt by this FeedGAP program. Mr. Speaker, we must have a consistent product to market so that the packers can continue to provide a service.

Mr. Speaker:

"The FeedGAP Program contributed \$.70 to the net benefit calculation, while the interest free livestock cash advance contributed an additional \$2.68. If you consider the loss of these programs along with the loss of the residual effect of other programs no longer in existence, the bottom line will be a loss in competitive position of \$4.09."

Mr. Speaker, this letter says, "This will place Saskatchewan producers five percent behind producers in Alberta, B.C. and Ontario." It also goes on to say:

"It is obvious that politicians need to be more aware of the economic impact of the red meat sector in Saskatchewan" commented (Mr.) Perkins. "In a study commissioned by the University of Saskatchewan in 1988, it was determined that the red meat sector employs 26,393 people. (Did you get that, Mr. Speaker; 26,393 people employed by the red meat sector.) That represents 5.8 % of the provincial total. This sector has a labour output ratio of 20.9 to 21.7 full-time jobs for every million dollars worth of goods and services produced."

And it appears members opposite, even in the comments from their chairs, didn't like it.

(1530)

"The red meat sector contributes \$1,636 million towards the value of goods and services sold in the province, representing 5.5 % of the total value of provincial goods and services produced . . . Loss in competitive position, will result in the decline of the feeding industry in Saskatchewan, but it extends far beyond the feed loss."

And the letter has more to say, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly hog producers, cattle producers in the Moosomin constituency will feel the impact of the lack of support that this budget has given to them. And not just the livestock sector, Mr. Speaker, the grain industry as well.

Another article in a recent editorial says, "Grain and livestock producers hit." "I didn't see anything in the budget to help farmers," Brian Cooper, a farmer from the Melville area said as he listened to the budget. "It's shocking," he said. "Not only will he pay more in income tax and more for cigarettes, a change in the farm fuel tax system is going to cost him about \$1,500 . . ."

Mr. Speaker, even as farmers are out there putting their crop in the ground or trying to put their crop in the ground, they realize that every time that bulk truck pulls into the farmyard, they're going to be losing money, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, grain producers across this nation, across this country, across this province, have been facing difficulty for many, many years. And what has this province done to help them? Nothing. In fact, another headline says, "Budget almost totally ignored the farmer."

For the past decade, the constant refrain from Opposition benches was that the Tories weren't doing enough for farmers.

Now that the NDP are in power, that has ended.

Instead of criticizing the lack of spending, the theme of the NDP budget is that Tory spending was out of control.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture faces a critical situation in this province. The former government made a commitment to agriculture because agriculture is the main economic sector in this province.

Mr. Speaker, another article — and I could go on and on — another article says: NDP abandons farmers in the '92 budget. There was so much more that can be added to the problems that have been created for people right across this province, Mr. Speaker, because of the budget.

Mr. Speaker, many groups have been speaking out on the lack this budget had in support for them — speaking out against decisions and changes implemented by the members opposite. And again I refer to the Saskatchewan taxpayers as being one of those groups, as well as Office of the Farmers Advocate incorporated running an ad regarding the GRIP changes; Synergy putting an advertisement regarding the energy deal that was broken by the NDP.

These groups are also being joined by many other groups in speaking out against . . . on the betrayal this government has put on Saskatchewan people. It's hard to believe that so many people would be so angry so quickly, so shortly after a provincial election.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that as people dig into their pocket-books they won't be very pleased with this government or with the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are many other things that I could say about this budget, but I know there are some of my colleagues and a number of others in this Assembly who would like to speak out. And so I would like to close my remarks today by adding an amendment to the motion, an amendment moved by myself and seconded by the member from Kindersley:

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

Regrets that the provincial budget betrays Saskatchewan families by breaking clear promises not to increase taxes, not to impose health care charges, not to cut essential services, to expand funding for health, education, agriculture and families, and to force the government to live within a \$4.5 billion spending cap; and further regrets that the provincial budget defeats the goal of expanding Saskatchewan's economy and achieving true savings for the taxpayer by imposing long-term costs associated with the cancellation of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan; singling out diabetes for attack, singling out chiropractic patients for attack, singling out optometric patients for attack; massively undermining the livestock and packing industries; failing to provide any whisper of a plan for economic development to diversification; failing to support rural or urban communities on any matter; and seeking to provide the excessively partisan government with an excuse to do anything to anyone in the name of deficit reduction while utterly failing to meet any of its responsibilities as the actual government of the people of Saskatchewan.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to be able to speak to the amendment from my colleague, MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from Moosomin.

Mr. Speaker, this budget affects my constituents in a very direct, very harmful and very dishonest way. As you know, very early after the new cabinet was appointed, I questioned the government on the status of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. And I was told, Mr. Speaker, that the pension plan was safe in Kindersley. And, Mr. Speaker, it does not matter how the Premier tries to squirm around the statements made in the Assembly; they are on the record, and the intent was clear: the pension

plan would remain in Kindersley, and everyone believed that.

In fact, Mr. Minister, they may have even used those exact words. Sixteen people have been thrown out of a job in the community of Kindersley; 16 families are now at risk by this closure, \$600,000 in direct loss of payroll which amounts to over a million and a half dollars of economic activity for the town of Kindersley, a town of less than 5,000 people.

But what we have seen, Mr. Speaker, is an unspeakable act of hypocrisy. The Premier tells us the reason he is killing the pension plan of thousands of Saskatchewan people . . . 85 per cent of the pension plan people involved in the pension plan were women. He is killing their pension plan because he says there is an unfunded liability of \$12 million this year, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as of March 31, 1991, the unfunded liability for the old MLA pension plan was \$19.7 million — \$12 million unfunded pension for Saskatchewan Pension Plan members, housewives, farm families, single parents, minimum wage recipients, small-business people, and \$19.7 million for the MLA pension plan, the old MLA pension plan.

Tens of thousands of Saskatchewan women who are covered by that pension plan are shocked at that kind of logic. The fact is the Premier is sitting himself on a million dollar pension — over \$1 million pension in fact, Mr. Speaker. And Donald Gass told us this million dollar pension of the Premier is also an unfunded liability. But the budget did not eliminate the Premier's pension plan. Oh no, Mr. Speaker, you will find more taxpayers' money being set aside for the Leader of the NDP.

A million dollars for one man compared to \$12 million for — what is it now? — 50,000 Saskatchewan people with the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. This is an absolute display of hypocrisy and mean-spirited action that is surprising in these difficult times.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier claims that the pension plan was poorly targeted. Those are his words exactly — poorly targeted. But I say 85 per cent of the people covered by the plan are women. But the NDP leader claims that these are all rich women. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that if you are indeed a wealthy person in this province, man or woman, it would not make a whole lot of sense to participate in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. You would do much better to invest in an RRSP (registered retirement savings plan).

And guess who gets an RRSP at the taxpayers' expense, Mr. Speaker? Jack Messer gets an RRSP — oh yes. The same people who are having their pensions taken away from them are the same people who are paying Jack Messer's RRSP contribution.

Mr. Speaker, you remember the rumours about some kind of trust fund being set up to hide extra salary for Jack Messer and other NDP appointees. Well it turns out there is a fund, but they are being very cute about it. The government pays into an RRSP and that becomes a political hack's insurance package against the possibility of getting caught and having to quit.

So we have an NDP government here now running around pretending to cut salaries while starting up secret funds, at the same time taking away the pensions of the women of this province. This is a government that truly just doesn't care. That pension plan was started for the very specific reason, Mr. Speaker, and the NDP Party and the Premier should be very well aware of those facts. By far the greatest proportion of the elderly people are women in this province, people who had an opportunity to participate in the pension plan.

We have watched our society decay under the morale liberal ways of the modern world, and one of the most dramatic increases has been that in the increase of divorces. And while the NDP members say that women who had no income should be made dependent upon their husband's income, the fact is that a great many women in this province have been left with nothing in their old age. That is a simple fact, Mr. Speaker, and the Saskatchewan Pension Plan was a major step towards ensuring that it did not happen any more. It allowed for women — married or single — to accumulate a pension on their own, regardless of the status of their husband. And that has been taken away from them by this government of deception, broken promises, and failed trust.

Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a government of broken promises and failed trust. The farm families around Humboldt are . . . and the NDP leader . . . are certainly wondering about what's going to happen around the area of Humboldt. They said, after listening to the member, that they would . . . from Humboldt, they would be doing more for our farm families. But what did they do in the Humboldt area? They yanked out jobs from the community of Humboldt. And where was the member for Humboldt when this was taking place, Mr. Speaker? Where was he, I wonder.

And the ugly fact of it is, Mr. Speaker, that those kinds of things are being . . . it is imposed on the farm families from across this province today. Not only that, but with the introduction of tax on farm fuels, delivering a crushing blow to many farm families, but there is a whole collection of other measures, all designed to drive farmers from the land as quickly and as cleanly as possible.

Going back, going back, Mr. Speaker, to marked fuels in this province. Farmers are absolutely amazed that a government would want to go back, a regressive step like this, and go back to having marked fuels in this province. People set up their farms today, Mr. Speaker, based on the fact that they're likely going to have to only have two fuels — diesel fuel on their farm and gasoline on their farm. Now they'll be faced with the reality of having to have another tank on their farm to put up additional fuel supplies — marked fuel supplies.

This government is in fact determined to drive farmers from the land, Mr. Speaker, and the budget, this budget, is simply clear proof of that. They failed to get them all, they failed to get all the farmers, with the land bank and now they're back with the new tools and new schemes to try again. We don't need a land bank in this province. We don't want bank land in this province, Mr. Speaker. We

want the land to remain in the hands of the farmers, where it should be.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Last Friday it was completely amazing to see the Premier of this province stand in the Assembly and announce it was too complicated to provide information about foreclosures on farm families — too complicated.

The Leader of the Opposition asked the Leader of the NDP how many notices had gone out from the two farm debt agencies. The Leader of the NDP, with all the government at his disposal, said he couldn't answer that question. Instead he launched into a partisan attack, his only refuge from the truth.

So the Leader of the Opposition told the Premier of the province that the information was so difficult for the Premier to alert himself to it. It's a strong statement about where the interests of this Premier lay — not with the farm families but with his buddies in Crown corporations.

(1545)

This Premier has also an expensive taste, Mr. Speaker, in the constitution. Mr. Speaker, we have been told that there's an entire new branch of the Premier's office created especially for the recreation of the NDP leader.

As background, you will know for a long time that there's been a branch of government called intergovernmental affairs office. That office dealt with constitutional matters as well as negotiations with other provinces, Mr. Speaker. But they did not . . . but that did not have jobs for the NDP's favourite constitutional playmates, Mr. Speaker. So now we have a brand-new agency called constitutional unit hidden in the basement of this very building, Mr. Speaker.

While he axes the pension plan, he finds money for his friends in something called the constitutional unit. And what is he saying to the farm families? He's going to trade a constitutional agreement off for some help for farm families.

Well I think every farm family in this province today, Mr. Speaker, are waiting with bated breath for the Premier to make this big trade, make this big trade of constitutional agreement for help for farm families. We're all wondering when he's going to be able to pull off this enormous plan for farm families. This Premier, I believe, should be ashamed of himself for even bringing up the issue of trading one thing for another as important as the constitution against help for agriculture.

If he was doing his job in this province, he would instruct the Minister of Agriculture to reinstate the 1991 GRIP program, the program that gave the farmers of this province a basis in which to operate their farms, and not have the GRIP program as we see today completely gutted, the way the Minister of Agriculture in this province has done in the last few months.

He's taxed farm fuel for the first time in decades in this province. But where will the money be going, I wonder,

to the Minister of Agriculture. I wonder where that money will be going. Would a little bit of it fall into Carole Bryant's hands, I wonder? He says the campaign director of the NDP needed hundreds of dollars every month so the taxpayer can buy her a car. It's not a Lexus apparently, although it was. Now it's just a little bit lower than a Lexus, a car that most taxpayers in this province can't even begin to afford.

The leader of the NDP says she won't be able to . . . he wouldn't be able to attract people of Bryant's qualifications if he didn't offer expensive perks. But what are her qualifications, Mr. Speaker? She's a social worker — a social worker to run one of Saskatchewan's largest and most important Crown corporations. This Premier thinks SaskPower is a welfare organization; that's why you need to have a social worker running it. I think that's a kind of a twisted logic, Mr. Speaker.

It seems that it would be very hard to attract qualified social workers to the executive offices of SaskPower without offering big salaries and special benefits. Heck, if you didn't pay these amounts, the social workers would all have to go to other companies to work for them, obviously other Crowns. They must be all waiting for social workers to line up at the door to hire them. It's ludicrous, Mr. Speaker, and the NDP leader knows it's ludicrous.

It's even more ludicrous that he appointed the Minister of Justice as the minister to answer for patronage appointments. I can tell you, many people were stunned when the person charged with maintaining the highest levels of honesty, the Minister of Justice, stood in this Assembly and, with a poker face, stated that there'd been not one, not one patronage action by this government.

I think it's pretty clear, Mr. Speaker, all we have to do is look to the Jack Messers, the Carole Bryants, the Lorne Johnstons — the list goes on and on of appointments by this government. They are all NDP patronage-type appointments. And yet we have the Minister of Justice in this province standing and saying, not one patronage appointment from this government. What an act of total hypocrisy.

It was an act of dishonesty that will mark the term of this minister and sully the reputation of the man who should have maintained a reputation above reproach. It simply shows how far this government is prepared to go to deny reality.

Mr. Speaker, the situation of our farm families is a reality that this budget not only refuses to deal with, but worsens. Elimination of the FeedGAP, application of fuel tax, taking away of pensions of farm wives, huge increases in power, gas, phones, and the roll-back of the oil and gas lease payments, jacking up of stud fees at provincial government community pastures, and who knows what other little gems are all designed to reduce farm income.

The corporate capital tax has been raised from 2 to 3 per cent, a 50 per cent increase. It shouldn't take all that much longer, Mr. Speaker, to drive the oil companies out of this province — the goal that the NDP has always maintained is something that they're going to try and

accomplish. Drive the economic activity from this province — the type of thing that they did in the '70s with the oil companies and are starting to do over again. The oil companies that produce all kinds of wealth for this province.

My constituency of Kindersley has thousands of jobs that are directly related to the oil industry. And what are they doing to that oil industry? — but they're slapping a 50 per cent increase in taxes to them. And all the while the NDP back-benchers can do is sing, merrily we roll along, as the choir leads us down the abyss to a total oblivion of this province.

Mr. Speaker, where is the vision in the budget? Where is there any hope? This budget has taken what was shaping up to be a promising recovery and snuffed it out because of the narrow minds of the members opposite. How can the Leader of the NDP actually believe that there were no options at all to expanding our economy? How can he ask us to believe that, when we know it is not the truth? Even his own back-benchers have shown him ideas, many of which we probably disagree with, but at least they are thinking about building something rather than just tearing things down.

Look, Mr. Speaker, at the idea of some of the NDP members of the NDP caucus have been promoting a bank of Saskatchewan. You know, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't have to be a totally socialist idea. An old private enterprise soldier, the former member from Biggar, used to promote that very idea on a regular basis for similar reasons as NDP members like it.

The disagreement is not whether it should or shouldn't be but who should own it. Does it have to be owned exclusively by government? I don't believe it has to be owned entirely by government. The fact is hundreds of millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, are escaping from this province every year in the form of interest payments — hundreds of millions. It's foolish not to try and recapture some of that money for Saskatchewan taxpayers.

And the fact is, Mr. Speaker, we're already banking in this province in a very big way. We have at least two banks that lend out money — Ag Credit and SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation). The Gass Commission and the Provincial Auditor had made some very valid observations regarding in particular SEDCO that would have fit well into developing a provincial bank. They point out that many of the loans offered by these institutions are in fact subsidy programs and therefore should be recognized as such.

The government could remove commercially viable loans from each portfolio and transfer them to a new bank, leaving the government those that exist for policy reasons as it is appropriate. This would have an effect of not only increasing accountability but it would allow an orderly transition from a policy loan to a commercial loan and it would provide a more diversified portfolio for the new bank.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, there is some monetary magic that can be worked by the banking system that would allow the province to keep some of those interest dollars

in this province rather than seeing them slip out of this province. Well the point is we could establish a financial institution in this province and capture all of the interest payments for our own economy.

The question is asked, how do we get a charter then from the federal government? And the answer is, I don't think you have to have a charter. The Alberta treasury branch operates exactly as banks do even though they don't have federal charter. They are not chartered and they have not been subject to the federal banking regulations. And this means the Alberta treasury branches are restricted only by their own policies and the markets they choose to compete in.

As well we can fight in this House about the degree of private sector involvement and whether or not the majority of the members of the board of directors should be privately appointed or not, but in the end the important issue is retaining hundreds of millions of dollars in interest payments in the Saskatchewan economy. Over time the government could retire all of its foreign debt and indeed a great majority of the debt owed to provinces like Ontario and Quebec financial institutions.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, even if there are flaws in the proposal of a Saskatchewan bank, it clearly shows that the government did have options. It could have explored these options. It chose not to. And the budget in my judgement does not reflect a belief in options at all. They said they would cancel things like the PST. But what have we seen, Mr. Speaker? We've seen an increase in it from 7 to 8 per cent.

It gives no reason to be hopeful about the future, no reason to believe the NDP government can grapple with assuring the future. It is a budget totally without any effort to make the economy grow — no effort whatsoever. Nothing in the budget that it will ask people to try and go out and earn and expand their businesses. Nothing in the budget for them at all. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this budget will make the economy of Saskatchewan shrink.

The minister refuses to table any studies that show the negative effects of this budget. Let's look, for example, at the elimination of the FeedGAP program. Mr. Speaker, this one action will destroy thousands of jobs over the next few years. We see the livestock feeding industry . . . we'll see the livestock industry shrink and perhaps even disappear. This in turn will devastate the packing industry.

So on one hand, Mr. Speaker, we have a government making SEDCO loans to packing plants and on the other hand we see the government assuring the demise of those same packing plants by destroying the basis of their raw material, the cattle and hog feeding industry.

Mr. Speaker, the minister admits jobs will be lost, but he said he didn't bother to find out how many. He did not research to determine how far his budget would drag us down because, Mr. Speaker, he did not want us to know the extent of this budget.

Mr. Speaker, the previous government conducted studies

that compared the effects of various tax measures. Why wouldn't the new Finance minister table the studies that he conducted about his tax measures? I am told that they show that increases in income tax would have a negative effect on government revenues over a five-year period because the associated reduction in employment and population will reduce the revenue base and the government will not make up in tax size what it loses in the number of taxpayers in this province. The member from Thunder Creek said it well. What we need are more taxpayers, not more taxes.

And, Mr. Speaker, what about the Buy Saskatchewan Agency, Mr. Speaker? We have seen a small dedicated agency that created many jobs, many thousands of jobs by putting together Saskatchewan suppliers with Saskatchewan buyers. The fact is that the economic analysis tells us one of the best things you can do for the economy is to engage a sensible export . . . or import replacement. And the Buy Saskatchewan Agency did that very well, Mr. Speaker, in every area conceivable, from power poles to jewellery.

And it was not only or even mostly a government-oriented agency. It would find a need for a product from a private manufacturer and then it would link them up with a Saskatchewan government agency to produce this product right here in Saskatchewan. It is another basic economic principle example that you try to make outputs out of the inputs of other industries. If you do that you have an integrated economy, Mr. Speaker.

But the NDP leader cannot tolerate anything to continue that was started by the former administration. He killed the pension plan because it was created by Tories. He killed the Buy Saskatchewan Agency because it was created by Tories. He's well on his way to destroying a number of other things in this province, Mr. Speaker. The government is engaged in a slash and burn policy unprecedented in our history.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP do not seem to care who they hurt in their mad pursuit to soothe their own egos. And lest you think I exaggerate the egos and the mean spiritness of the members opposite, let me relate to you a story that shows the depth of pettiness that the Leader of the NDP himself has stooped to. And I would like the NDP leader to answer that, if he has the courage to stand up and act today.

(1600)

Mr. Speaker, there is no one in this province today that does not know that the member from Estevan led the way to a building of a new agriculture college in Saskatoon. Everyone knows that, and the NDP voted against the budget that provided \$80 million to build that college. This is a fact, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as is the tradition in these things, when the building was completed the plaque was affixed to the building naming the premier who built the project. Guess what the NDP Premier did, Mr. Speaker. As soon as he was in office — in fact I think he faxed, the order went out on November 2, 1991 — as soon as he got himself in the door he ordered the plaque destroyed, naming the

member from Estevan, so that he would have his own name put on that building, the College of Agriculture in Saskatoon.

Talk about utter pettiness. That's the type of thing that you did, Mr. Premier. Your name is on that building and not the member from Estevan, the member who rightly should be on that building. He isn't on it because you said he shouldn't be on it. That's true, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the Premier doesn't like those kinds of accusations; the kinds of things that indeed are happening in this province today, Mr. Speaker. All one has to do is drive up to the College of Agriculture and have a look for themselves to see whose name is on it. Is it your name that's on it, Mr. Premier, or is it the former premier's name that's on the building?

Those are the kinds of acts of pettiness that this Premier is becoming well-known for in this province today. The plaque was destroyed so he could have his own name put on the building. Absolute hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker. It shows the lengths, Mr. Speaker, that these people will go to raise their own profile. I don't know, Mr. Speaker, of things like this that happened in the province in the past, but now we see the government intent on destroying anything in this province that the previous administration put in place.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we've obviously hit a chord with the Premier. He keeps speaking and speaking and speaking about this. But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that it's his name that's on the College of Agriculture today up there. You're the one that ordered it be put on, sir . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I ask the member from Kindersley to direct his comments through the Chair, and not at any particular individual in the House. And I ask also the Premier not to interfere when the member from Kindersley is speaking. But I wish the member would direct his questions through the Chair.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate your advice in that. Well now that we've seen that type of thing happen in this province, Mr. Speaker, I think the people of this province are beginning to get a clear picture of what kind of Premier we have today.

This budget indeed was a . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The member from Maple Creek knows full well that that is not acceptable in this Assembly, and I ask him to please stop.

Mr. Boyd: — This budget, Mr. Speaker, is a disgrace. It's a hurtful budget. It's a budget that does not care for people, but makes war on people. It's a budget that allows the NDP to plunder the taxpayer, but gives the taxpayer of this province no refuge at all. It's a budget without hope, without vision, without any economic agenda, and without respect for those who work in this province today, Mr. Speaker.

It's a budget, Mr. Speaker, that shames every NDP MLA in this province today. And for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, the budget should not pass, and this government should

face up to the truth of the amendment proposed by the member from Moosomin.

I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to support the amendment from the member from Moosomin, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel a great deal of responsibility to be a member of this Legislative Assembly during these difficult times in our province. There is no doubt that this is one of the most difficult and important budget debates that will ever take place in Saskatchewan, and I truly want my contribution to be a meaningful one.

When deciding upon the tone and the content of this reply, even when to deliver it, I took the time to reflect on what is important to me politically and personally, and I want to share my conclusions with you today. I hope that the members of the government will invest at least some of their time, not just in being here but in actually listening to what I have to say today.

First, I did decide not to speak on Friday because I felt it necessary to digest what was in the budget carefully. A budget is a complicated document and deserves, I believe, more than a cursory glance and a dismissal. It commands thoughtful consideration because of many hours having been spent laying it out and the many politicians and bureaucrats having struggled to do the best job they can. I want you to know that I have taken the time to try to better understand what this government has done and to discuss the specifics of this budget with many of the people affected by it.

Last week there was much evidence of people being caught up in the rhetoric and the partisanship of politics in this Assembly. We have seen this evidenced in the last two days of this week as well. I believe that the opportunity to evaluate the budget is far too important to be lost in that way.

I hope then that all members will listen to what I have to say as I did when the Finance minister delivered the budget speech. In listening, perhaps the members of this Assembly may understand better the points of view of many Saskatchewan people. Perhaps they may choose to follow a suggestion or two which may serve to better the lot of our people and to hasten our economic recovery.

The ideas that I put forward are not just ideas from an opposing politician, because that is not the purpose in my being here. I do not simply wish to oppose; I wish to contribute. If, after I have spoken, any one of the members of this Assembly is intrigued by my proposals or wanting more information on a concept, I invite them in the best interests of all people to discuss them with me.

On Friday in question period the Minister of Finance extended a challenge to me to put forward my plan for economic development. Today I will explain why Liberals feel that a different approach should have been taken with this budget. And at the end of all of this, I ask all present to remember that I am here to represent a different philosophy. I remind them also that at least 125,000

people support that philosophy, and they have a right to voice their approach in this democracy. And I hope that they will listen through me today to what the Saskatchewan people have to contribute.

Expectations. When a budget is as long overdue as this one, Mr. Speaker, everyone in the province has a time to develop expectations. Though the government spent a great deal of time and went to considerable expense to prepare people for the bad news and to clearly pin the blame on the previous government, they did not spend much time consulting with the people who would be most affected by this budget.

Mr. Speaker, there was no shortage of time given, since the budget was fully two months late in coming down. And with 10 years in opposition, six months in government, with 55 MLAs on the taxpayers' payroll, I believe that these individuals could have invested some of this time in consultation with the very groups who would be most affected. Although the final decision always rests with government, it is unacceptable that so many groups affected were not consulted about the best way to achieve the desired savings and the ways of generating revenues.

This government missed an excellent opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to demonstrate a true commitment to the open, honest, and consultative approach they claim to have. Unequivocally, they failed to meet the expectations raised that they would be different from their predecessors in their treatment of people.

What about the average Saskatchewan taxpayer, the working person. People were expecting a tough budget, but there were many things they were not expecting. They were not expecting major tax increases. And why weren't they expecting major tax increases? Because they were told. They were told throughout the entire election campaign that the NDP would not impose more taxes.

People were expecting the government to say it was going to manage with \$4.5 billion. They were not expecting the government to have a need to raise more than \$4.5 billion in revenues because the Premier told them so, many times during the election, that \$4.5 billion would simply have to be enough.

So what were they expecting, Mr. Speaker? They were expecting — I know it and you know it — they were expecting this government to come up with an alternative to dealing with the deficit without raising taxes.

Now let's go back in time, something members opposite over there love to do. Let's go back to October of 1991, the election campaign. It's a refresher course on the deficit predictions. The hon. member for Riversdale, now the Premier, warned everyone, and I quote: the deficit for 1992 could be as much as \$1 billion. So everyone knew it would be a great deal more than the Conservatives said it would be. It turned out to be \$852 million, as confirmed by the Gass Commission.

The problem I'm having — and maybe some of the NDP members can help me out here — is that it seems that they really didn't have a plan to deal with the deficit, no matter

what the size was, whether it was \$1 billion or even the \$500 million or \$600 million that they must have known it would be back in October.

When the Premier was telling the people the deficit could be \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, he was trying to prepare us for the worst, but thinking that it would probably be about \$600 million. At the same time he was telling people, quote, trust us. We can deal with this deficit, whatever it is. We will wrestle it down to the ground and we won't raise your taxes.

What I'd like to know is this. I'd like to know just how the members of the government believed they were going to accomplish this feat at that point; what kind of a plan they had developed in order to deal with any deficit; what was the plan and what happened to it.

Never mind the fact that the deficit was underestimated by \$200 million. What people deserved to know is how the NDP planned to deal with even a \$600 million deficit without raising taxes. But they simply saved a few million in waste, then they cut programs by \$344 million, and guess what? That was it.

Was that all that they had in mind to deal with the deficit? Bottom line is this, Mr. Speaker, whether the deficit was 600 million or \$850 million, they addressed only 400 million of it through cuts and spending.

The smartest alternative which people expected in this plan and which was the Liberal's plan, as we outlined in our document, would have been to lower taxes to attract investment, to bring in such activities as the AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.) deal to create quality jobs so more people would move here and more people would pay taxes. It's called expanding your revenue base.

But the government did not adopt this approach, Mr. Speaker. Where did the NDP go? As usual, straight to the taxpayers. What kind of innovative strategy is this, I ask? The new budget didn't come up \$150 million short in dealing with the deficit. It didn't come up \$200 million short in dealing with the deficit. It didn't come up \$300 million short or \$400 million short.

After raising every tax in Saskatchewan and creating a new one, the no-new-taxes NDP still came up \$517 million short of the target. Where's the rest of this supposed to come from? Excited investors flocking to Saskatchewan? The 700 companies so anxious to relocate here? Don't cut with a dull knife; use a laser to pin-point cuts. Less pain, less bleeding, I say.

After going through every government department, after destroying our Saskatchewan Pension Plan, our universal access to medicare services, after cutting 500 jobs, and after axeing the feed grain adjustment program, after closing the Department of Science and Technology, the government was only able to reduce government spending, Mr. Speaker, by 3 per cent. There was no carefully organized strategy, no fine-tooth comb — just a purge of the civil service to make room for the NDP, and the abolition of Conservative programs and departments because they were Conservative.

(1615)

No attempts made to discuss with people of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and others, what could we do to save the taxpayers' money while saving the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Closing trade offices with no alternative plan when we're struggling to find a global market niche doesn't make a whole lot of sense either.

And the Department of Science and Technology is the last department we should be losing when we're trying to create centres of excellence in research and technology for energy and agriculture. These are areas with potential wealth expansion, Mr. Speaker. This economic strategy will ensure that the only thing for which we can claim to be a centre of excellence in this province after this budget, is taxation.

But they didn't stop at cutting programs in a helter-skelter fashion, Mr. Speaker. This NDP government proceeded to tax the sick by doubling or tripling deductibles for the drug plan and deinsuring optometric and chiropractic services.

They off-loaded increased costs to the members of SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) and SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association).

And when they were done with those attacks, the next place they headed was straight for the working people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayer. The carefully laid NDP plan to tackle the deficit was nothing more than a carefully concealed tax attack on the people of this province, concealed until their members were safely installed in their seats over there.

Once they had their hands on the reins of power, Mr. Speaker, the NDP government couldn't come up with one creative idea to deal or fulfil the promises they made, so they went straight to the pockets of the people.

Well the NDP have done this so often, it's almost becoming a trade mark across the country. And even then, even after raising taxes on income, on corporations, on cigarettes, on gasoline, and on every item retailed under the E&H tax, they still couldn't get within \$500 million of eliminating the 1992 deficit.

I don't think that this is at all what people expected that the NDP meant when they said, attack the deficit and no new taxes. And how dare, how dare they sit there with their army of MLAs and ask last Friday, what I would do, when the people are paying them collective salaries and benefits of more than \$3 million, Mr. Speaker. The people expect their NDP MLAs to have spent the last seven months producing a strategy and a budget that would reduce the deficit, fuel the economy, and create jobs to expand our tax base. That is what the people expected from this government, but it is not what they got.

The only new revenue that this lack-of-talent group has been able to produce is through video poker terminals at border hotels. Wow! I am not convinced that they have

an overall strategy for the gaming industry, sir.

Speaking of poker, it appears that the members of the government and the Premier really do seem to think that they're engaged in a high stakes poker game. The problem is this. The NDP candidates came to the election poker table with a bankroll of promises, Mr. Speaker. They joined the game with the Conservatives and the Liberals and they bluffed their way through, never once tipping their hand to the people during the election campaign. The Premier kept his face, his poker face, through speech after speech during the campaign, making promises that he knew he couldn't keep.

Now the Liberals were there with their chips on the table too, I might add. But the people didn't realize that the Liberals really could win the game, that they did have, in fact, a very good strategy — the best strategy and the best hand.

And you see, unlike the New Democrats, the Liberals were honest with the people. We did not promise that taxes would not have to go up. We did not try to pretend that we wouldn't have to spend differently in health care, perhaps even have some of the costs passed along to citizens. We didn't mislead people. We put it all out in the open, put our cards on the table for everyone to see. Liberals were committed to producing a budget that used overall tax reform — increases in some areas, decreases in others — to encourage investment and stimulate the economy.

But the election was truly poker of the highest stakes, Mr. Speaker. Eventually, although we stayed in the game for a long time with one-tenth of the money spent by the other parties, we couldn't compete with their bankroll of promises.

So the NDP won the pot. They cleaned up with a full house — 55 seats, 55 of a kind. But you know what? We have finally seen the Premier's hand, and he had nothing. And now knowing full well what cards they were dealt by the Conservatives, all they can do is complain about having to play them.

All I can say is this: they cannot bluff for ever, Mr. Speaker. Sooner or later they had to show their hand, and the people knew this government was bluffing. So take heed. The NDP won't fool the people a second time, no matter how much they try to buy the pot, no matter what they try to have up their sleeve.

The simple fact is they created the expectation of a \$1 billion deficit, they created the expectation that they could deal with the problem without raising taxes, and they created the expectation that they had a strategy that they could generate revenue in some other way.

The NDP created an expectation that this would be a tough budget, but they failed to live up to the expectation that they were going to handle things in a much different way. Ask labour, ask business, ask farmers, ask health care providers, ask the taxpayers — none of them expected this government to have such a know-nothing strategy to expand the economy or to create jobs.

The NDP government created the expectations, Mr. Speaker. That, I regret having to remind them, is how they got elected. And I had some high expectations of the members opposite as well. I expected the NDP government would very clearly lay out a long-term plan for deficit reduction which would tell us exactly where we are today and show us where we will be one year from now, two years from now, three years from today, if we followed their plan, Mr. Speaker. I hope we will see that projection from the government before this week ends.

I expected to see careful and detailed analyses as to how these tax increases and decreases would impact on the economy. Surely these analyses were done, especially in view of the harsh criticism they levied on the Conservatives for not providing a cost/benefit analysis for Fair Share Saskatchewan.

In quote, no one does business like that. Or is that an unforgettable quote as well? Surely the NDP would not be so careless as to impose new taxes without having measured their impact.

I expected, everyone who supports the AECL memorandum of understanding, whether it be revised or not, expected to see concise details on the Energy Institute in the Speech from the Throne or at least in the budget speech.

First this government misled the business community and SARM and SUMA into thinking that they would go ahead with the Billinton inquiry to bring the \$50 million research project to Saskatchewan. No sooner was this government elected than they flip-flopped to the party faithful. And not one MLA on the government side uttered one objection. Instead they quickly pulled a card from the NDP bag of election tricks and called it the Energy Institute.

This was better, they said. It was cheaper, they said. It will create jobs, they said. Now we have to pay someone to tell us what they meant when they said those things because they didn't seem to know.

And the NDP hired Kilborn engineering on taxpayers' dollars to come up with the concept they supposedly were supposed to have. And they're sending the bill for the engineering firm right back to us. We can pull out our wallets one more time and see five bucks missing in everybody's pocket in Saskatchewan.

And the very least, since this concept was unveiled but never explained during the campaign, I think the NDP Party should pay for all the design of this concept and the design of the wellness model, neither of which seem to exist except in the minds of the Premier and his cabinet.

In fact we heard more details about the budget before it was released than we've heard about the Energy Institute. And the budget was supposed to be secret? This fictitious Energy Institute that I hope we're going to hear about, since apparently it's come forward today, has already cost the province the AECL deal, unless something's going on in the back rooms that the people haven't been told about, as well as the entire Department of Science and Technology.

Therefore I think the government had better put all of the details — the costs and the job creation and the economic development potential — on the Table this week as well. They've kissed goodbye one good deal after another for the province, Mr. Speaker. They owe it to the people to show them their alternatives before another day passes.

While we're talking about nebulous concepts, let's talk about health care and your wellness model. I expected to see a comprehensive plan on health care, complete with the proposed wellness model and the endorsements of it by all groups consulted in the process. And believe me, everyone else in the province expected to see the details and the endorsements as well, Mr. Speaker. Everyone assumed that extensive consultation and discussion had taken place, for the issue of premiums to have been discussed fully.

Well we didn't see anything about the wellness model or extensive consultation. What we saw were funding cuts to health care in some areas, increases in the drug plan rates, de-insuring of chiropractic and optometric services, while the professionals involved claim that they were never consulted at all.

I think people deserve to see this wellness model now so that they know what the government is trying to do with or to our health care system. When they told us \$4.5 billion had to be enough, they indicated that the government could provide the services it promised, including improvements to the prescription drug plan and reinstatement of the dental plan.

They haven't provided the extra services they promised or the improvements to the prescription drug plan. What they have done, Mr. Speaker, is to take away services and increase costs to the users. This is a not very clearly disguised user fee, Mr. Speaker. This government has targeted the chronically ill and forced them to spend more on their drugs, their eye examinations, and their chiropractic treatments. And when they talk of a wellness model, they will have a lot of explaining to do to convince people that this will actually keep people well and avoid having them end up in hospital or on more expensive drugs.

If a chronically ill person fails to take medication because of the cost, then that person ends up in emergency or in hospital, Mr. Speaker. If a middle-aged diabetic cannot get free access to an optometrist, we will have numerous expensive complications in the health of such an individual. If people who rely on chiropractic treatments to relieve pain and suffering are now forced to pay for pain medications, there will be an increased demand on the hospital system as other insured services try to fill the gap that is left by de-insured chiropractic services.

The members opposite will be particularly hard pressed to explain this to the optometric association and the chiropractic association and the Saskatchewan Medical Association, none of whom received more than a listen-up briefing days before the budget with no chance for input. These are the people who could have helped the government to save money in our province. They could have been asked to help save taxpayers' dollars in health care. And they could have turned to these

professionals for advice, but they turned them down.

Although I applaud the move to increase funding to home care, I'm left wondering just how this fits into an overall strategy, Mr. Speaker, and when the people are going to finally be able to see the complete plan, how the pieces are supposed to fit together. I suggest to the government that the patience of the patients is wearing thin, as is the patience of the professionals in health care.

(1630)

We want to see their health care plan complete with long-range protection and projections, and people deserve to see it now. The government had the perfect opportunity to discuss health care premiums in a rational way with hundreds upon hundreds of professional people who were willing to talk about all the options. The approach they took was to bend to party pressure, freeze out concerned groups, and to keep the public guessing. This approach is not open, Mr. Speaker; it is not honest; and it will not keep them accountable.

Another important expectation was not just opening the books, but keeping them open and keeping them understandable. And we all applaud the Gass Commission for giving us some frightening but believable baseline numbers from which to work. I congratulate this government for adopting the accounting methods proposed by Mr. Gass in his highly capable commission. We're relieved to know that we have finally the news, the bad news, and that the waiting is over.

At the same time, we expected the government to do two things. First, to leave no stone unturned in finding areas to save money — not just Tory-created waste and scandalous spending practices, but day-to-day expenditures that don't make sense; programs that have outlived their usefulness; physicians whose productivity are not commensurate with their cost. People wanted this done, and it could have and it should have been done first. In fairness to people working for government, they should know the criteria and be part of the saving process, Mr. Speaker.

In the Liberal platform, we call these productivity and efficiency audits. And I shan't take the time today, but at some point in future I would like to share with the members opposite what a taxpayers' protection Act could provide for this province, as well as a deficit reduction Act and productivity and efficiency audits of government.

Second, we wanted brought forward with the budget proposed legislation that would target all tax revenue from the deficit tax to go directly to the deficit. People are tired of seeing their money collected for one purpose and spent on another. The Liberals did call this the deficit reduction and taxpayers' protection Acts in our platform. And I suggest that this directionless government bring forward these Acts immediately.

So where is the hope? In terms of my expectations, the Liberal expectations, the expectations of those who supported this government and non-supporters alike, there was no tangible element of hope in this budget. The most traumatic thing about this budget in general is that

although the government did what they believed to be necessary in terms of the deficit, they have not offered anything on the other side of the equation.

Everyone is willing to be part of a plan, to do their part to get things moving. But they dashed our dreams when they increased taxes. They jeopardized our ability to pay increased taxes. They've given us no opportunity for economic growth and investment. And they've not lived up to our expectation that they could decrease costs. What they have left us with is no more hope.

But just like a family, when one asks people to give something up, one must be able to show them what they're going to get for their sacrifice in the long run. If the kids give up their allowance in the household, maybe there can be a special purchase in the long run. If we cut out going to the movies and dining out now and then, maybe the money we save will allow us to save for a home of our own.

People understand giving up one thing for another, Mr. Speaker. What they don't understand is making more sacrifices, doing without any rewards for working hard, and having nothing to hope for. After failing to produce a long-term deficit reduction plan the best the minister could tell a shell-shocked public on Thursday last was, quote: Maybe we can balance the budget in five years or maybe six.

Well, Mr. Speaker, and respected colleagues, that's simply not good enough. People need, they want, they deserve more concise information from an open and honest and accountable government.

What is in this bad-news budget to convince people to hang in there? The NDP party said no to the jobs that could have come with the AECL deal. What will they do to replace them? — the same jobs they will use to replace the jobs of uranium mines when they manage to close them down too. Is that the next step that this government will want to implement?

People need a beacon, some light at the end of the tunnel to follow, Mr. Speaker. I think the government could have found the imagination to offer something substantive to keep people moving in the right direction.

I'm not just taking up time here. I want the members opposite to really understand that they have to go back and do some things to change this budget, to offer some encouragement to people. Because if they don't, their numbers won't work, Mr. Speaker. Estimates aren't worth anything in a budget if one starts with false assumptions.

I want to give the Minister of Finance and members of government a few pointers here in creating an accurate revenue projection, and I think they should take some notes. Do you have your pencil ready? When they predict that certain things will happen, they have to consider all the variables, Mr. Speaker. If they leave things out or if they operate on wishful thinking, as was the case of the Conservatives during the last 10 years, the result is major problems for the government and especially for the taxpayers.

Let me illustrate. If one calculates the cigarette tax revenue based on the same level of consumption after the tax as before, one will actually be short of money on the revenue side. Some people will quit, some people will cut back, and some people will go across the border where Canadian cigarettes are so much cheaper.

If this government calculates income tax revenue assuming that everyone will make just as much profit as before, the new taxes this government imposed took \$340 million out of consumers' pockets, thus the estimates will be wrong. If corporate tax revenue increases are based on all corporations keeping their operations here, those estimates will fall short of the mark as well.

And if they assume that sales tax revenue and income tax revenue will go up in direct correlation with the rate of increase, they'll be forgetting about the people who have less disposable income to spend, the people who no longer have jobs or income on which to pay tax, and the people who will just plain leave the province of Saskatchewan.

Finally, if they calculate their main budget income source, which is federal transfer payments, based on the assumption that our decreased population since the last census will not affect the size of our transfer payment cheque, then we're in very big trouble, Mr. Speaker. I see all of these false assumptions in this budget, and I state that the people of this province deserve the real numbers before it is too late.

I would like the members opposite to offer our taxpayers the peace of mind of having an independent body like the Gass Commission take a look at their tax hikes and confirm that they will indeed generate the revenues that the Minister of Finance is predicting when all of those variables are considered. Maybe I'm right, maybe he is right. But the fact is that people do not and should not trust politicians to do this accounting.

So let's show some of that open, accountable, honest government and have the till tape checked by an independent source, or let's ask the auditor at least, before we get the bad news. This time let us begin and end the year with numbers that people can actually trust.

I've been talking to many people since budget day because I don't simply want to give my opinion today. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it might be of some interest to the people on the opposite side if they actually heard what people were saying about their budget.

I have a caucus of 125,000 people in Saskatchewan, and I manage to meet with a lot of them. Every day when I open my mail I meet with a few dozen and I talk to 15 or 20 of them every day on the phone.

Today many of them will be watching television and hearing these remarks. They won't be surprised by what I have to say and they shouldn't be. They won't be surprised because what I am saying to you, Mr. Speaker, is what they are saying to me. From all across this province people call and they say, Lynda, please tell the Premier we can't pay more taxes. We are just barely

making it out here.

They call my constituency office to say, I'm a student and I want you to tell the Premier that the government has invested far too much in my education not to offer me a reason to stay here.

I talk to doctors and optometrists and chiropractors. I talk to waitresses and hairdressers and cab drivers and gas station owners. I talk to restaurateurs and with farmers and parents and seniors and stockbrokers and artists and musicians. And I talk with people who teach in our schools and the people who go to our schools, and I listen.

Last week people were nervous but hopeful; this week they are shocked and disappointed. The folks at the hairdressers were pretty sure they wouldn't have to pay more taxes because the NDP told them they wouldn't have to. They didn't sit down with the 1992 estimates like we do and figure out all of the details on the deficit. They just believed what they were told; they trusted.

And some of them have voted NDP because the 55 MLAs sitting over there today show us that they did. Now these people are trying to figure out what they will have to give up in order to cover the drop in business they expect this budget to bring about. If there are a few less customers it will probably mean less money for everyone and perhaps one operator being squeezed out of a job — one of their colleagues gone.

The head of the restaurant association told me he had serious concerns about the potential for the minimum wage going up because he would have to lay off staff. He will be pleased that there was no specific news on minimum wage but will continue to be concerned about the lack of money in his customers' pockets and the effect it is having on the sales in his industry.

A friend of mine owns a bar and has concerns about the fact that there was no job creation in this budget. He says his customers no longer spend what they used to on food and liquor, and so he'll be laying off staff to cut costs.

He also has serious concerns about video poker, the terminals being installed, because he doesn't believe that there's an overall gaming strategy. He says in his bar when a customer comes in and spends \$20 on food and on beer, this owner could count on the profit to pay his bills, his GST, his liquor tax, his property tax, his income tax, and hopefully have something left over for himself and his family.

Now if that customer has only \$20 to spend, puts half of it into a video poker terminal on which the owner gets less profit than he would on other sales, that's great for the government, but where does it leave the small-business men in terms of his bottom line? How does that help his ability to pay taxes, with or without a 1 per cent decrease in the rate? I know what great business acumen the people across the way have, Mr. Speaker, so I hope they'll at least pay some attention.

My optometrist and a few of his colleagues called to say that deinsuring people between 18 and 65 will actually

cost the system more money in the long run. He says that and I quote: many people with chronic eye conditions will now go to a general practitioner to get a referral to a specialist, an ophthalmologist, costs which are covered. That is two visits to the system which are both covered when they could have been more cost-effectively treated by an optometrist.

I have heard from many constituents who suffer from chronic physical and mental illness and who require medications for which the drug plan deductible has been increased. They said to me, in quote: ask the Premier what he should do to pay for this, what we should do? Our incomes are fixed, and we have no way to earn more. How do we find an extra \$150 a year for necessary drugs?

I get the impression, Mr. Speaker, that some of these individuals in this House don't understand that I'm talking about real people, so let me read them something from a real person — Theresa Lavis from Wakabayashi drive, a terminally ill single mother who is a student living on student loans. She wants to know how the changes to the drug plan will affect her and her son who is a special-needs child.

In the budget, she states, the government laid out plans on page 9 to save \$29 million from the prescription drug plan this year. The government said they would help "those most vulnerable to excessive hardship" but did not say how they would do this. And she's very, very worried. She says, please, please find an answer out right now.

This kind of behaviour disgusts me, sir. Many threaten to stop taking medication, which is going to result in them ending up at emergency for treatment or even being admitted to hospital at far greater expense to the system. People with special-needs children are calling to know, when are the details going to come out so they can plan their lives — their real lives, sir.

(1645)

Mr. Speaker, the government has an obligation to provide this information, not when it is strategically most opportune, not whenever they just happen to get around to it. They have an obligation to get it out now. And surely with 55 MLAs they could delegate some of these jobs to people being paid by the taxpayers to be productive in some area while they're there. These are crucial issues to real people in very difficult circumstances. Show some compassion towards these families and their children.

The constituency of Greystone is a relatively good cross-section, Mr. Speaker, of urban income earners. The middle class taxpayers in my constituency are all saying the same thing. We're tired of our relatives and friends leaving, calling us to ask how long we're going to put up with this. We're frustrated at seeing the equity being eroded from our homes. We're fed up with watching our income and our purchasing power decrease every year. We're all tired of a government saying it will do one thing and then doing something else.

My constituency has a very dynamic business community that runs the length of 8th Street in Saskatoon. And all up and down that street, Mr. Speaker, small-business people

are saying this: this is going nowhere fast. First the economy slows down, so we struggle. Then the federal government brings in the GST. Then the PST is brought in so people have less money to spend. We go to the bank for a line of credit or a loan and they want everything we own simply because we live in the province of Saskatchewan. No one has confidence in us, especially not the banks.

And these business people say this: we cut back on our costs, and the government raises property taxes and utilities. We lay people off and work a few more hours in order to save money, and the government raises the sales tax, raises income tax, raises the cost of gas and utilities. So we usually end up, and basically end up, working for nothing. Now we have a business that has no goodwill, no net worth, no borrowing power, no profit. Basically we're stuck in it because no one has the money or the desire to invest in it even if they could get the financing.

And finally they say: and then as a final insult, the government offers us what? A 1 per cent decrease on the tax on our profits. Most of us have no profits. We just work for wages, and now we have to pay an extra 10 per cent tax on that. It makes you want to take your lumps, they tell me, cut your losses and move on while you still have something left over to be able to start up somewhere else.

We know what the farmers must have felt like the last 10 years, these business people say, pretty hopeless about the future. Hopeless — that is what I'm hearing after this budget, hearing from people who are usually optimistic people. These are the risk takers, the professionals, the young people, the people upon whom we need to build a future. Their attitude doesn't surprise me but it indeed worries me. And this government has got to offer something quickly, that will start these people believing that they have a plan for getting the economy moving.

As I said in my opening remarks, the Liberal party had some pretty workable approaches in the campaign. We had a strategy to pursue value added processing in agriculture, to market agricultural technology, to attract research and development to Saskatchewan.

I think this government should rethink many of its positions, particularly on AECL, and I believe that they should listen to SARM and to SUMA, to Synergy, and to the Saskatchewan chambers of commerce, to the Billinton blue chip panel.

I have said many times that this government is not a creator of wealth. Even the Premier has said so. And I have listened to many of the NDP ministers talk about the great job the NDP has done in Saskatchewan. But since my opportunities to speak in this legislature are limited to two speeches per session and a question every third day, I want to give you and the people of Saskatchewan a short history before I conclude.

If we look back in our history to the 1920s, we can clearly see that it was the Liberals who knew how to show leadership and vision to build our legislature, our universities, our highways, and communications systems. The Liberals were always careful and frugal managers of the public purse, as record will show.

Your government members seem to delight in taking credit for what a great job the CCF did, Mr. Speaker. But I'd like to remind all of them that the Liberals endured the depression and the war years when the federal government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And listen, you may finally learn something about history.

When the federal government took all of the revenue raised in the province for the war effort, when the war ended and the provincial coffers began to fill as the result of a booming North American economy and millions of dollars in federal government loans being returned to the provinces, the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) stepped up with a promise that they never actually kept, but that got them elected for 20 years — medicare.

The NDP promised universal medicare for all services, Mr. Speaker. But they imposed a hospitalization fee in order to pay for it — not exactly free health care. And the reality was that many services were not covered under the CCF medicare scheme. The CCF continued to charge this fee until the late 1950s when it was challenged by the federal government who refused to continue to pay their 50 per cent share of health care costs unless the CCF stopped collecting their fee.

Then the Liberals took power, and through the education and health tax, continued to offer free medicare until the cost of health services began to exceed the targeted income. It's called how you plan a budget, sir. In order to protect the other programs which Liberals knew were crucial to the infrastructure that the Liberal government had built during the tough times, the Liberals brought in a fee for service to ensure that health care spending did not exceed health care revenues generated.

Of course the NDP railed loudly in protest, and the next election the Liberal government of the day was defeated. Health care costs continued to balloon under the NDP, as did the costs of all government programs. And despite the highest tax increases in history, in the 1970s the NDP were still unable to cover the cost of government when they were dipping into the Heritage Fund in the '70s to cover their spending overruns.

Now it really disturbs me, Mr. Speaker, to hear about the tough shape the Liberals left the province in prior to the Blakeney government taking over. Because after the difficult recessionary period the Thatcher government faced — defeated on its plan to bring in a fee-for-service for health care costs — turned over the province with no deficit, with no debt, and with a record nine straight years of balanced budgets, after recessionary times I might add.

The NDP right-place, right-time government took power just as the economy was rebounding and there were record high grain prices, high oil prices, and a public ready to line up for expensive election hand-outs like the 7-7 program, and other assorted temptations after the tight-fisted Thatcher government had kept spending under control during tough times without raising taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Premier that even he has told the people in this province what a frugal

manager Ross Thatcher was in this province. And I would like him to rise and refute that at some point.

The NDP could have done much more with the resources of the 1970s, but many of the same people we see running this province today lacked the imagination and the creativity to do so.

One of the things, Mr. Speaker, that I'm doing this for is I have spent considerable number of hours listening to the NDP/CCF (New Democratic Party/Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) version of history in Saskatchewan. I've decided to set the record straight, and I actually went to a historian. No one said that they had to spend every dime that came into the government coffers in the 1970s. Times were good, markets were buoyant. The government could have kept the size of government down. They created the largest multiple bureaucracy the province has ever seen.

But the NDP increased the size of government more than it had ever been increased before. They created our present bureaucracy with layers and levels that will be years before we can ever get it down to an affordable size.

They created boards and agencies and Crown corporations filled with patronage appointments, borrowing in American funds at high interest rates, creating never before experienced government debt, and hiding it in the Crowns.

The members of this government tried to paint the golden era of Saskatchewan as correlating the CCF/NDP terms in power. They really do try to rewrite history every time they rise, Mr. Speaker. And I'm going to give them some facts that they really need to know to put in perspective what has happened to our province.

In 1905 there were a hundred thousand people in our province. In 1910 our province had a population of 500,000, and it doubled to 1 million in 1929. The migration planned by the Liberal authorities in Ottawa brought to Saskatchewan good, hard-working citizens to build in the construction of a new land. Because of the agricultural possibilities most of the immigrants, with assistance from the government in Ottawa, received land and equipment and some stock to commence operations with very few personal incomes.

And here is some interesting noteworthy information. From the Liberal Scott government in 1905 to the Liberal Martin government in 1915 to the Liberal Dunning government in 1922, the Liberal Gardiner government of 1926, Saskatchewan enjoyed great progress in providing new homes, education, health services, highways, railways, ferries, government services, and legal beginnings to make a province possible.

Saskatchewan rose from nothing to being one of the most prosperous provinces in Canada. And by 1929 Saskatchewan held the balance of power between Quebec and Ontario, and Liberal leaders were amongst the most powerful in the nation. All of this was achieved through an era of trouble and doubt. The wars caused great hardship for people.

The NDP always raises health services as if it's its greatest achievement. But in the early years of this province, Liberal administrations created health care, built two mental hospitals, three TB (tuberculosis) sanatoria, two major hospitals in Regina, two in Saskatoon. And by 1915 the first municipality was assisted with provincial monies to provide doctor and hospital services. By 1944 one-third of all Saskatchewan people were covered by these services.

Liberal governments provided free care for TB, mental illness, and in the 1920s a grant of costs for medical care for expectant mothers. In 1937 the Liberal administration offered free cancer treatments as well. And Saskatchewan was credited, sir, with having some of the most progressive regimes in health care long before the CCF ever came to power.

Prior to the election in 1944, the Liberal Patterson government passed the Saskatchewan Health Services Act, under which all health services could be provided to Saskatchewan. And during the election of 1944, Premier Douglas, along with other leading CCF politicians, promised complete medical services at no charge. The money was going to be raised through Crown corporation dividends and taxing the rich. None of these promises were carried out by the CCF, by the way. Look at the record.

Financially Saskatchewan had a fine record during the years 1905 to 1929, 1933 to 1944, 1964 to 1971 — all Liberal governments. And the '20s were one of the best periods for Saskatchewan. The hopes for progress in manufacturing and financial success came with the construction of General Motors in Regina to assemble vehicles for the western market.

A large agricultural market potential developed with meat packing, with dairies, and grain storage, providing a possible wealth producing industry which never grew to its potential due to the years of the CCF government.

The population figures tell an amazing story of the failure of the CCF, Mr. Speaker. In 1929, Saskatchewan had over 900,000 people. This placed us third — ahead of Alberta, B.C. (British Columbia) and Manitoba. In the year 1946, we still held this position despite the depression and the war that had reduced our population. Today in 1992, we find our population at about 1 million. Alberta has 2 million, B.C. well over 3 million. There's little doubt that the existence of a CCF government in the 1950s held our province back and placed us in an unfortunate position in which we find ourselves today.

And the big story of co-operation to build a province was the story of Saskatchewan under Liberal governments. In 1915 — and this is something for the education of those people who think that they are the inventors of the co-op — in 1915 when the first co-op branch of government was organized, Saskatchewan had 1,500, no less than 1,500, co-operatives active in our province. Most of these were true co-operatives directed by local people and provided services of all kinds to our province. Every major co-operative in Saskatchewan was started under a Liberal government: the Saskatchewan co-operative creameries, the Saskatchewan co-operative elevators,

Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the credit unions, co-operative oil refineries and United Grain Growers. Co-operatives cannot exist in its true form under socialism as co-operatives are the purest form of capitalist business-ownership.

(1700)

One of the most successful stories of Liberalism in action was in the field of services to the public and the protection of the public dollar. During its years in office, the Liberal Party managed to balance the budget during the good years and the bad years. Conservatives and NDP governments cannot make this claim.

I believe that the NDP are not being truthful . . . I want to just go back for one moment. I really do want people present to understand, Mr. Speaker, that I am not implying that Liberal governments were perfect. I would not imply that any governments have been perfect. And I'm not at all implying that I condone everything that Liberal governments have done, which is more than I can say for the members opposite who don't seem to think that they can learn anything from anybody and that they've been perfect throughout time.

But I believe that the NDP is not being truthful in some of its implications about the fiscal management ability of the Liberals, nor should they be so simplistic about their accounting of history, nor should it go unchallenged.

As shameful as the behaviour of the previous government was — and I did say on a talk show with one of their members that I do believe that this province deserves to have an apology from them so we can get on and go forward in this province — as shameful as their behaviour has been, this government should be careful about not calling . . . the pot calling the kettle black.

The NDP are the people who have had two chances in the last 20 years to do things right. Regardless of how good their fantasies are, they didn't do all they figured they did in the 1970s. And now back again with some of the same faces in charge, they may be about to screw things up a second time around.

And I'm saying this, the Premier must listen to the people, apologize for the mistruths that he visited on Saskatchewan, step back for a moment and rethink his approach, and call off this tax attack on our people. I urge him to consult with his Premier's Advisory Council tomorrow. I urge him to call in all of the health care representatives today and show them the wellness model before it goes any further. Employ some independent auditors to evaluate government departments. Create a lean bureaucracy that we can market across Canada as an example of efficiency and productivity.

Create another Gass Commission and ask them to work with the auditor to tell the people if the revenue and expense projections are achievable. Call Jake Epp and tell him the government has changed its mind about the AECL deal. Show some desperately needed leadership from that side of the House.

And while he's calling Ottawa, talk to Bill McKnight and

tell him Saskatchewan wants a national agriculture summit, as suggested in the Liberal Party platform, to discuss problems of GRIP and NISA (net income stabilization account) and GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and the Crow and other programs before changing one more Saskatchewan program that's going to leave us out in the wind.

Call the people in the investment community, sir, and ask what we could do to save the Saskatchewan Pension Plan without costing the province's taxpayers anything. This is the talent and the imagination and the vision that this government lacked in the budget.

And I say to the Premier: let the people help you, let the Liberal Party help you, and yes, even let the Conservatives help you, if they are willing. If this government will not go back to the drawing board, Mr. Speaker, they have failed the people in this initial test.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support this budget, and ask the government to offer its commitment to return with a more positive, innovative fiscal plan for the province of Saskatchewan — one which creates prosperity from stagnation and hope from despair.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I believe that there's been an agreement as between the government side and the official opposition that the House will adjourn shortly. And I promise the members opposite that I will limit my remarks to five minutes, if that, before I beg leave to adjourn the debate, and then the House Leader can take over the management of the House.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to enter this debate, and I want to do so at the very outset by making a few preliminary observations about the speech which we have just heard. I'm not sure whether it's a speech or a lecture, and I must say to the hon. member from Greystone that it's nice to hear what a truly non-political speech in this Chamber sounds like.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — I must confess to the hon. member from Greystone that she had me a bit confused about whether or not it was a political speech the last three-quarters of an hour about the history of the Liberal Party and all the great things the Liberal Party did and all the bad things that Tommy Douglas did and Woodrow Lloyd did and Al Blakeney did.

But excuse me if I concluded that that was political. I know that it really wasn't political. I know that it was non-partisan and it was in the tone and in the tenor that you advocate, namely that there shouldn't be partisanship.

But if I am confused a little bit by that, don't be surprised if the hundreds of people who are watching are not confused, and they really know what you're saying and what you're saying is all about — raw, hard-core politics of the worst kind in this legislature, of the worst kind.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — I might also say to the Leader of the Liberal Party that apart from many historical — how should I put it — errors, slight inaccuracies, one that almost made me fall off my chair was her reference to the 7-7-7 program as a program of the mid-1970s of the Blakeney government. I want to tell the hon. member that the 7-7-7 program was advocated by the NDP in opposition during the campaign of 1986. And as the hon. member may or may not know, historically we didn't win the election in 1986 and 7-7-7 was never implemented. Instead we had the home program which the Conservatives implemented and which of course this budget now addresses, which I assume you will, when it comes to budget time, vote in support thereof.

I only point that out because if one takes a look at the historical chronology, with the greatest of respect — and I say this in the spirit of non-partisanship that the hon. member has said it — the history lesson needs to be rechecked again, Madam Member, because I wouldn't want your credibility undermined by those numerous small little historical errors that you have.

But I must say that it was interesting to see the defence of Ross Thatcher in this House. I am one who was old enough to have actually served with Ross Thatcher and I thought he had many redeeming attributes as a politician. I must confess, however, that I didn't believe that his ideological approach to health care and medicare were very redeeming. And I thought that the era of Ross Thatcher had pretty well gone by now.

But lo and behold, I guess as they say, the carpenter said to the walrus in that famous poem or vice versa: there ain't nothing new under the sun. And here we have in 1992 a reincarnation of Ross Thatcher and the defence of the utilization fees of Ross Thatcher all in defence of medicare of course, in 1967 by the member from Greystone, of course just having finished three-quarters of an hour previous in her remarks saying that what we were proposing was all wrong.

Forgive me, Mr. Speaker, if I interpret that as being a slightly political observation or a slightly political oversight of the factual circumstances. I know that the member did not intend to be political in this context, but others will see this as a slight contradiction. And I say to her that this defence of Ross Thatcher I think will be appreciated by a few Liberals and certainly by a few Saskatchewan people, but I think unfortunately it also shows exactly where the Liberal Party of 1992 is at.

We don't need any lectures from you — with the greatest of respect, Madam Minister — about the defence of medicare because it was Ross Thatcher and the Liberal Party that gave it its most severe, cruel blow — the same Ross Thatcher and the same Liberal Party that you defend in this historical context.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I make one other observation before I take my place and beg leave to adjourn the debate. And I don't say this exclusively about the member from Greystone because this is in effect the

nature of the debate that not only she but the Leader of the Opposition and the Conservative Party find themselves in. This is the essence of their political debate. And she stated it forcefully today over and over again.

She says, you know, this budget is all wrong. She says it's all wrong. And the hon. member from Rosthern supports her from the Conservative caucus. She says, you know, it's all wrong. Their argument boils down to this, Mr. Speaker. You shouldn't have cut. You shouldn't have raised taxes, and you shouldn't have run a deficit. In fact she was critical of the \$517 million deficit that we were forced to run up, given the massive cuts and the tax increases which were necessary as a result of the last 10 years.

Now just stop, Mr. Speaker, and members of this Legislative Assembly. To any objective observer, just stop to think of the logic and the political credibility of that line: no cuts, no tax increases, and no deficit . . .

An Hon. Member: — More cuts.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Oh, more cuts. The hon. member from Greystone says, more cuts. But will you notice in her speech that there was not a word as to where those cuts should come from. And I'd like the hon. member — when we get into estimates, and we will be putting these questions to the hon. member — to tell the people of Saskatchewan precisely where she would cut more in Health.

Would it be the Ross Thatcher deterrent fees that you so eloquently defended this afternoon everywhere across the piece? Is that where you would do it? What would you eliminate? What areas of the health care service would you totally reduce and cut?

Not only, not only is your position . . . Well now she's amending it — no cuts, further cuts, no tax increases — there's a little variation of that. What her argument is, is not no tax increases. Her argument is tax reductions. So you have no cuts, tax reductions, and a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, that is the most intellectually dishonest, the most politically deceptive argument, and the most cruel hoax that can be perpetrated on anybody in the province of Saskatchewan. If there is any term that is applicable for that — it's been kicked around in the United States; it's applicable — that is voodoo economics with a capital V and a capital E. Voodoo economics.

Mr. Speaker, I say with the greatest of respect to the members opposite, this just simply isn't good enough. It's not good enough for the people of the province of Saskatchewan. It's not good enough for this Chamber. And that isn't the new politics, Madam Minister, Madam Member, that is the politics of the old, and the people of the province of Saskatchewan know it. And that's why you're sitting with only one member because they know that you and the members opposite who sit to your right practise and preach that politics. That is not what we believe in.

And you should join us, as you say you're willing to do it, by recognizing the source of the problem, recognizing

the choices that we adopted here were the best — given the circumstances that we faced — if you truly want to rebuild the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I have a few more words that I wish to say in respect to this debate, but in the interests of the time and the other developments, I therefore beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:15 p.m.