

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Tuesday next ask the government the following question:

Regarding the Department of Health and the prescription drug plan: (1) how much was paid by users of the plan in premiums in the last year; (2) how many persons received benefits from the plan during the last year; (3) what was the value of the benefits received; (4) how many of those receiving benefits were seniors, on social assistance, or considered chronically ill?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to introduce two young people who are seated in your gallery. They are Liz Warden and Bob Haynes who are here from Scarborough, Ontario. They're presently practising with the Regina Optimist Dolphins swim club. They will be going to Germany to compete in the meet over there, leaving on April 5.

I'd like members to join me in welcoming them and wish them the best in their competitive spirit.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly 10 guests from the Regina Open Door Society, frequent visitors to the legislature, with their teacher — and I hope I get your name right — Roshnie Thaver. And I hope to meet with you later. Thanks very much for coming.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Legislative Assembly, 30 grade 11 and 12 students from Wakaw. They're accompanied by their teachers, Raymond Rivard and Jack McGarvey and Leanne Durand. Mr. Speaker, they're seated in your gallery.

Wakaw is geographically located basically at the centre of my constituency. It's basically a farming community. It also has quite a bit of tourism attraction to the community. And it's certainly the home of my constituency office.

I had an opportunity earlier this fall to meet with these young people and discuss the future of our country and in particular the constitutional debate that was being waged at that particular time.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome these students to Regina and to the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to meeting with them after the question period to answer any of their questions. And certainly I welcome . . . and hopefully they have a beautiful stay in Regina. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to introduce through you and to other members of the Assembly a couple of people in your gallery, one being my sister, Wanda Upshall, and the other being Jerome Bombreck. Just, Mr. Speaker, as this government with our budget has embarked in a new relationship with the people of Saskatchewan, a recent engagement is going to result hopefully in a long relationship between these two people. I'd like all members to welcome them to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you, two members of the francophone community, they're Mr. Roger Gauthier and M. Gérald LeBlanc, who work on behalf of the association of francophone parents in the province of Saskatchewan. I'm glad to see them here today and I welcome and I hope their stay is pleasant.

M. le président, je voudrais vous présenter deux membres du communauté francophone, M. Roger Gauthier, M. Gérald LeBlanc, qui travaillent pour l'association des parents francophones de la province. Je vous invite aujourd'hui d'être ici puis je vais les voir après la période de question. Merci, M. le président.

(Translation: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you two members of the francophone community who work for the provincial association of francophone parents. I welcome you here today and will meet with you after question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Budget Provisions

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be to the Finance minister.

Madam Minister, the reaction of Saskatchewan taxpayers is coming in from all around this province. And that reaction to your budget delivered yesterday, Madam Minister, is one of universal condemnation. And I quote to you, Madam Minister, from the *Star-Phoenix* this morning:

"A tax revolt is coming," warned Jim McGeary, president of the College Park Community Association.

"I'm personally overburdened already . . ."

"People will just stop spending," said the father of three elementary-school children, in reference to the increase in the education and health tax.

Madam Minister, you and your Premier, who a short time ago promised this province that there would be no tax increases under a New Democratic Party government, yesterday went out and picked the pockets of this province for another \$200 million in increased taxes — the absolute antithesis of what you promised in that election campaign.

Madam Minister, how can you answer people like Mr. McGeary in Saskatoon?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, I have a very good answer for that gentleman. And that answer is this: how did we get into the situation that we are in?

Let's be clear about this. The members opposite took a once proud and independent province which, in 1982, had one of the highest credit ratings in Canada, could borrow money wherever it wanted, independent of any scrutiny, and have reduced us to the situation that we have bond rating agencies regularly overlooking our shoulder.

They did that by decisions like privatizing the Potash Corporation for a loss of \$400 million. And I will mention other decisions later.

What this government is doing is it's fighting to preserve our capacity to borrow money independent of conditions, and we have the people of Saskatchewan behind us in that fight.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the same minister. Madam Minister, that is sheer nonsense and you know it. Your leader and your Premier had the absolute confidence to stand on province-wide TV in the leaders' debate in the election campaign and talk about a \$14.2 billion deficit in the province in Saskatchewan. He had absolute confidence that he could handle a debt that size with no tax increases.

Madam Minister, today SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) and SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) are saying that the people that they represent are in tax revolt. The businesses that pay the taxes are in tax revolt. And you promised them, Madam Minister, that that wouldn't happen.

And I remind you, Madam Minister, that it is your government that has added onto the 14.2 that your Premier talked about in the election campaign.

Now, Madam Minister, in light of the fact that individuals, that the people that SUMA and SARM are saying are in tax revolt, Madam Minister, would you

explain to these people how you can add another half a billion in hidden taxes over the next four years on the backs of those people that are already in tax revolt?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, I think we have to clarify the terms and conditions of this debate. What is absolute nonsense? Are you telling me that this province has a major financial problem is absolute nonsense? Because if that's what you're saying, I will spend the rest of this question period reading comments by outside observers to the contrary.

I will start by Nesbitt Thomson, describing Saskatchewan's credit position as terrifying. I will add, it's not terrifying to us because we have a plan to deal with it. But I will go on to the Canadian Bankers' Association, talking about our debt being \$15 billion, and making this comment: the recession is in part due to our continued deficits and our accumulated debt load. That is what they're saying, is our capacity to come out of the recession is being strangled by the level of our debt load.

I will go on to the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. They say: the deficit has to be the number one priority of the government. They say: these deficits will have a major effect on the province's ability to take advantage of economic recovery.

So what I ask the member opposite: is he still in denial? Is he still saying there's no financial problem in this province? Because if so, that's what we'll debate for the rest of this question period.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the same minister. Madam Minister, it's a question of how you manage that is important here. Madam Minister, let me quote to you some more people who today are in condemnation of the way that you manage. And I quote from the *Star-Phoenix*, Mr. Speaker:

The province and municipalities are eyeball-to-eyeball over how much of the provincial deficit property owners will carry, Bernard Kirwan warned Thursday.

"Property taxpayers have said they can't be pushed any further," he said. "There will be a tax revolt . . ."

Many municipalities can't take any more cuts, said Ted Cholod, president of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association.

"Businesses are talking about a tax revolt."

Madam Minister, I say to you, the people that have to be your partners in management in this province are universally condemning the way that you are

handling the debt problem in this province, the job creation problem in this province. And then to top it off, they resent the fact that you would dump another half a billion dollars in offloading onto the backs of their taxpayers.

Madam Minister, you still haven't answered the question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, assuming the member opposite has accepted the fact that we have a financial problem, I will move on to deal with your question. Our problem is simple. If you take interest on the public debt, which is something that has to be paid, you take health care, education, social services, agriculture, and economic development, that's 90 per cent of the expenditures of this government. The tragedy is, the situation that you have left us in is a situation where we have to make cuts in areas that we would never choose to make cuts. We are not like your counter . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Could I ask the members, please give the minister an opportunity to answer the question. You can't constantly interrupt.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — We are not like your counterparts in Ottawa who have a \$6 billion helicopter program that they could cancel or a Department of Defence. Your government created the problem; we have devised the solution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question to the same minister. Madam Minister, people around this province are saying they don't like your solution. The Saskatchewan association of taxpayers this morning says, just the upfront stuff is another thousand bucks a family — another thousand dollars, Madam Minister, to people that are already suffering the burden of tax increases from your government a year earlier, suffering the burden of increased utility rate increases that you said you wouldn't do, suffering under all sorts of increases that people have never seen before, Madam Minister.

And on top of the thousand dollars upfront, they are saying there will be another half a billion dollars in hidden taxes of offloading to the property tax base in this province, Madam Minister. Maybe you would be so kind to table in this legislature what that half billion dollars in extra costs will do to the provincial economy. Surely you've got it figured out. Tell us about that half a billion dollars, please.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite saddled my children and the other children in this province with an incredible burden of debt. They spent without thinking about the future and who was going to pay. That era is over in Saskatchewan. We now have a government committed to living

within its means and planning for the future. We plan to sit down with our partners at the local level to help them restructure, rationalize, and to work in a cooperative way to deal with the problems.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the same minister. Madam Minister, once again people around this province are questioning your management and your plan. Ted Cholid, president of SUMA, says that since your government came in there's been a 33 per cent reduction to municipalities — 33 per cent, Madam Minister. That's an entire third of what these people deal with in the way of relationships with your government. Now that process that you embarked on has already cost this province 9,000 jobs last year.

And what they're afraid of, Madam Minister, is that because you're doing more of the same — more offloading — that rather than creating jobs, rather than allowing people to be creative, the people that pay the property taxes in our cities and our towns and our rural municipalities, more of them are going to lose their jobs and there'll be less of a tax base. That's what they're trying to tell you this morning, Madam Minister.

Now in the face of a 33 per cent reduction to urban municipalities, Madam Minister, how in the world can you justify offloading another half a billion in hidden taxes on their back? You still haven't answered that question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite ranges from topic to topic. Let me deal with the issue of jobs. This government came out with a plan for the economic development and job creation future of this province.

What we did yesterday was we put our money where our mouth was. We said co-ops and small businesses are the main engines of economic growth and job creation. And we gave them tax breaks and other incentives to expand. We also increased capital expenditures by 10 per cent to ensure that there were projects out there immediately to give people jobs in this province.

This is a government with a plan, with a vision of the future. And we're prepared to put our money where our mouth is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question to the same minister. See, Madam Minister, there's where you've got it all mixed up. That's not your money. That's the taxpayers of this province's money. It's not your money.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Now, Madam Minister, how are taxpayers supposed to believe that adding things on like another quarter of a million dollars to the fuel bill of the city of Regina, upping the sales tax by 29 per cent in two years time, how are taxpayers supposed to believe that that is going to create more jobs, more excitement, and less property taxes for them in the next four years, Madam Minister? How are they supposed to believe that? That's their money, not yours.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, I wish the member opposite would have been so concerned about taxpayers' money in the 1980s when they squandered so much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — This government has made difficult choices and we don't deny that these choices are difficult. We are willing to work with our partners at the local level, to restructure, to rationalize, to improve the delivery of services. But please to understand, what this government has done is it has had the courage to take the difficult choices now and to do them within the context of a long-term plan for the future, a plan that will eliminate this deficit, a plan that will create jobs, and a plan that shows compassion. It's a plan that I'm quite proud of.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, you talk about courage. I say to you, it is a lot closer to hypocrisy. Yesterday in the budget, you are going to the manufacturing and processing sector in this province and saying, we're going to give you harmonization for eight months. And that's going to kick-start your industry. You are going to hire people. You're going to create jobs. You're going to place Saskatchewan industry in a better position competitively in North America and around the world because you're going to give harmonization at 9 per cent for eight months.

Now, Madam Minister, I say to you: if you really truly believe that, you probably would have given every businessman in the province harmonization for eight months at 7 per cent and had some money to balance your budget to boot. I say, Madam Minister, it's hypocrisy.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, the member has alleged hypocrisy. I want to tell you a tale of true hypocrisy. In 1982 the members opposite were elected on the promise that they would eliminate the E&H (education and health) tax. They didn't eliminate it; they increased it two points before they had finished.

In 1982 they were elected on the promise that they would reduce personal income taxes by 10 per cent. They didn't reduce them; they increased them by putting on the 2 per cent flat tax, a tax grab to the tune

of \$260 million.

They were elected on the promise that they would eliminate the gas tax, and it kind of did disappear for a while. But I'll tell you, it was back and it was higher by the time they were finished. And I could go on and on and on.

Please, sir, don't give us any lectures about hypocrisy. We know where hypocrisy is in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the same minister. Madam Minister, it was your Premier that promised the people of this province no tax increases. I can live on 4.5 and I'm not going to offload on anyone; and besides that, I am going to go to Ottawa and get the province's farmers a whole bunch of money.

Well, Madam Minister, yesterday you came in and told rural Saskatchewan that there was \$60 million less in agriculture; that you're going to offload on rural government another half a billion dollars. Madam Minister, those taxpayers out there can't take any more. And you cancelled GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) on them.

So, Madam Minister, would you please today tell rural people how a 18 per cent reduction in the agriculture budget in this province and offloading on rural municipalities is going to make their lives better? Would you answer that today, Madam Minister?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite should have asked those sorts of questions when they racked up the debt that we are dealing with. It's not just the actions of the members opposite that have to be recalled; it has to be their attitude that we remember as well. Saskatchewan has so much going for it that you can afford to mismanage it and still break even: the former premier in 1983. When you have an attitude like that prevalent on the government benches in this province, that's why you end up in the kind of situation in which we are in.

We had to make difficult choices. People in this province are going to have to live with difficult choices, but we are doing them because we are committed to turning around this province and securing the future for our children.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question to the same minister. Madam Minister, but that's the point. People all around the province this morning are saying that you have made the wrong choices. It doesn't matter if it's government, urban government, rural government, farmers, business people; all of the so-called partners that are supposed to help you out of this situation are all saying you made the wrong choices this morning.

Madam Minister, this morning on CKCK Radio, they

interviewed several Regina residents last night at a drugstore and, Madam Minister, those people said you had made the wrong choices again. And in the words of the one lady: how can this Finance minister complain about federal offloading when all she's been doing is offloading on me all day long? Madam Minister, how do you answer the lady that was lined up at the drugstore last night, suffering from your offloading? How do you answer that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, we're now talking about choices. Yes, there are choices to be made. What I want to ask the members opposite is: what choices would they have made? Would they ignore the deficit? Would they ignore the deficit and get to the point where this province no longer has the capacity to borrow money? Is that a choice?

I think it may be a choice of theirs because I have people in the Department of Finance now costing out an amendment to one of our Acts that you proposed. The cost of that amendment, I think, is about half a billion dollars. Is that the choice? Or if your choice is not to tax, is your choice then to take away all safety nets to protect the most vulnerable people in our society? Is that your choice?

We have made our choices, balancing revenue and expenditure measures. We have justified our choices. I would like to hear your choices and how you would justify them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question to the same minister. Madam Minister, if you'd like to trade seats I'd be more than happy, I'd be more than happy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Madam Minister, I'd be more than happy to sit down with the taxpayers and the chamber of commerce and SUMA and SARM and the lady that was lined up outside the drugstore to talk about a plan. Because, Madam Minister, this party had a plan and it stood by its plan.

You didn't have one. You didn't have one, Madam Minister, and that's why we're floundering today. That's why everybody's saying you've made the wrong choices.

Now, Madam Minister, there has been universal condemnation. I go back to the first point that I made today. My question, Madam Minister, is this: given that SUMA and SARM have said their taxpayers are in revolt over another half a billion dollars in hidden taxes, Madam Minister, will you give a commitment today to meet with those people and be prepared to change your budget sufficiently enough that those people don't have to revolt on you? Would you do that, Madam Minister?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talks about choices. We don't have to guess what their choices are; we know what their choices were. They chose to raise taxes in the 1980s at the same time as they racked up a debt on average of a billion dollars each and every year. That was their choice — raise taxes, spend, and increase the deficit. And look what it has got us.

What we have said is that this is a new era in Saskatchewan. We are not prepared to burden our children with a massive debt. We are beginning to live within our means in this province. And we're planning for the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, the deception and the betrayal that you have woven in this budget, I'm going to give you one more example of that deception and betrayal, Madam Minister. Yesterday the president of SSTA (Saskatchewan School Trustees Association) was here, talking about what was going to happen to the rural property tax base of this province because of what you've been doing. The deception and the betrayal was there because it means that schools are going to close; the teachers are going to be laid off.

Madam Minister, the condemnation is universal. What do you say to those rural trustees who are going to have to go out and ask the tax base that you have abandoned to come up with more money so that they don't have to close their schools, so that they don't have to fire their teachers? What are you going to say to them, Madam Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, what I'm going to say to them is this. Yesterday this government became the first government in Canada to come out with a long-term plan to balance the budget of this province within four years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Not only do we have a plan to balance the budget, we have a plan to stimulate the economy and create jobs. And our plan is a plan with a difference because it has compassion involved.

The eyes of the rest of Canada are focusing on Saskatchewan because once again we are leading the way. We are leading the way to solutions to this country's problems. And I'm very proud to be part of this government leading the way to solutions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, just because the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) comes and sets up in the rotunda, don't be deceived that you're leading the way.

There are people all across this province who say that your plan is very seriously flawed. Madam Minister, on the west side of this province today there are people shopping in Alberta because your plan is so seriously flawed.

Madam Minister, why don't today in this legislature, you tell the folks from Lloydminster to Maple Creek, how your increases and your deception is going to keep jobs and activity in their towns and communities. Maybe you could do that, Madam Minister. Tell them today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, once again I come back to two points. We inherited a mess from the members opposite. We are committed to cleaning up that mess. You have asked us about our choices; we made them yesterday. By the end of the four-year period, expenditure cuts will be greater than tax increases. But if you're saying to me that you do not want to increase taxes at all . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I challenge any of the members to hear what the minister is saying. There is so much noise in the Chamber we simply can't hear. Order! Will the member from Rosthern please come to order.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — We made our choices yesterday; we laid them before the people of Saskatchewan within the context of a long-term plan to turn around this province. If you don't agree with those choices, then I would like to see your choices. Are you going to remove the safety nets for all of the most vulnerable? Are you going to totally eliminate highway construction? How are you going to find that other revenue to balance the books? Or is it in fact true that you still don't care about balancing the books and living within your means? Because if that's true, we fundamentally . . .

The Speaker: — Order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to take a few moments this morning to commemorate in this Legislative Assembly the designation of Sunday, March 21, as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. I will also recognize the United Nations' designation of 1993 as International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

In 1966 the United Nations designated March 21 as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in order to mark the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa. In that incident, individuals peacefully demonstrating against apartheid were wounded and killed.

In 1983 the United Nations General Assembly called upon all states and organizations to participate in the program of action for the second decade to combat racism and racial discrimination.

In 1986 our federal government proclaimed Canada's participation in this program of action. Also in 1986 the Prime Minister of Canada called upon all Canadians to extend their efforts to ensure the rapid eradication of racism and racial discrimination and the realization of mutual understanding, respect, equality, and justice for all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination approaches once again, I am pleased to firmly restate this government's commitment to the eradication of racial discrimination and our commitment to the realization of mutual understanding, respect, equality, and justice for all.

Governments in this country through legislation and policies and programs, and our courts through rulings based on our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, have helped to ensure that our society does not overtly tolerate discrimination based on race. Yet we are familiar with how subtle and yet how devastating discrimination can be, and therefore how difficult it can be to eliminate.

We live in an imperfect world. There are some days when the gap between the way things are now and the way we want our society to be seems immense and impossible to bridge.

At the same time, this country and this province have a number of things to celebrate. We are and have been since the formation of Canada as a nation, a multicultural society. We may struggle at times and sometimes fail tragically at living peacefully and productively together, but at the same time Canada can also continue to be proud of the relative calm and safety of our society.

On Sunday I believe we should all stop and reflect for a moment on what it would mean to each of us to have a society completely free of racial discrimination. A society without racial discrimination would be a society free of hate, fear, and ignorance associated with racist beliefs and behaviour and the sometimes dire consequences of these emotions.

Racial discrimination cripples and limits the freedoms and opportunities of us all. Commemorating March 21 reminds all of us that a society free of racial discrimination is within our reach.

Mr. Speaker, today I also want to take a moment to note that 1993 is International Year of the World's Indigenous People. This year has been designated by the United Nations to strengthen international cooperation to solve problems faced by indigenous communities with regard to such issues as human rights, the environment, development, education, and health.

As culturally diverse as the indigenous people of this world are, they also, frighteningly, share many similarities in terms of the dire economic and health and social conditions they face.

As the member nations of the United Nations mark this year, we in Canada must also ensure our strong commitment to ensuring a brighter future for the indigenous people of this country.

Canada's aboriginal peoples have proud heritages. Strong cultural beliefs and traditions have served them well as they survived and flourished for generations in the often harsh environment of this country.

The Indian, Metis, and Inuit people of this country contribute immensely to the rich mosaic of Canada, to the diverse heritage we all claim as our own. This said, it is apparent that our aboriginal peoples face discrimination and racism on a regular basis. We must all work together to change attitudes and remove structural barriers.

The establishment of new partnerships with Indian and Metis peoples, along with our emphasis on equity and harmonious race relations, will go a long way towards the elimination of racial discrimination in Saskatchewan. The full participation of aboriginal people at every level of our society is essential to the future of our province and this country.

I understand the aboriginal people of this province plan to mark International Year of the World's Indigenous People through various means during the next few months. The designation of 1993 as International Year of the World's Indigenous People is highly significant and warrants the recognition and support of all segments of our society.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all citizens of this province to reaffirm their commitment to a society free of racial discrimination, a society where citizens of every conceivable racial heritage have the opportunity to make the most of their gifts and strengths as full members of our society.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Before I recognize the member from Moosomin, I do want to remind ministers that ministerial statements are to be short and to the point. This statement was much too long for a ministerial statement and I want to remind ministers of that.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a moment to respond to the statement, the ministerial statement, made by the minister and certainly stand with the minister in support of our province and our legislature standing out in support of racial discrimination and supporting governments and countries where we take a stand against this type of abuse that we have seen take place over the years.

Certainly we live in a very fortunate land. We are privileged people, Mr. Speaker. We look around the world today and we see many areas where men and women are very literally fighting for their very existence. Yugoslavia is a prime example of discrimination and how the adverse effects it can have on people's lives and how it disrupts lives. Somalia is another example.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, we in this province and in Canada can be proud of the heritage we have, the ethnic cultures that have come to this country to make up this nation. However, it doesn't free us from the fact that there has been some racial prejudice over the years. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we stand together and stand against racial discrimination.

I would also like to comment on the fact that, Mr. Speaker, we need to find ways in which we can work closer with our indigenous people in helping them achieve their ultimate goals and aims as well to be a very major part and parcel of our society.

And I join with the minister in standing behind the United Nations in the . . . joining with the . . . designating the year 1993 as International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the people in the party I represent I merely wish to wholeheartedly support the Minister of Justice and the words from the member from Moosomin in stating that we truly are a blessed people. And I do hope that we can all work in order to look at the strengths and the real, I think, abilities of people rather than simply their races and perhaps we'd just all be strengthened by that. In fact we know we would be strengthened by it.

It's a great privilege for me to lend support to the very articulate words expressed by the Attorney General.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 39 — An Act to amend The Education Act

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, I move that The Education Amendment Act 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.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Francophone Week

Mr. Roy: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce to you

and to the members of the Legislative Assembly and to the people of the province of Saskatchewan that between March 20 and 26 has been designated as National Francophone Week across Canada.

In order to show Saskatchewan's support to the Fransaskois community, our Premier has officially designated this week to be the National Francophone Week in Saskatchewan. The Hon. Ed Tchorzewski will officially launch the week during a ceremony in the rotunda of the legislature here on Monday, March 22 at 10:30. During this week, Mr. Speaker, the Fransaskois from all over the province will celebrate this week with a program of special events which will take place all week long in as many as 12 communities.

Mr. Speaker, Canada is a country which promotes two official languages, French and English, and it is one important element which makes us unique.

La Semaine Nationale de la Francophonie is an occasion which encourages Canadians living in Saskatchewan to express their support for the expansion and development of official linguistic minorities.

(1045)

M. le président, je vous annonce et à mes homologues dans la Chambre que le 20 mars est la Journée Internationale de la Francophonie. Cette journée marquera le coup d'envoi de la Semaine Nationale de la Francophonie au Canada. Pour souligner l'événement, notre premier-ministre de la Saskatchewan, M. Roy Romanow, a décrété que la semaine du 20 au 26 mars, 1993, sera la Semaine Nationale de la Francophonie en Saskatchewan. Le lancement officiel de cette semaine sera fait par le vice-premier-ministre, l'Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, le lundi 22 mars à 10h30 dans la rotonde de la législature. Les fransaskois et fransaskoises célèbront cette semaine d'un bout à l'autre de la province par diverses activités socio-culturelles telles que théâtres, rencontres, danses, etc.

M. le président, le Canada est un pays où deux langues officielles sont reconnues, ce qui fait sa richesse. La Semaine Nationale de la Francophonie c'est l'occasion de montrer que nous sommes fiers de cette richesse et que nous appuyons l'épanouissement de la langue française. Merci, M. le président.

(Translation: Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce to you and to my colleagues in the Assembly that March 20 is International Francophone Day. This day marks the kick-off of National Francophone Week in Canada. To highlight this event, Saskatchewan's Premier, Mr. Roy Romanow, has declared March 20 to 26 as National Francophone Week in Saskatchewan. The official launch for this week will be made by the Deputy Premier, Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, on Monday, March 22 at 10:30 a.m. in the rotunda of the legislature. From one end of the province to the other, Fransaskois of the province will

be celebrating with such socio-cultural events as theatres, gatherings, dances, etc.

Mr. Speaker, Canada is a country where two official languages are recognized, which makes up its richness. National Francophone Week is an opportunity to show that we are proud of this richness and that we support the flowering of the French language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the member from Kinistino in welcoming a Fransaskois Week in Saskatchewan from March 20 to 26. I have a large francophone community in my constituency and I'm sure they'll be very proud to participate in this activity.

The Fransaskois across North America were the first to explore the North American continent. In fact La Vérendrye was the first white man to see the Rockies. He was ably led across this continent by our aboriginal people. And I think we need to give recognition to the Fransaskois community for the service, for the hard work and diligence, for the creation of the North American economy, for the people in North America as we know it today.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Before I recognize the member from Saskatoon Greystone . . . Well I'll recognize her now. I assume you want to speak to this?

Ms. Haverstock: — Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to add my support to the Premier's decision to declare Fransaskois Week.

And I think many of us forget that the percentage of Fransaskois in Saskatchewan is equal to the percentage of Saskatchewan people in our nation of Canada. It's very important for us to acknowledge their value and their importance, just as we as Saskatchewan citizens want to be acknowledged for our value within the nation.

So I'm very, very pleased that next week we will be able to celebrate. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Before we move on to the next item, I do want to remind all members, but in this particular case the member from Kinistino, that in his statement he referred to the Premier by his first name; he referred to the Deputy Premier by his first name. And you are to refer to them either by their constituency or by the position that they hold, not by their names.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it relates to questions no. 87 and 88, put by the member from

Greystone, I would request that they be converted to motions for returns (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motions for returns (debatable).

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Not Debatable)

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it relates to return no. 186, put by the member for Morse, I would request that it be converted to motion for return (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motions for returns (debatable).

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it relates to motion for return no. 187 (not debatable), I hereby table the answer.

The Speaker: — Answer tabled.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

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

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's most appropriate that I rise again in debate on the budget just presented by the New Democratic Party government in this province. Especially since we see almost universal condemnation, universal condemnation of what was perpetrated on the taxpayers of this province yesterday.

As I said in my remarks yesterday, Mr. Speaker, this was the culmination of an 18-month PR (public relations), media, and political campaign that was almost of biblical proportions by the New Democrats in this province, to try and throw up a big enough smokescreen over the promises that they made to Saskatchewan people in the fall of 1991, that they wouldn't be held accountable by the taxpayers of this province for those promises and for the direction that they've set for this province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as question period showed today, the names are starting to add up, the associations are starting to add up that universally around this province people are saying, you're not managing well, given what you promised to Saskatchewan taxpayers and what you've delivered. There's obviously a very, very wide gap — a very wide gap between the taxpayers of this province, the associations that represent taxpayers in this province, and the provincial government that is supposed to work in concert with them.

The challenges before this province are large, Mr. Speaker. There isn't a person that lives here, that works here, that farms here, blue-collar, white-collar, government worker, private sector worker, that

doesn't know that the challenges, the challenges will be difficult. And what they want, Mr. Speaker, is not a government that simply lives on politics but a government that is ready to cooperate, is ready to work with them in a meaningful way.

And it is interesting, Mr. Speaker, to watch this New Democratic Party government cherry-pick their way through Saskatchewan society, always with the intention of managing to save their own political hides at each and every instance.

The other day my colleague, the member from Rosthern, stood in this House for some two hours talking about health care, talking about the offloading, talking about the hurt that is going to result from the moves of this government who promised Saskatchewan people exactly the opposite. And the things that he was saying the other day, Mr. Speaker, the prophecies about what was going to come down in this budget, have become true today. And those prophecies, Mr. Speaker, are being echoed by people by the hundreds and the thousands in this city and in other cities and towns and villages and on the farms of our province. People who have lined up at the drugstores, people who have talked to their doctors, and people who are waiting to have their property taxes raised like they haven't had them raised in the history of this province, in order to make up for the half a billion dollars in offloading that we're going to see come from this New Democratic Party government — the party of medicare, the party that says that we are the people that have always cared the most for Saskatchewan people.

Well I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the budget delivered yesterday shows that this is the party of I don't care. I don't care because I'm more worried about my political hide than I am about the true families of this province, the families that will have to pay the increased property taxes; the families that will pay the increased sales taxes; the families that will pay for the increases in utilities and fees and services, and will pay and pay and pay like they have never paid before.

And I guess what's so frustrating to them, Mr. Speaker, what is so frustrating to the Saskatchewan association of taxpayers, what is so frustrating to the chamber of commerce, what is so frustrating to working men and women around this province, is that they had choices, they had alternatives, they had ways to implement tax increases that wouldn't be so hurtful, that would be fairer, that would maintain some minimum levels of services to Saskatchewan people.

But because those choices, Mr. Speaker, meant that New Democrats in power, and their friends who they brought along with them, would have to admit that they misled Saskatchewan people such a short time ago, they would have to admit that the promises made were not to be promises kept . . . They were promises made so that the members of the New Democratic Party in this legislature could move to the other side of the Chamber. That the member from Riversdale could become the Premier of the province, and that they

could exercise political power in this province, not live up to the promises made to Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder what would have happened in the fall of 1991 after the Premier appeared on province-wide TV and said, I know there is \$14.2 billion in debt, but that doesn't mean that any child in this province shouldn't get an education, a good education, because there always will be money for education.

I wonder what would have happened if the Premier of this province on province-wide TV, after he talked about a \$14.2 billion deficit, said we will be more to medicare, we will be more to health care because we will simply manage better, and we will improve the services that the former government has taken away.

And I wonder what would have happened if the Premier, the then Leader of the Opposition, the member from Riversdale, had said to Saskatchewan people on province-wide TV after he admitted that there was a \$14.2 billion deficit, if he had said, on top of that I am going to remove all the sales taxes in this province.

And then, Mr. Speaker, the other shoe fell, and in fact what we find is another \$778 million in sales tax tacked onto the backs of Saskatchewan taxpayers from a Premier and a government that said that they wouldn't do that.

I want to read into the record, Mr. Speaker, a couple of quotations, and I think they're important. Because today in question period we saw the Minister of Finance once again lighting up the blame thrower, trying to blame anyone and everyone besides her caucus and her political party, for the mess that Saskatchewan is in.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that Saskatchewan people, that Saskatchewan people know the truth in this matter. And I want to quote from Don Gass, the head of the Financial Review Commission sponsored by this New Democratic Party government. And this was on CKCK-TV News on February 18, 1991 — that should be 1992 — and I quote: the Tories made no attempt to hide the province's financial standing. In fact, the books were open all along to credit agencies or anyone else interested.

Well I find it rather strange, Mr. Speaker, that a man running to become the premier of this province wasn't interested enough, wasn't interested enough to take a look before he should go out and make such wild promises to the people of this province in October of 1991.

(1100)

And Mr. Gass also had this to say, and I quote again, same TV news story: Blakeney — referring to the Hon. Allan, past premier of the province of Saskatchewan — used the same accounting principles and the figures were correct. The main reason for the increase

in deficit is due to accounting principles, and under the accounting principles the main element is unfunded pension liability.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when one takes the time to review the record of the province of Saskatchewan . . . and even the member from Regina Dewdney under questioning in this House last year in estimates admitted that the largest proportion of unfunded liability in pension funds in this province occurred during the 1970s when the New Democratic Party was in government in this province.

Don Gass is saying that the only difference, Mr. Speaker, is whether you include or don't include that unfunded pension liability. And you add about \$800 million in loan guarantees or direct participation by the Government of Saskatchewan in projects — which I remind you, sir, and everyone else in this Assembly and around the province were all at commercial rates or higher and therefore are not a liability — that what Mr. Gass is saying that the numbers are the same.

And yet this member, this Premier, this member from Riversdale, now tries to hide behind some kind of a financial charade, a charade of doom and gloom in order to take the responsibility off of his shoulders for the promises made to Saskatchewan people such a short time ago.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, that you're finding this morning around this province universal condemnation — universal condemnation of what this government brought forward yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, there isn't a person in this province that doesn't believe that debt and deficit reduction and debt control and the elimination of the deficit aren't a high priority of Saskatchewan citizens. What they take issue with is the way that this government has handled the situation.

I point out to you, Mr. Speaker, yesterday another province in Canada was faced with the same problems — even worse. Newfoundland was a guaranteed BBB rating. There was no light at the end of the tunnel at all for Newfoundland. Did they raise taxes? No. Did they attack the business community? No. Did they attack schools and hospitals? No. What the Government of Newfoundland did yesterday was they cut themselves. They cut deep. They cut hard. They cut themselves before they would cut the taxpayers of the province of Newfoundland.

And yesterday person after person said this government had the ideal opportunity — this government had the ideal opportunity to downsize government, to cut themselves, to start at the provincial cabinet and work down in a systematic and real way to show the leadership necessary in this province to handle our financial problems.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, this morning the condemnation is universal. Because for every dollar that the government has purported to save, they have

taxed Saskatchewan people for two more dollars. And, Mr. Speaker, anyone in business, anyone who financially plans, will tell you that that ratio is exactly the opposite of what it should be. That there should have been two dollars of cutting, two dollars of cutting by the Government of Saskatchewan for every dollar picked out of the pockets of Saskatchewan taxpayers in yesterday's budget.

Because, Mr. Speaker, what the reality will be, what the reality will be when one adds in this half a billion dollars of offloading, is that municipal government, hospitals, and schools, the very infrastructure of our province, will now have to go through that process of shutting down institutions, of cutting their payrolls, of cutting the very people who educate and provide services to our children.

And they will have to do that so that this Premier and his Minister of Finance, the member from Westmount, will not have to show the leadership that they should have and will be making people all across this province, all across this province, wear the goat horns that they should have worn by bringing down those decisions.

It'll be interesting, Mr. Speaker, as other provinces across Canada bring down their budgets, what the reaction will be and what the tack that others will bring forward.

But I say to you, Mr. Speaker, there was a fundamental choice made by this government, who were afraid to do the right thing because they were afraid of their friends, the union bosses of this province. And you know, Mr. Speaker, ultimately, ultimately it is always the rank and file that will pay the price for these political decisions cooked up between the members of the treasury benches and their union-boss friends.

Because the reaction of people, the reaction of taxpayers in this province, is going to be one that I wouldn't want to have to live with if I were a member of the public service today. Because taxpayers are going to say that it was unfair, and instead of having an orderly downsizing of government over the next four years that would be meaningful and would show Saskatchewan taxpayers the way, we've got a government that shoved that option aside and said, we'll simply pick your pocket for more. We'll simply pick your pocket for more — and right now it stands at about a thousand dollars a family and counting, Mr. Speaker — rather than do what we should have done, what people elected us to do.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that I've been getting back some responses. I just recently mailed a questionnaire around my constituency as part of a report from the legislature. And in it I provide an 11-question survey form for people to fill out in my riding, and also have given them the opportunity to comment on the back page and mail it back into me. And those returns are just starting to come in yesterday in fact, Mr. Speaker. And I suspect after the budget delivered in this House yesterday that they will come in by the tens and by the hundreds and perhaps even

by the thousands.

I have eight of them here, Mr. Speaker. And you know what? The theme through each and every one of them is the same. I represent a riding of rural people, Mr. Speaker, farm people, people in small towns and villages. And they have been feeling the hurt of this government for some time now. They have been feeling the hurt started by the member from Rosetown-Elrose in this Assembly, the biggest betrayal of agriculture people ever brought forward in this province, longer than others.

But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, when this gentleman here, Mr. Gusretser writes a PS (postscript) note at the bottom. He says: I just learned this morning that my wife who is taking shots for allergies will have to pay \$10 per shot starting April 1, '93, adding a further cost of \$40 per month to our cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, that he is only echoing the remarks of not only the constituents of Thunder Creek, but echoing the remarks of people all across this province this morning who are feeling terribly let down and betrayed by this New Democratic Party government who promised them so much in the fall of 1991 and have delivered so little and have broken so many promises.

When we look at this budget, Mr. Speaker, and we hear the Minister of Finance telling the people of this province yesterday that the tools for economic renewal are built within it; we heard the Minister of Finance yesterday talk about creating thousands of jobs, that the tools to put Saskatchewan on a road to economic recovery were in this budget.

And it was interesting to note that as a section of that recovery she is going to harmonize the manufacturing and processing sector of this province for eight months. That these are the people because of Saskatchewan's strong position in trade, in international trade — these are the people that are going to lead the way. These are the people that are going to hit that projection of, I believe it's 3.6 of GDP (gross domestic product), of growth in Canada; that this was the sector that would lead the way because she was going to harmonize them at 9 per cent.

In other words when those industries, those manufacturing and processing industries go out and purchase goods and services and they pay their 9 per cent PST (provincial sales tax) and they pay their GST (goods and services tax), and then they apply for a refund from the provincial government and federal government, that that money that they're refunded is going to allow them to go out and buy new equipment and hire new employees and seek out new market-places, and by doing so they're going to strengthen the Saskatchewan economy.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that that option was available to the government on a province-wide basis, and that that option for the business people of this province and the farmers of this province at a lower rate would have generated more money than

what we saw come down yesterday, with less pain, less dislocation, less job loss. And yet this government rejected it simply on the basis of politics.

Because in 1991 the member from Riversdale, as he went across this province promising people, said that we can't have an increase in sales tax, and I quote, Mr. Speaker:

No new taxes would be imposed; instead, the NDP would cut wasteful spending and encourage new economic development.

The *Leader-Post*, September 6, 1991, member from Riversdale.

A 7 per cent harmonized sales tax will lead to increased inflation, reduce consumer spending and consumer confidence, thousands of lost jobs, and hundreds of millions of dollars lost in economic activity within the Saskatchewan economy.

Well, well, well. The very thing that is now going to make the processing and manufacturing sector of this province the leading edge of the Minister of Finance's budget, the leading edge of job creation and development in this province, the leading edge of technological development, and the leading edge of employment at 9 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, a 9 per cent harmonization tells me that there was a great deal of misleading information, to put it in the kindest terms, a great deal of hypocrisy on the loose in this province in the summer and the fall of 1991.

Mr. Speaker, all it says to me was the member from Riversdale and his cohorts didn't have the political courage to face Saskatchewan people in here yesterday and say yes, we made a mistake; yes, we misled you; and yes, we are prepared to do the right thing in this province now so that Saskatchewan can get back on the road to economic recovery; and that the political hides of the New Democratic Party members of this legislature come second, come second to the needs and the wants of Saskatchewan taxpayers, not first.

(1115)

But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we see the denial written across their collective faces. We see the Minister of Finance in question period this morning denying, denying, denying the true aspirations of Saskatchewan taxpayers. Instead of coming clean with people, she simply lights up the blame thrower and tries to pass the buck to someone else.

It's like the Minister of Health who repeatedly has stood in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, and denied that there was going to be offloading occurring of tremendous proportions, is denying in this legislature that she is pitting community against community in the face of dozens of quotations delivered by herself in this legislature and outside, at the Saskatchewan people.

And I quote from *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker, in August, 1989: the opposition, the then New Democratic Party opposition is going to fight these health care cut-backs and these changes to medicare. It's going to fight the erosion of the principles of medicare. I feel rather certain we'll be having a change of government next time around and then the public isn't going to have to worry about these problems.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the folks lined up at the drugstores of this province last night were certainly worried about these problems. And the people out there in rural Saskatchewan who are being forced into health regions that they don't want to be part of, who are having their communities pitted against each other in order to see their hospitals and their nursing homes closed, they are having to worry about the problems and the offloading managed by the Minister of Finance, the hon. member from Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Speaker, people all around this province have been faced with offloading for the last 18 months by this New Democratic Party government. And now they are going to have to pick up the slack and deal with another half a billion dollars over the next four years.

We had a person phone in this morning, Mr. Speaker, who has done some initial calculations on what that's going to mean to his family. And he wasn't able yet to calculate, Mr. Speaker, what exactly the property tax load will be. But I'm just going to run through some of the items, and this is a taxpayer family, city of Regina.

And I think their requirements in life seem to be fairly modest, Mr. Speaker. Spending only \$500 a year on clothing for the two adults in this family will mean another \$45 in taxation. You add to that another general sales tax of \$300.

And these people are now faced, you have to understand, Mr. Speaker, with picking up some medical insurance that they didn't have to have before. They're looking at, in his estimation — and I appreciate the fine tuning here — \$456 in added health care premium costs in order to cover off the things that weren't there before. And when you add in the kids in the family through the dental program to that, they come up with about \$850 of an increase to this family in Regina.

The gas tax alone, he says \$63. I think that's probably on the light side. I think this individual's got a fairly fuel efficient vehicle if he's going to get away with \$63 in increased fuel tax for the next year.

And I think he's also being very modest when he figures there's only going to be \$240 in pharmaceuticals. I think that'll be very modest, Mr. Speaker, considering the rise in drug costs that most people in this province will face in the next year.

But I mean the bottom line of all of this, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line when you start adding these things up, and they seem very small in themselves, but the

bottom line is you're looking at a couple of thousand dollars, Mr. Speaker. A couple of thousand bucks in the face of a party and a government that said none of that would occur; that they simply would eliminate some waste and mismanagement. They would live on \$4.5 billion a year and they would do it smarter, knowing full well what the size of the provincial debt was.

And now it's just come . . . it has come home like a steamroller, Mr. Speaker, to this individual. And as I said, he hasn't been able to calculate what the difference is going to be in property tax increases because of the half billion dollars in offloading which has occurred in this budget over the next four years on the health and the education and the snowplough and the school bus and all of those items that are part and parcel of being a property tax owner in this province.

How many mills are we talking about here, Mr. Speaker? Is that why the Minister of Finance won't answer our questions about when we ask, what is the true cost to Saskatchewan taxpayers when you add these things up? What is the true cost of a half a billion dollars in offloading? I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest to the minister that we're not talking 1 mill or 2; we are talking 7, 8, 9, 10. We're talking double digit increases over the next four years in the mill rates.

Because people out there are not stupid, Mr. Speaker. They know that there is an unsettled teachers' salary dispute to be made up. They know that Saskatchewan government workers have been on a rotating strike. They know, Mr. Speaker, that there are people all across society who are in bargaining positions that are going to add to the cost of the average taxpayer in this province.

And yet we have the Minister of Finance, had the gall to stand in this legislature and say that a half a billion dollars in offloading on taxpayers, on the property tax base of this province, isn't going to hurt anything. In fact it's going to create jobs and employment, and it's going to lead the way.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is why this morning the newspapers of our province are filled with condemnation of this plan, this route to recovery. Because ultimately, Mr. Speaker, when you put the property tax base of this province at risk, nothing will be generated — nothing at all.

That is why the members of the opposition have brought Bill 10 forward each and every day, almost, in this legislature to ask this government to repeal that hospitals tax Act. Repeal it, give Saskatchewan taxpayers the comfort zone that they need to know that the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Health, by simply issuing an edict, can go out and tack a couple of mills onto one of our new hospital districts.

That is why SUMA and SARM requested the same of this government, because they feared for their taxpayers' base. They feared for the property tax base of this province and the pressures being put upon it.

And that's why they said, government do the right thing and repeal this Act so that we have the comfort zone that we need; that you aren't going to pick our pockets.

Have they been given that comfort? No, Mr. Speaker, not only will they repeal a seldom used Act of this legislature . . . not only will they not repeal it, yesterday the Minister of Finance compounded the situation over and over and over again by ensuring that there would be a half a billion dollars offloaded on those same property owners.

So now, Mr. Speaker, we're faced with not only having this half billion dollars, but we're faced with having that Act of this legislature brought into play by the Minister of Health at any time, in any jurisdiction outside of a union hospital district, to save her political hide. Because, Mr. Speaker, that would be the only reason, the only reason for the implementation of that Act — to take off the pressure and heat of promises made and promises broken to the people expecting more on the health-care side, from this New Democratic Party government. That is the only reason we would see the Minister of Health in conjunction with the Minister of Finance implementing that Act.

And I say to the government today, at least give taxpayers, property holders in this province, a little bit of comfort, that as they have to face this half a billion dollars in offloading in the next four years, that you will not compound it by this Act of the legislature, that you will bring it forward and repeal it so that they know it will not be tacked on top of what already they face.

That is the least that this government could do, Mr. Speaker, given their commitment — the party of medicare — given their commitment. Because I say to you, Mr. Speaker, if they don't, it is one more piece of evidence that this has become the party of I don't care, the party of I don't care, to Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss in this debate if we did not talk about the agricultural sector of our province for a while. Mr. Speaker, agriculture in this province faces a crisis like they have not faced since the 1930s. Net farm income in this province is projected at \$241 million. Mr. Speaker, that is a level that is almost unprecedented in the history of our province, going back for decades.

It's a level, Mr. Speaker, that makes the words "sustainable agriculture" almost an oxymoron. Two hundred and forty-one million dollars of net farm income, Mr. Speaker, in this province means that 60,000 farm families are at risk.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not deny for a moment, I do not deny for a moment . . .

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

Ms. Hamilton: — Mr. Speaker, I'm asking leave to

introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, a former colleague of mine on city council, Mr. Mike Badham. Mr. Badham has brought with him today some visiting guests from the Hunan province in China on an educational tour and with, I hope, a furthering of our twinning arrangement.

I would also like to introduce Mr. Feng Xiangqin, who is the supervisor of the state education commission for the People's Republic of China, and also the delegation that's with him. We welcome him and hope that he is having a good visit in Regina and being greeted with the warmth of our community.

So I would ask members to join with me in welcoming our delegation from China and hope that their stay is very educational and enjoyable.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1130)

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

(continued)

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to say hello to Councillor Badham and his guests. We always enjoy having people from other countries and other places in our legislature. And I hope you enjoy yourselves.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, agriculture in this province is in a crisis situation. And I don't deny for a moment that the former administration spent tens of millions and hundreds of millions and I would suggest to you even billions of dollars on that farm sector. I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that probably we spent more money on agriculture than this province could afford sometimes. But I also say to you, Mr. Speaker, the very fact that most of those farm families are still there is ample evidence, ample evidence that those weren't such bad choices.

In the face of those expenditures, Mr. Speaker, in 1991, we had the member from Riversdale and his political cohorts travelling around this province saying, you know it's not enough, that the billions of dollars spent on agriculture are not enough because you should have the cost of production built into those plans. But not only should you have security on the price side, that you should have the cost of production built into it besides. And you elect us and we're going to go to Ottawa and we're going to get you that cost of production and we're going to get you that guaranteed

price and we will administrate it better than the current government.

Well, Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this budget the second offload occurred. The budget was cut last year in '92, and it was further cut by 18 per cent, over \$60 million to agriculture yesterday, to an agricultural industry that is suffering like it has never suffered before, in the face of the promises made by the member from Riversdale.

Do you see, Mr. Speaker, the cost of production delivered in this budget? No. Do you see guaranteed price delivered in this budget? No. Do you see support of any kind, Mr. Speaker, delivered in this budget? No. In fact what we got . . . the commitment yesterday from the Minister of Finance was that within two years time potentially Saskatchewan farmers will be without any support at all, that they won't have access to the same insurance program that farmers all across this country will have, that they won't have access to federal dollars the same as other farmers in this country will have.

They guaranteed yesterday, the culmination of the folly started by the member from Rosetown-Elrose in this Assembly last year that saw this Assembly hamstrung for 18 days, that saw thousands and thousands of farmers rally around this province in protest at the folly begun by that member, that member who was moved from his position in cabinet because of his folly, that member who was repudiated by his own Premier on Prince Albert radio earlier this year. The member from Riversdale stood up and said, you know if I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't have touched it, I wouldn't have touched it.

And yet yesterday we see the Minister of Finance come into this Assembly, cut the agricultural budget by another 60 million bucks-plus and cancel the only farm support program people who are faced with \$241 million in net farm income have. And flawed as it is, flawed as it is, it is something. This from a government that made a commitment to Saskatchewan farmers that they would put a committee, a non-political committee in place that would go out and study and find solutions and bring them into this House this spring.

What in the world, Mr. Speaker, have 30-some people been doing, wandering around this province holding meetings, holding meetings supposedly to find solutions to the problems associated with GRIP. And the minister walks in and just shuts the whole thing down. What have they been doing? They've been going around spending money, Mr. Speaker, holding meetings, going to farm families and saying, come forward, bring your solutions forward. And before there's even an attempt at a solution, the Minister of Finance walks in and cans it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, something is terribly wrong with that process. This is the open, consultative government that was promised to Saskatchewan people in the fall of 1991. Something is wrong with that process. Where was the committee last year?

Well, Mr. Speaker, is there any wonder that there will be no confidence in rural Saskatchewan? Is there any wonder that that preaching of doom and gloom by this government is now hanging over the head of every rural family? Is there no wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the red meat industry, one of the few bright lights in agriculture, is probably retrenching as I speak, in fear because of what this government did in the budget yesterday?

You know, Mr. Speaker, there's one thing about it. This bunch of new-found democrats is at least fair in their application of misery. Because the grain sector got it last year from the member from Rosetown-Elrose, and the member from Westmount made sure that the rest of them got it yesterday. At least it's fair, Mr. Speaker, I guess, that they have broken their promises universally to agriculture and just didn't confine it to one particular area.

I challenge any member of the government, Mr. Speaker, to show me one place in that budget yesterday, one place where there will be one new job created in agriculture, one new job. Because, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you I can find places in that budget yesterday where there will be jobs lost, lots of jobs lost in agriculture. Seventeen per cent of the workforce in this province is tied to that industry — bigger than any other. The government's own projections show that that labour force of 17 per cent will be cut dramatically in the next four years.

Mr. Speaker, what are we going to do with those people that are dislocated? What are we going to do? Where are we going to put them? Where are they going to fit into the social contract of this province?

Well I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that they aren't going to fit into the social contract of this province. What they're going to do is get into their cars and they're going to the province of Alberta. Or they're going to go to the United States of America. They're going to go anywhere except the place where they should be, which is on their farms contributing to their communities. They will be some place else where there is an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, where there isn't dislocation because you happen to be a farmer.

And probably the ultimate insult, Mr. Speaker, to these people who were abandoned so quickly by the members of the New Democratic Party, will come into this legislature some time this session with a Bill to redraw the boundaries of this province — a short three years after the last redistribution.

And I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, what that Bill will show is a reduction in the seats, in the number of seats in this province, disproportionately born by the people of rural Saskatchewan so that the next time they wish to go and vote on a government that promises them certain things, they will not be able to cast retribution on this party and this Premier.

That will be the ultimate insult, Mr. Speaker, that after you have stripped them from their ability to make a living, after you have stripped them of any opportunity

to build and grow in this province, you ultimately will take away their opportunity for political representation. And then I guess, Mr. Speaker, the package will be complete. The package of the New Democratic Party will be complete. The nails driven in the lid of the coffin by the Minister of Finance yesterday — that process will be complete, Mr. Speaker. And the agricultural community of this province will move off into second place. Because, Mr. Speaker, I cannot take any other, any other direction than that from the plan laid forward by the Minister of Finance yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, there were clear choices for this government — clear choices that they ignored because of ideology, that they ignored because of the promises made by the member from Riversdale such a short time ago.

I raised with him yesterday the possibility that perhaps the natural gas pipelines of this province, of them being privatized. That shareholders in a pipeline would be better positioned to purchase over \$60 million in large natural gas pipe and bury it in the ground of this province than the taxpayers of this province are positioned. And that the half a billion dollars received from the sale could have stopped this massive offloading on Saskatchewan property owners.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, it wouldn't have even infringed upon their Crown corporation. That doesn't harm SaskEnergy in the least. SaskEnergy would stay a Crown corporation, and SaskEnergy would charge its tariff and its tolling, and SaskEnergy would collect its royalties.

Mr. Speaker, that gets them some chirping from their seats, because they are so blind, they are so driven by ideology, that when faced with those clear choices they would rather make sure that Saskatchewan families, Saskatchewan property owners, bear another half a billion dollars in burden — a half a billion dollars in burden rather than let somebody else . . . And I remind the members opposite, the only jurisdiction in North America where the taxpayer has to pay for the large diameter pipe that's buried in the ground is right here in Saskatchewan. Good old Saskatchewan.

These New Democrats are smarter than the other 300 or 290 million people that live in the North American continent. Aren't they smart, Mr. Speaker? The only place in North America where the taxpayer pays for the large diameter pipe is right here.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think there's a lot of taxpayers in this province, when the mill rate starts jumping 2 and 3 and 4 mills at a crack, might start asking some of those fundamental questions, fundamental questions about who should own the pipe buried in the ground, Mr. Speaker.

And it might surprise some of these members as to what the answer would be. Matter of fact, I would challenge each and every one of them. Why don't

they put a little survey out in 1993, post-budget, that lays that option out very clearly to the property taxpayers in their constituencies and see what the choice would be, see what the choice would be. I think there might be a little bit of a surprise, Mr. Speaker, for some of these folks in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this government had choices yesterday, very clear choices that they could have made. And I think they would have had the business community, they would have had the professional community, they would have had taxpayers as a whole agreeing with certain things. And because they are so hidebound by their ideology, so hidebound by the promises made by the member from Riversdale in the fall of 1991, and trying to cover up for those promises, that they won't make those obvious choices that so many people demand.

(1145)

Mr. Speaker, yesterday there was a web, a web of deception and deceit woven across the face of this province. Why else, Mr. Speaker, would you have things like this little item on page 51 where you've got the '93-94 budget delivered in two different ways with about 50 million bucks difference. All of a sudden when it chooses this government's political agenda, when this government chooses to implement something, they can change the numbers.

One number shows the debt, the annual operating debt of the province at 296.3 million, but the number that we've been using consistently, Mr. Speaker, in this province since 1957 through CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) and Liberal and Conservative and NDP (New Democratic Party) governments shows the debt would be at 340.1.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why do that? Why do you have to put a little footnote down at the bottom in very small print, in very small print, if you are not trying to weave a web of deception and deceit across the face of this province? Because I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, if it means that the taxpayers of this province are picking up the difference, are picking up the difference, they would like to know why that was done.

And I suggest to you, sir, they are picking up the difference, that they're picking it up to the tune of \$788 million in sales tax over the next four years, and they're taking on a half a billion dollars in offloaded property taxation in the next four years. They are picking up the difference, Mr. Speaker, that this government, this open accountable government . . . is so crass that they will put it in a small footnote on the bottom of page 51. I want to know what the truth is. Which number do I believe? So far nobody's come clean.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, as further evidence, as further evidence, of what this government has tried to do with this web, this web of deceit, was we saw items pulled from past budgets that were normally dealt with as a line item and injected into the Speech from the Throne.

And it just boggles your mind, Mr. Speaker, when you see agricultural research, which has been a component of the Ag Development Fund in this province for, I don't know, 5, 6, 7 years — just a line item — brought into the speech at \$12 million. Well the only problem, Mr. Speaker, was last year it was 17. And as my colleague from Morse says, the year before that it was a lot more and a lot more and a lot more. Yesterday it's brought into the Speech from the Throne by the minister from Saskatoon Westmount as if it was something brand-new that she'd thought up.

Once again she's out picking the pockets of the research and development firms of this province, the people who benefit, the short line implement manufacturers, the people clustered around Innovation Place in Saskatoon, the people that work with the research capacity of the University of Saskatchewan and the Department of Agriculture, she picked their pocket yesterday but she put it into this speech in such a way that she wanted people to believe that it was a brand-new initiative of this government. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, it was a massive cut to the ag research and development component of this province. And yet she presents it yesterday as an initiative of this government.

Well it is one more litany in the string of broken promises, Mr. Speaker, that we see in this budget brought forward by this New Democratic Party government. And, Mr. Speaker, as you go through those pages you will find other items that used to be simple line items in past budgets brought forward, brought forward by this minister in order to deceive the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the people who were quoted and reported on and visited with in this province this morning would have said the things they did about the betrayal of this budget if they had not known deep in their hearts that there honestly will be a tax revolt on in this province.

That tax revolt will mean, Mr. Speaker, that the energies of people in this province, who should be directed at expansion of entrepreneurial initiative, of hiring more people, of leading the way in so many sectors of our economy, are now going to be devoted to conflict with our government; are now going to be devoted to try and hide their successes from the prying eyes of the Minister of Finance; who are now going to say that I'm not going to work that extra hour or two in a day because there's no point in it because the member from Westmount is going to strip those rewards away from me; who is going to tax my business on Main Street and who is going to tax my home.

And then she is going to make sure through increased sales taxes and utility rates and gasoline taxes and property taxes that I don't have the ability to practise the God-given talents given to me and to my family. That they'll be like the gentleman from Regina who phoned in and simply said, you are picking my pocket to the point where I really have to wonder about living

here any more.

I'm going to make a prediction to you, Mr. Speaker, that the new Superstore being built in Medicine Hat, Alberta, being built in Medicine Hat, Alberta, will be flooded with customers from Maple Creek and Abbey and Lancer and Kindersley and Eston.

All over the west side of our province, Mr. Speaker, those people are simply going to say, I'm not going to participate, Madam Minister, in your folly any more. Number one, I can't afford it. Number two, I'm just diametrically opposed to your game plan; I'm simply not going to participate in it any more, Madam Minister. I'm going to take my dollars and my time and I'm going elsewhere.

Well, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately not everyone in the province of Saskatchewan has the ability to go to the province of Alberta to shop. Some of us are going to have to stay here and shoulder the load. Some of us are going to have to stay here and fight, fight this provincial government, who such a short time ago promised us so much, promised us so much with less, promised us so much with less pain, that promised us as taxpayers that our health and our education would be looked after, that promised us that the burden of sales tax would not be the inhibiting factor to growth in our province.

And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the evidence, the 9,000 jobs less in the last year, the hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity that didn't take place, is ample proof to so many people in our province that that was a false, false promise of such a short time ago.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I will be talking a lot about the broken promises of the member from Riversdale in the days to come. We will be talking a lot about the flaws in the plan presented by the member from Saskatoon Westmount in the days to come. And each and every day, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that there will be a mounting ground swell of Saskatchewan people who will join in, will join in with the opposition in attacking the plan laid down by the member from Westmount yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, it is a very easy plan to oppose. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to be able to participate in this budget debate. I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that what I'm going to be doing today in my remarks, I will be talking at first about the budgeting process that we went through here in this legislature, here on behalf of the government caucus. I want to talk then about the overall concept of the budget and why this budget is the best option for Saskatchewan. As an example, I'll want to relate a bit to some portion of the health budget. And then last of all, I'll want to compare it with the thrust that we are now hearing from the Liberal Party and from the Conservative

Party, both of which . . . or neither of which really have had any positive impact or any positive suggestions to answer the problems that Saskatchewan found itself in.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance and the Premier and the entire cabinet for the most well-thought-out budget delivered to this legislature in at least 10 years. This budget details the bold, decisive action that our government is taking to secure our future and to achieve financial freedom and to balance that budget within four years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, to come up with this budget, it took courage. But I tell you, it's not simply a muscle-and-guts operation. I said at the outset that this was a thoughtful budget. More than any recent budget, it required homework, weeks and weeks of homework. And it required teamwork, repeated assemblages of teamwork.

Mr. Speaker, following the outstanding leadership of our Premier and our Finance minister, I and all of my government colleagues took time to listen to constituents and to hear their aspirations. And we took careful note of their advice with respect to a multitude of issues that face us these days, and we brought these ideas to our caucus. We all had our say, Mr. Speaker.

Constituent expressions were expressed and considered. Research and professional analysis were sought. And then, according to the democratic principles, decisions were made on the basis of a vote or a consensus in caucus.

This year's budget, as presented by the Minister of Finance, is a product of such a process, Mr. Speaker. It's a half a year in the making. It started with departmental proposals and then went through a series of consultations and adjustments.

(1200)

And I want to report to my constituents in Prince Albert Carlton that I am totally satisfied that those opinions that they have given to me to pass on have been expressed and have been heard. And the budget which is before this Assembly today is truly the result of homework being done, and done well.

Mr. Speaker, the budgeting process was a good one, a thorough one. As a consequence, the budget itself is the right one. It is the best option, and I am proud to be supporting it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — This budget charts the course for financial freedom. When I went to the constituency, along with my colleagues, and we asked the question: what is it, what is it that the people really want? And there are several things that they want, several pieces of advice that they gave us. One of the first ones was

face reality, something that the people in the opposition are completely void of, facing reality.

They said to us: face the same reality that every household, every business, every farmer, every wage-earner has to face at home in his finances or her finances. They told us that government right now is like a business overextended. Some said government is like a plane overloaded and underfueled and destined to crash unless you bring it down for a landing now.

They saw a mountain of debt piled up by those members opposite, piled so high that it destabilized everything around. And the people at home feared an avalanche of that mountain. And they want us to cap that mountain of debt and to let the warmth of our economy radiate on that threatening glacier of debt and heat it to a steady retreat.

People want a secure future, not only for themselves but for their children. They want the province to achieve the financial freedom and enhance the vital social and economic programs for the future. They want emphasis on job creation so that our population exodus will be put to a stop and so that our tax load would be shared by a larger number of people.

This budget does that. It faces the reality. It's designed to secure the future. It's designed to bring us the financial freedom. It's designed for job creation. And, Mr. Speaker, it's designed to do so with compassion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, over the last few years we have been dealing with debts approximating 10 years before that, debts by spending a billion dollars more than we've been taking in. This was under the Tory management, the Tory mismanagement. This year's budget follows the plan that we started a year ago to decrease that annual deficit. And I'm proud to say that combined with savings and revenue increases, this year's deficit budget will be down to \$296 million.

But more importantly than that, Mr. Speaker, is what the plan is for the future, what portion this year is of the entire future of Saskatchewan, because it lays the course for the budget deficit to decrease from 296 million this year to 190 million the year after, and the year after, down to 70 million. By 1996-95, our projection is that we should be in a balanced budget or even have a possibility of a slight surplus, Mr. Speaker. Now that's progress.

That's a complete reversal of trends of the 1980s under the Tories. Assuming, Mr. Speaker, that there are no natural disasters and no more massive offloading by the federal government, we can achieve that financial freedom for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, debt is the biggest single threat to our province — debt and the interest. My constituents, my constituents in Prince Albert appreciate the emphasis we are putting on grappling with that mountain of

debt. Why? Because in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, they have heard and they have happened about what happened to the city of Prince Albert way back in the years 1912 to 1915.

Mr. Speaker, if you come to Prince Albert and you travel downstream about 23 miles — 23 miles east and downstream — you will come across a chain of boulders and rapids and beside it stands a multimillion dollar concrete monument stretching a third of the way across the river. It is a monument of waste and mismanagement, motivated by greed and paid for by the taxpayers of Prince Albert. They never completed . . . pardon me, the never-completed dam at La Colle Falls is now a great tourist attraction. And I invite you to come visit it.

But more important and more to the point, I want to go back and give you a little history on this. Because the cycle that the people of Prince Albert went through is very similar to what Saskatchewan is going through, or has gone through in the '80s.

I'm going to call it the lesson of La Colle Falls, Mr. Speaker. And the lesson of La Colle Falls is, number one, if you don't manage your finances responsibly you will lose your ability to manage your finances. And lesson number two of the La Colle Falls is interest rates eat up tax dollars which results in a reduction of programs, which happened to us in Prince Albert to our streets and roads and sewers and parks and civic facilities. Prince Albert was behind most other cities until the 1970s.

And the third lesson is the relationship between business and government, something that is really an issue that the members opposite should pay for. And that is, one of the rules of business is the purpose of business is to make a profit; not to be sustained by tax dollars. And the second rule of business is you don't go into business unless you know something about it, Mr. Speaker. The lessons of La Colle Falls.

Let's go back — 1910 to 1915 Prince Albert was regarded as a boom town. Things were very volatile. People were moving in and people were moving out; the population was transient. It was based on . . . the economy was based on agriculture and lumber — all of those being cyclical.

But the city fathers thought that they were progressive and they were maybe perhaps a little excitable. They decided that it was time to borrow some money for all this booming that was going on, or they thought was going on. They borrowed \$362,000 for water; another \$584,000 for sewers; \$76,000 for a sewage disposal plant; \$90,000 for electricity; 19,000 for street lights. This is a litany of borrowing. What does it sound like, Mr. Speaker? What does that sound like?

An Hon. Member: — Nineteen eighty-two to nineteen ninety-two.

Mr. Kowalsky: — My colleague says it sounds like the 1980s. It sounds like the 1980s under the Tories. They bought \$19,000 for street lights; 106,000 for

sidewalks. And they purchased road machinery and they purchased a gravel pit and they purchased barges and they purchased a steamboat; it was called the King George. And they built a fire hall and a police station. Good progressive moves, except that, except that they were doing this borrowing at a rate which they could not sustain.

And then, Mr. Speaker, and then, Mr. Speaker, came along a fast-talking promoter. His name was Charles Mitchell. He was the predecessor, he was the man who introduced the original idea of GigaText to Saskatchewan. He came to the province, to the city of Prince Albert, and he says: I suggest you borrow \$800,000 dollars. And he came up with an agreement. The city borrowed \$800,000 to build a dam at La Colle Falls. This dam was financed by the city, even the provincial inspector was paid by the city — I wonder why that was. But it was controlled by the fast talker, Charles Mitchell. He said Prince Albert would become a white coal city. It's water power would light up the entire Saskatchewan valley. I often wonder if he said that Prince Albert and La Colle would have so much going in it, you can mismanage it and still break even.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — I noticed a statement very similar to that was repeated in 1983 by the former premier, the former leader . . . the deposed leader of the Conservative Party, when he spoke in New York, and he said Saskatchewan has so much going for it that you can afford to mismanage and still break even.

Well Charles Mitchell poured concrete, he employed milk, he promoted, but the city borrowed.

And then at the same time another man, a Mr. Felix Frank, arrived from Germany. He had some used equipment, and he said: listen, I'm going to open up a company here. And he called this company the Great West Iron, Wood and Chemical Works.

Now here was his promise. He said he would employ 10,000 men. They were going to build boxcars; they were going to build Pullmans; they were going to build wheels for those railway cars. They were going to build 1,000 windows a day and ship them all over Canada; they were going to build eight . . . six prefab homes per day, and they were going to ship out a carload of toothpicks per day from Prince Albert. And they were going to build a paint production factory, and he said this paint was so good that it could even be applied when it was raining outside.

Well what did the city fathers of Prince Albert do? They contributed 15 acres of land to him and they guaranteed \$125,000 worth of bonds. I think Mr. Felix Frank was the original champion of Saskatchewan megaprojects, Mr. Speaker.

You know under the Tories, we had megaprojects. Oil upgraders that we will be subsidizing until doomsday — the taxpayers' money. And they have about . . . this issue, this particular plot of Mr. Felix Frank had about

as much chance of success as our GigaText, the Tory GigaText, or the Tory Supercarts. Small wonder where Mr. Guy Montpetit came to take his lessons, Mr. Speaker.

Well what happened? The city borrowed. They borrowed for a power plant because that wasn't in the original plans. And then they had to refinance. So they refinanced. Went back to the brokers, refinanced over the next couple of years.

Then all of a sudden problems began to emerge. City fathers found out that Mr. Charles Mitchell had forgot to include the interest cost in his projections. They found out that Charles Mitchell had forgot to test the water flow levels and how they varied from spring to summer to fall to winter. And they forgot, they forgot to bore into the river bottom to see if it could sustain the floods that came every spring.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as it happened, Mr. Felix Frank and his company, like GigaText, never came to production. He went back to Germany just before World War I. But what happened to the city? Notice the parallel between that and what happened to the province. The bond rating went down to something that must have approached ZZZ, Mr. Speaker. The result was that in 1916 Prince Albert, with a population then of 6,432 people, owed the bondholders \$3,328,000.

(1215)

And on top of that, they had a bank overdraft of 401,000. And on top of that, they had to pick up Mr. Felix Frank's loan of 134,000. Well that comes out to about \$600 per man, woman, and child for the city of Prince Albert — a figure that is very, very close to the debt of \$15,000 per woman and man and child right here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, like in Saskatchewan, the course of Prince Albert had been set out for unlimited glory but it ended in unmanaged disaster. The result is it took 50 years — 50 years — until the mortgage was burned, the mortgage that started with La Colle Falls. It's interesting that the city of Prince Albert even tried to sell this albatross twice to SaskPower, but we didn't have a Conservative premier at that time to buy it. Tommy Douglas refused to buy it in '59 and '63.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — There were two other results, Mr. Speaker. At that time, because of the fiasco that the city fathers put the taxpayer in, there was a lot of civic political strife and it was characterized by anger, by bitterness, and by disrepute.

And there was a third lesson, a third result. It took until mid-1940 that the city of Prince Albert was allowed to build anything without permission — couldn't build anything. And as a result, the infrastructure that the citizens of Prince Albert now enjoy was not put into place until the '70s — until the '70s with the coming into place of the Blakeney government, Mr. Speaker.

There is a significant overall lesson on that, Mr. Speaker. And the lesson is if you don't control your debt, others will do it for you, Mr. Speaker. If you don't control your debt, others will do it for you.

Mr. Speaker, that is why this budget . . . when I said that there was bold and decisive action taken in it in order to secure our future and in order to provide financial freedom so that we can enjoy the programs and sustain the programs that we feel are needed.

That is why it is so important that the plan that is put in place is now followed through and that those people are not listened to and that the cabinet does not even begin to be moved by any of their scare tactics about some kind of a tax revolt, because the people of Saskatchewan want a plan that's going to get us out of the quagmire that those people put us into.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, one of the major thrusts of this government and of this budget is to revamp and to reorganize the entire health system. And I want to speak for a few moments on this.

We in the western world are now on what I would call the cusp of major changes in our way of thinking about health.

There are several reasons that have brought us to this position. I want to talk to you about some of the current and emerging thinking about staying healthy, and I want to relate how this budget implements this new wave in health — this new wave that we're calling wellness.

Saskatchewan people have a lot to be proud of when it comes to health care. In fact we often feel that we are world leaders. When Premiers Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd pioneered the introduction of medicare in 1962, they gave Saskatchewan people a gift that has been shared with other Canadians and others the world over. This gift of medicare has been enshrined into our federal laws so that future generations are protected from having to face personal bankruptcy or lack of treatment due to financial constraints.

Today we take all of this for granted. It seems as if medicare is a fact of life that always was and always should be. And what a shock it would be for any of us to take sick as citizens if we were living in a nation where there was no medicare. If we took ill abroad, Mr. Speaker, I think that the cost of paying for the doctoring and the institutionalizing that we have grown accustomed to, could cause as much shock to us individually as the affliction itself.

It's indeed the extent that we take medicare for granted that is a cause for concern. Because we, the consumers of health, have taken for granted that any and all expenses in the name of health or medicare would automatically be paid by the government. But what a shock it is to realize that the government's

income must come from us. And when \$760 million of our tax income has to go to pay for the interest on the debt created by the former Conservative government, there simply isn't enough left to pay for everything else.

Mr. Speaker, my government has made a commitment to health reform. This implies, as I mentioned earlier, reorganizing and revamping the entire system. We're taking our cherished medicare on a journey — a journey of renewal. The result will be a sustainable and more comprehensive system. It'll emphasize good health maintenance through prevention in addition to intervention. It'll include paying attention to mental and spiritual, emotional, as well as the physical aspects of health. We are calling this the wellness model. It recognizes the interconnectedness of the body with the mind and with the spirit.

And to reform our medicare system to include the wellness model, we need to change the way we have organized our delivery system to our regionally run system. We need to reduce the duplication. We need to reduce the competition for clients. We need to broaden the health options available to consumers and we need to speed that transaction from high-tech institutionalization to staying healthy and to healing in our communities and in our homes.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, provides a framework for these changes. Local boards are given the responsibility of delivering a full range of services necessary to maintain good health in our communities. Local boards with the responsibility of allocating funding will be closer to the care-giving professionals than a provincially based authority. Our government places that funding authority right next to where the action is, and local boards will allocate the funding according to community needs.

Let me emphasize that it is well established that our health needs are changing. This has been amply documented. Our government's responsibility is to adapt to this in the context of our financial and fiscal strait-jacket.

The basic objective of providing health care is changing from hiring somebody to heal us or to save us to us taking a greater responsibility for our own wellness. We're still going to need our doctors, but the emphasis will be changing. We will be depending more on our doctors to be your and my teachers and less to be your and my interveners.

Mr. Speaker, in order to understand where we're going in health, in wellness, picture this analogy if you would.

Picture a region which I will give the name of Freedom Place. Green fields, a lovely, beautiful lake with beaches, a stream flowing from the lake, a stream which gets faster and deeper, might have a couple of sharks in it, then some rapids, and then a waterfall, then a waterfall.

And these people who are settled in this beautiful

place called Freedom Place, are having a good life. But every once in a while somebody sitting on the bank notices that there's a person coming down the rapids and they're going to go over the waterfall. So somebody maybe by chance will go out there and save that person.

Well soon the people of this area decide that perhaps they should have some sentries set up because these accidents could happen on a frequent basis. So they set up sentries and soon they . . . and sitting on the bank they notice that there's another person coming down. And then sometimes there's two or three coming down in bunches; and sometimes three or four coming down, approaching the waterfalls, and they all need to be rescued.

And soon they see that they have to put more and more sentries just to keep the people from going over the waterfalls. Eventually the leader asks a question. He says, what's going on upstream? What is going on upstream?

Now think about this. What would you as a leader, what would any leader do in Freedom Place? I think that they would determine that there's a need for a change. I think that they would reallocate the resources. I think that they would go into prevention. They would try to find out what it is that's causing people to get lost in the rapids. They would help people assume responsibility for their own well-being and they would help them triumph.

Now that's exactly what we're doing in health, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're doing in this budget. We're sending people upstream.

Let me give you an example of how we're adjusting just one portion of our health budget to be fairer and to meet the needs of Saskatchewan people. And I'm going to talk very briefly about the changes to the drug plan. What are the purposes?

Mr. Speaker, I would love to be able to give everybody free everything if these things grew on trees. But facing reality, adjusting the budget so that we don't achieve bankruptcy in this province, we have to find and look for savings.

The changes to the drug plan bring us the savings of \$29 million. And we've done it in such a way as to emphasize sensitivity to those with low incomes, those families with low incomes, and also those with very high drug costs.

And I want to emphasize that in this budget there will be no extra costs — no extra costs — to social assistance recipients; to those people who are SAIL beneficiaries, Saskatchewan Aid for Independent Living beneficiaries; to palliative care patients there will be no extra costs. There will be no extra costs to special, high-cost drug users. And in addition to that, low income working people will have their benefits improved. Their cap on the amount of drugs that they pay will be reduced from \$190 semi-annually to \$100 semi-annually, and thereafter they will pay 35 per

cent of the prescription cost.

This new plan is also income sensitive. It is income sensitive to all those people with a family income of \$50,000 or less, and it's calculated on the basis of a total income of a family, subtract \$3,500 for any independent child. And it works out something like this: that those families with a family income of \$20,000 or less will pay a maximum for drugs of \$340. And those families with an income of \$30,000 will pay a maximum amount for their drugs, of \$510. And those people with a family income of \$40,000 will pay an increased maximum, a greater maximum up to \$680 maximum for any six-month period. Mr. Speaker, that's a progressive, that's a progressive system. And I want to state . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1230)

Mr. Kowalsky: — And I want to state when you take everything into consideration, that that is the fairest and the best option, because it is sensitive first of all to our financial strait-jacket; it is sensitive to low incomes; it is sensitive to high cost drugs. And yet at the same time, in addition to this increased cost, this program is still better than most other people in Canada have.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that with this budget, this bold, decisive plan that we've put forward of getting the provincial debt under control, there is reason for optimism. Our provincial economy, while not booming, is on a steady increasing, improving pace. Because while these people tried to bankrupt the province, the people of Saskatchewan were a little smarter, and as a whole our general economy is quite solid.

We were told just this week, Mr. Speaker, by an official from the head office of the Bank of Montreal that Saskatchewan's agriculture and wood and potash and uranium prospects are good. They won't boom, but they should not go down and they should show a steady decline. That was his prediction. We know that the people . . . the number of jobs in Saskatchewan has been increasing slightly and he projected they will continue to increase slightly, at a slow rate.

We know that our inflation rate is low. We know that our unemployment rate is amongst the best in the country. We know that the interest rates — which really dictate a lot of the construction in the province — are now the lowest in 35 years. And more important is we know that the attitude of the people of Saskatchewan is such that they want to cooperate, they want to work with us. They want leadership because they want financial freedom.

We have a plan, Mr. Speaker. Our plan is to balance the budget in four years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Our plan is to strengthen the

economy by creating jobs in small business. Not megaprojects, but small business.

As an incentive to do this, I want to outline, Mr. Speaker, that one of the major, one of the major benefits of this particular budget is the tax reduction to small business and cooperatives. The tax charged on the corporations, small business corporations, in 1991, when these guys were still in power, was 10 per cent. In '92 we reduced that to 9.5 per cent. This next year it goes down to 9 per cent, followed by eight and a half per cent the year after, and by 1995, down from eight and a half per cent to 8 per cent. Mr. Speaker, people in small business will look at this and they will say, I've got confidence in Saskatchewan and I've got confidence in the NDP government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — We will not be subsidizing megaprojects from tax dollars as those people have done. We welcome big companies and we welcome small companies but we say to them, follow the rules of business. And the purpose of business is to make a profit, not to take tax dollars to subsidize it. Small business, Mr. Speaker, has a good record and we feel that through these incentives we will see expansion of new industry, we will see expansion of value added, we will see employment opportunities.

Now, Mr. Speaker, over two-thirds of the new jobs in Saskatchewan over the last 10 years were made by small business. Compare that to the foofraw that we heard about Saskferco, all the money we put into it. For how many jobs, Mr. Speaker? About a hundred jobs, about a hundred jobs. Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing.

Now what is happening with the Tories? What are the Tories doing? What are we hearing from the Tories? What I can see is they're over there some place; they're some place over to the far right, over there with Preston Manning trying to recruit.

And how are they doing it? Well they're doing it in a couple of ways. They're doing it in a couple of ways, Mr. Speaker. They're first of all trying to align all politicians with what they and their leaders over the last 10 years — people like Maggie Thatcher and Major in Britain, and Reagan and Bush in the States, and Preston Manning and Mulroney here — doing exactly what they . . . and following them. They're trying to paint a picture where all politicians are like that. And they're thinking hey, politicians are in disrepute. And somehow they're trying to make this link, not realizing that the people that are in disrepute are those that caused the problems over the last 10 years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say what else. There's a couple of other things that we have identified that the Tories are doing, which way they think we should be heading.

And I went through *Hansard* and read out the March 4 amendment that they made to the throne speech. In this amendment by the member from Kindersley — and I'd be very pleased to send it to anybody who'd want it — what they did is they outlined their policy. They said that there was some policies here that they outlined. And there's about 15 or 20 items that they have targeted here, and each one of these identifies something that this government has done, some positive move that this government has made in order to achieve the savings that is going to set up the plan for our economic renewal and our financial freedom.

And I'm going to have this costed out. And the time will come when I will read out these costs to those members. But I'm taking a good guess right now, Mr. Speaker, that if I'm going to cost this out, that what it would do, that the cost of all of these items that they mentioned here would more than double the deficit that we're into right now, more than double.

So, have they changed? Have they learned? Where are they? They are going into the same dustbin that Bush went into and that Thatcher went into and that Reagan went into and that Mulroney has gone into — same one. Mr. Speaker, we know. We know what the Tories are trying to do. They're way over there on the right some place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's one other question. I asked myself, well where are the Liberals? Because when I look down the centre and down the middle, I see the New Democratic Party. When I swing over and look away off to the right, I see the rump of the Tories.

And then I look back and forth across the political spectrum and I look for Liberals and I say, where are the Liberals? And I say it in English: where are the Liberals? Nobody responds. So I say it in French: où est le Liberal? Nobody responds. And I got some help with this one. You can say in German: wo sind die Liberals? And nobody answers. And I say it in Ukrainian: dezh tee Liberaleh? Well, we can't see them on the political landscape because they have no positions — absolutely no positions. They are nowhere on policy.

What we find though, is there's a couple of curious statements. There is a couple of things we can identify them for. The Leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party, when she talks about expenses for the legislature and secretarial help, wants more. She wants us to cut the deficit. She wants us to sell SaskTel. She wants us to sell SaskEnergy. But she wants, for herself, she wants more.

And then there's another thing. And then there's another thing. She also says along with her Liberal friends: those New Democrats, they're building up a pot of money some place. Well you know, I sure hope she shows me where it is. I sure would like to see it, because there's a lot of things we could build with that money.

Well, Mr. Speaker, and the third thing is that while they're doing these things, while she says, I want

more, and they are setting up a pot of money — unable to substantiate it, never be able to prove anything like that — she's saying, but I don't want to be a politician. Well I'll tell you something, we don't want her to be a politician either.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, the plan to balance the budget is here. This budget is compassionate. This budget focuses on job creation through small business. This budget rationalizes and improves the services of Saskatchewan.

And I want to congratulate the Premier and the Minister of Finance and the entire cabinet for this bold, decisive action which they are presenting before us on this day and this week.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to support this budget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bradley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed with great honour that I stand in my place as the representative for the Bengough-Milestone constituency, in support of this budget — a budget, although difficult, that will lead us on to the journey of renewal; a budget that will give us financial freedom; a budget, Mr. Speaker, that secures our future, a future that the residents of this great province deserve, a future that our children and our grandchildren deserve.

I congratulate the Minister of Finance for her leadership and strength in preparing this budget. I also want to congratulate all the members of our caucus for their hard work, determination, courage, and compassion in helping to prepare and in supporting this budget.

It cannot be denied that this is a difficult budget. It's possibly one of the toughest budgets ever brought down in the history of Saskatchewan. It's a budget that each member of our caucus struggled with and at times we found heart-wrenching in making difficult choices. But we all had a say, and we all brought our constituents' concerns to this budget. But through this struggle, we are presenting to Saskatchewan a budget based on reality, fairness, community, cooperation, and compassion.

I agree completely with the Minister of Finance when she said Saskatchewan was founded by pioneers who had the vision and the courage to make sacrifices to secure a better future for themselves and their children.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bradley: — Now we must draw on that decision by making difficult choices today to secure a brighter tomorrow. Sacrifice is not easy but it is necessary. When we know our sacrifice is for a just cause, I believe the people of Saskatchewan are prepared to accept it.

I have faith in the people of this province, that they will support this budget too. Not because they want to pay higher taxes and not because they want less programs, but because they want a plan to rebuild this province to secure their future. Without such a plan, we jeopardize all that we do have.

(1245)

Mr. Speaker, when I say this budget is based on reality, it is. And the reality of the financial situation in this province is serious, but not insurmountable. Some would say that this is the doom and gloom message. I argue that this is reality. And when we know what reality is, we can face it, challenge it, and move on.

I will never forget, Mr. Speaker, driving down the highway after the election of 1982 and feeling like a death had happened, and saying to myself, I hope that this will not be as bad as I think it will be. I hope this will not affect my children's future in this province. But the Conservative reign of terror over the province from 1982 to 1991 was devastating and it did affect my children. And in fact it affected every man, woman, and child in this province.

In only 10 years we saw our province's debt increase from 3.8 billion to 14.7 billion, a debt that increased as the assets of the province were sold off or possibly more accurately, given away, a debt that is costing us \$847.5 million of interest this year.

The interest on this debt is our third-highest expenditure, right after health and education in our budget, and if left unchecked, would soon surpass what we spend on education. An interest debt that we pay each and every day of over \$2 million — \$2 million being sent out of our province to the banks and bond agencies in New York, London, Zürich.

If we could only have that money spent that we're spending on interest being spent in Saskatchewan, can you imagine what we could do in health, in education, in economic development, in agriculture, and social programs. If we didn't have interest payments, our last budget would have had a surplus. We actually took in enough revenue to cover our programs and government spending if we didn't have to pay the interest on the debt.

But the reality, Mr. Speaker, is that each year, as we continue to run deficit budgets, more money will go to serving the debt rather than serving the people of this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know what bothers me the most about this incredible situation is that the opposition members across the way take no responsibility for it — members who irresponsibly drove this province into bankruptcy with no plan other than patronage and power.

When a former PC (Progressive Conservative) member brags that they would make this province ungovernable, I wonder what kind of conscience a

person has who has been entrusted with the public office and who so blatantly could feel good about destroying a province. No wonder people become cynical of politicians.

But I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that unconscionable people form unconscionable governments that will do whatever to stay in power with no regards to what's in the best interest of this province.

As Bob Hughes wrote in the *Leader-Post* just earlier this week on March 15: "Payment for the good times is now due." He tells about a young accountant lamenting over the way of the changing world. He talks about the government which helped him out, and I quote:

"So, you were able to get a nice house at an affordable price because of the provincial government, eh?"

"Oh yeah, it was funny. The house we bought was bigger and better than anything our parents had. I remember me and my mom and dad and four brothers grew up in a bungalow that had three bedrooms, was just over 1,000 square feet, and had one bathroom."

"How big was the house you bought?"

"Well, let's see, it was about 2,000 square feet, had three bathrooms, rooms all over the place, a big yard. There was lots of space for just the two of us."

"Sounds like you were in heaven."

"Not really. I mean, we didn't have a fence. We didn't have a swimming pool. We didn't even have a hot tub, if you can believe it."

"No! You've got to be kidding."

"No, it's the truth. But thank goodness for the government. The government really cared for us. They told us that if we wanted to put up a fence, go right ahead and put up that fence, and they would pay for half of it. Or a deck, if we needed one, and everybody should have a deck. And so we did. And if that wasn't good enough, if we wanted to finish the basement so we would have even more room, or if we felt we really needed a hot tub, or a whirlpool in the bedroom, then there were ways the government would help us get those, too."

"How was that?"

"Well, governments had to be innovative to stay in power. So they came up with this neat idea that we could borrow up to \$10,000 at interest rates so low at the time you were crazy not to borrow it, and you could pay it back over a long period of time. Heck, we had a swimming pool put in. Didn't bother us while they were doing the job, either . . . we (were off

in) Phoenix for a few weeks while they were digging up the back yard."

"So, when you got back everything was done?"

"Oh, yeah, it was great. (Because) that's what governments were for. And we understood that because we kept voting for them. It's too bad they ran out of money because ordinary folk, such as myself, were kinda getting used to them picking up the tab for some of the things we all deserve to have just because we live in this great country."

"So, what's your big problem?"

"Well, it sounds like the government is about to do something drastic."

"What's that?"

"Sounds like they're going to make us pay for the good times."

"You're kidding? You don't mean, they expect you to . . . to pay your own way."

"I think I'm going to faint."

Well that article, after reading it, it made me stop to think. And, Mr. Speaker, I am not blaming the individuals for using the government's money for those programs. They were offered to them and they were enticed by them.

But to me this was not reality. This was part of Tory wonderland — or should I say, blunderland? — as they led us into never-never land.

But I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that the electorate of this province will never be led into never-never land again. My constituents want to know what reality is and to move on to facing the challenges ahead. And I am confident, Mr. Speaker, with this budget we are facing reality, and we have set out a long-term plan to secure the future of this province; a plan that creates jobs and strengthens our economy; a plan that balances within four years; a plan that rationalizes and improves the delivery of services; a plan that is committed to compassion. It is a plan of hope and partnership with our communities. I have faith in the ability of Saskatchewan people.

I now would like to use a local example of how Saskatchewan people can work together to accomplish great things. I'd like to take this chance to mention a group of very talented people in my constituency, the Milestone Prairie Players.

They're a group of local, amateur people who have worked hard to put on dinner theatres in our community. The whole community participates in this annual event, which puts on a fabulous meal and great entertainment.

The group, I am proud to say, has won several awards

in the Saskatchewan Drama Festival over the past few years. They have now been asked to represent Canada at an international drama festival in Ireland. Saskatchewan people can do it, and I congratulate the Prairie Players on their endeavours.

But I also want to congratulate the former premier, former leader of the opposition, former professor, former supporter of Saskatchewan people for taking a position on the board of a company in direct competition with his former pet project, Saferco. I am sure he will give this out-of-province company his best, just as he did to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps my implied comparison between the Milestone Prairie Players of Saskatchewan and the board member of Cominco needs further explanation.

The difference between the two is the difference in miniature between the message of hope presented by the government in the two speeches opening this session and the legacy of dismal failure left by the previous government, left by the board member.

The Milestone Prairie Players had a dream. They pooled their talents to move towards that dream. They worked together, setting their goals high by keeping them realistic. And they succeeded beyond their expectations — the Saskatchewan way.

On the other hand, the former premier and his government talked big, planned not at all, trusted not in themselves but in anyone so long as he was from elsewhere, and succeeded in bringing this province not to its knees but flat on its face.

Mr. Speaker, our government is nurtured by the spirit that inspired the Prairie Players. And I'm proud to support Saskatchewan's return to sanity, responsibility, and vision.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bradley: — Between last year's session and this session I held over 17 public meetings in my constituency. These meetings were an opportunity for me to tell my constituents about government programs and initiatives, but possibly more importantly for me to hear their concerns.

In my constituency farming and small business are an integral part of the economy. My constituents raised concerns about agriculture, jobs, and services. They have been facing difficult times. But I'm proud to say I represent people who are hard working, creative, adaptable, and resilient — people who want to cooperate and work with us to meet the challenges head on.

To tackle the budget they realize there are no easy answers. We could ignore the situation, which would only jeopardize all our programs with massive devastation. We can cut back on expenditures or raise revenue or stimulate the economy. No one answer will work. But through a combination of cuts to

government expenditures, some raises in revenue, and by stimulating the economy, we can begin to live within our means. And, Mr. Speaker, our budget has addressed all these areas and addressed it with compassion.

The amazing thing about this budget and its four-year plan to eliminate the deficit is that it's so simple, so logical, and so correct. Its theme is securing our future and it forecasts a secure future by returning us to common sense. It is a common-sense budget that outlines how we will live within our means. It does not say we should; it says we will spend what we take in with a little set aside for a rainy day. A lot of very tough, very complex, very heart-wrenching decisions had to be made along the way. But what this budget is astonishing in is its simplicity.

I was glad the Minister of Finance mentioned her children yesterday. I have children, as do most of us in this Assembly. I don't expect to leave mine with a fortune, but I don't expect to leave them with a millstone. I want to be remembered for what I did for my children, not for what I did to them. As the member from Redberry said, I want them to make their own mistakes, not be saddled with mine.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture of course plays a central role in my constituency, as it does in Saskatchewan's economy. Some may be heard to say that this budget doesn't have a vision, doesn't have a vision for agriculture in this province. I beg to differ, Mr. Speaker. We do have a vision. We have a long-term vision and a long-term commitment to achieve that vision.

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

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, may I have leave of the Assembly to introduce some guests?

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the member from Saskatoon Greystone, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly, 23 students in grade 7 and 8 from the Cardinal Leger School in Saskatoon. They are here visiting the Assembly today, along with their teacher or chaperons, I'm not sure which. But I would like the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to welcome our guests from Saskatoon today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

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

Ms. Bradley: — As I was saying, we do have a vision for agriculture in this province. We do have a vision. We have a long-term vision and a long-term commitment to achieve that vision, something the opposition members wouldn't understand. Our farmers in this province would have been better off if the former leader of the Tories had left agriculture programs alone.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bradley: — We saw programs signed into that continued to allow the federal government to reduce its percentage of support while the provincial government gained a larger percentage of carrying the costs of support programs. Saskatchewan sits in the most vulnerable situation in Canada because of this.

With 40 per cent of the agriculture base in Canada and less than 4 per cent of the tax base, how can Saskatchewan be expected to support the very industry its economy is based on when times are difficult? It's exactly what we've been saying over and over again. It's like asking the person who is bleeding to death to give themselves a blood transfusion.

Mr. Speaker, from 1988 on, the federal government offloaded second line of defence support programs . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. It now being 1 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Monday.

The Assembly adjourned at 1 p.m.