

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 11(7) they are hereby read and received.

Of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to urge a decision regarding the decertification of the Moose Jaw Woolco store.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Monday next ask the government the following question:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's request to communities, agencies and other organizations to submit proposals for co-generation projects: has a decision been reached on any projects, and if not, what is the reason for the delay and when will the decision be reached?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Carlson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and to the rest of the members of the Assembly through you, a constituent of mine, Cecile Halyk, who is watching the proceedings here today, and her uncle, Lloyd Halyk, who is visiting the province of Saskatchewan from Toronto. Lloyd works for CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) television in Toronto. He is back in the province, albeit not for a great occasion — it was a funeral that he was back for of a brother of his, and he's just commuting back to Toronto today. So I'd like the rest of the members of the Assembly to welcome Cecile and Lloyd here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to introduce a guest, and to you and through you to all members of the legislature. In the Speaker's gallery is Brian Hartsook, the executive assistant to the director of education, Saskatoon Public School Board. I want to welcome Dr. Hartsook to the legislature this morning. We'll see whether or not there are any questions on education, but I'm sure that he will find the proceedings most enjoyable.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce through you to the legislature a group of grade 7 students just entering the Speaker's gallery. They're from St. Gerard School in my riding, and they're accompanied by their teachers, Ms. Aline Korol, Roseanne Carter, and also their chaperons, Ms. Mantyka, Ms. Gamdzalles, Mr. Ross, Mr. Lanman, Mr. Gusikowski. So welcome to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Availability of Taxol

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health. Mr. Minister, Gloria Hartsook was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1981. Following a mastectomy and follow-up chemotherapy, Gloria was fortunate to enjoy eight years of remission. However, in January of this year Gloria was informed that she had cancer of the liver. Gloria's doctor informed the Hartsooks that the one drug that they could use with a great deal of confidence was Taxol. The problem, Madam Minister, is that Taxol has been approved for breast cancer patients but there is no fee schedule as of yet through the drug plan.

Madam Minister, can you explain to me why Taxol does not have a fee schedule?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for the question and for raising this issue. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that there is a committee in existence which reviews the various pharmaceutical and drug products. That committee, if my understanding is correct, has not made a ruling on Taxol.

I appreciate the spirit in which the member is bringing the questions on this issue on behalf of this individual this morning, Mr. Speaker. As we proceed through the questions, I sense that there will be a need for me to discover more of the detail and perhaps respond in detail at some further time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, our office was informed by the Health department that the executive director of the Saskatchewan Cancer Foundation could approve Taxol immediately, that exceptions could be made. When Mr. Hartsook contacted the executive director to request such an exemption, the director said that he would check with the cancer clinics in Regina and Saskatoon and if there were 50 cancer patients that needed Taxol, it would probably be covered, but if there were 150, they could not be covered because of the cost.

Mr. Minister, why would 50 people be covered for such an important drug and not 150 people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Again, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the way in which the member is raising this issue in

the House today. On this and I think some other questions I will simply have to take notice.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, as a result of no fee schedule for Taxol, the Hartsooks will have to pay \$2,000 every three weeks for the next six to eight months if they hope to get Gloria's cancer back into remission, or about 24 to \$36,000.

Mr. Hartsook said he isn't worried about his family because they are prepared to delete their savings and cash in their RRSPs (registered retirement savings plan) to cover the costs, but he is concerned about the many other cancer patients they know that are faced with these costs.

Mr. Minister, I am posing a question then directly from Brian Hartsook's letter to the government almost a month ago, which he received no response: I respectfully request that you intervene with the staff of the department to have the fee schedule established for Taxol immediately. Cancer patients across this province are relying on your help.

Mr. Minister, will you grant this request?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, what I will guarantee to the member and to our guests is that immediately following question period I will be in contact with officials from the Department of Health and we will pursue this immediately and get what information that I lack here.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, Brian Hartsook was also told by the executive director of the cancer foundation that he would have to wait until the pharmacy and therapeutic committee meets to discuss Taxol. The problem, Mr. Minister, is that the committee only meets a couple of times a year and the Hartsooks don't have that sort of time.

Mr. Minister, would you please agree today to meet with the Hartsooks who are here today, since they have come all this way from Saskatoon, and listen to their concerns and act as quickly as possible to help this family — as quickly as possible — and the other families in the province that are affected by this problem?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, again I commit to the member and to members of the House and to our guests that immediately after question period I will be in touch with officials in the department and I would be more than pleased to meet with our guests.

Studies of Casino Gambling

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for the Gaming Commission. Mr. Minister, how many studies in total have been commissioned by your government to study casino gaming and will you name and table all of those studies in this Assembly?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the

member's question, I would want to say that over the months that I have been the minister responsible for the Liquor and Gaming Authority, we have done a number of studies. We have studied information from other jurisdictions, from Manitoba, Ontario, from Quebec, from the Maritimes. We have looked at information that has come to us from some of the American states in areas where in fact they have been involved in gaming.

We have had consultants' reports done on a number of locations dealing with the expansion of casinos, dealing with video lottery terminals. We have done internal studies in terms of the impact on bingos as we've introduced the video lottery terminal program. We've been consulting with law enforcement agencies throughout North America and throughout Europe.

I want to say to the member that the Liquor and Gaming Authority has spent an enormous amount of time studying this issue. As you and I both know, it is a very delicate issue, the expansion of gaming. We have people who support the expansion of casinos, who support the video lottery terminal program, and we have people who are opposed.

We have spent endless meetings with first nations people, with Metis groups, with exhibition associations, with chambers of commerce, with church groups, with community groups, with individuals as well. It's a process that has been ongoing, not only since I've been the minister, but previous ministers before me. And it is a process that we plan to . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. The next question.

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, my question was, how many studies in total has your government commissioned, in other words, have they paid for, to study casino gaming, and will you name and table all of those studies in this Assembly?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, in order to answer to the member's question, I guess I must revert to some of the inquiries that were made by the opposition with respect to who has done studies, when the studies have been done, how much the cost of these studies have been.

I would want to say that we think that we have been very diligent in terms of the information gathering and learning what we can about this industry, not only the effects on our province, but the effects that have happened in other provinces. And it is an area that we have been prudent with respect to the amount of money we've been spending. Quite clearly, we would want to ensure that money we spent would return to us the appropriate and proper information. So quite clearly we have been careful in terms of the amount of

dollars.

I would like to say to the member opposite that I don't have with me the details in every instance in terms of where we've been spending these monies. I would want to say to the member from Greystone that she's been part of this Legislative Assembly for quite some time now and I'm sure understands the process and detailed questions are more appropriately asked in estimates.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Next question.

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Minister, I still am most interested in knowing the numbers of the studies and the specific studies that have been paid for by the people of Saskatchewan regarding gaming in this province. And we would very much appreciate you tabling that information.

On Wednesday last, you indicated that the amount of money spent on bingos went from \$4 million to more than \$100 million a year. That's over a \$100 per year for every man, every woman, and every child in the province of Saskatchewan. You're now proposing two large casinos, complete with hundreds of slot machines, for Regina and Saskatoon. What studies have been done to assess how much new money will have to be bet in these casinos in order for all the partners involved to get the profits they expect?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, in order to answer the member's questions I would have to respond that yes, in fact we have done a number of studies and we think it's a prudent approach to the expansion of gaming. We know that this hasn't been the case in the past.

As the member from Greystone has indicated, the number of dollars that people are spending on bingos in Saskatchewan has increased dramatically in the last 10, 11, 12 years and I would want to say that it's my belief that there wasn't enough information gathered and that there wasn't enough time spent putting together information with respect to the impact on charities and how they function with respect to the families that spend their money and the people who spend their money on bingos.

And I want to say that I commit to her that we will continue the process that we've been involved in, that of consultation and information gathering. I would want to say to her that we have gathered together the best information we can with respect to how many dollars we might expect to come through an expanded casino operation.

I think she will understand that we can only do an educated guess because there's nothing in black and white. It's a new industry; it's not been done before. In terms of the expansion, we know how much is spent on table games, but how much may be spent . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Next question.

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the partnership of exhibition boards, FSIN (Federation of

Saskatchewan Indian Nations), and government treasury have already discussed how much will be left after proposed American investors get their share.

Our investigators indicate that the casino partnership expects to share in close to \$50 million in profits. That will likely mean \$40 million to promise for a similar investor, \$12 million to FSIN, and the remaining monies split between exhibition boards and the Metis association.

That would mean betting increases up to \$350 million per year or, Mr. Minister, an additional \$350 per man, per woman, and per child in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, when will you table the anticipated revenue projections for the proposed casino operations, so that local groups, local people, can get a better picture of how many gambling dollars these casinos are going to take out of revenue they count on to run their community activities?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting, the number that the member from Greystone puts forth. Quite clearly she must have spent some time and some money to put forth the numbers that she raises, unless she pulled them out of a hat. And I'm just not sure where they may have come from.

But let me say this, Mr. Speaker. We have embarked upon a process whereby we intend to involve exhibition associations and first nations and the Metis groups in this province in terms of revenue sharing. We intend to, with the dollars in profits that come from these, create some jobs for some people who haven't had employment opportunities in the past and who we hope to employ in this expanded form of gaming that quite clearly, by the number of dollars that are spent on gaming, the people of Saskatchewan demand.

We know that there are thousands of dollars leaving this province every week and they're being spent in other jurisdictions. We want to stem that flow. We want Saskatchewan dollars to remain in Saskatchewan. We know that there are employment opportunities for aboriginal people in Saskatchewan and we intend to pursue those opportunities, working with the aboriginal community in Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the number of dollars that are going to be spent in casinos, we can only speculate at this time and based . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Next question.

Rural Health Care

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my series of questions is to the Health minister.

Madam Minister, cases brought forward in the past few days have proven that your health care reforms are placing a lot of stress on rural families, which indicates, Madam Minister, that maybe a warning to you was that you were starting at the wrong end.

Not only are families dealing with the concern of travelling great distances to receive emergency medical care. They're also having to deal with sick family members being relocated all over rural Saskatchewan. As you are aware, Madam Minister, that because of your cut-backs to rural health care facilities, respite patients — mostly seniors — now have a six-week limit that they can spend in a facility. Madam Minister, are you aware of this?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With respect to emergency service the member opposite knows full well that the facilities that were converted continue to provide emergency services, and so for him to suggest that people are travelling much further because of the conversions is inaccurate, because it isn't necessary. The emergency services are still available in those communities and he full well knows that.

With respect to patients being moved, there have been a number of long-term care patients being moved and we have known about that; it was necessary in order for us to achieve the conversions. And in places where there was not an opportunity to relocate an in-patient, long-term care patient, the facility is continuing to be funded to accommodate that.

With respect to respite patients, the district boards are doing needs assessment to determine what the needs are in districts. That information will be in very shortly. And if they have determined that respite care should be six weeks, or respite care should be two months or whatever, that is the kind of service that will be provided by the district boards. That type of analysis is taking place right now, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — Well, Madam Minister, I would like to give you an example of what's happened. One respite patient at Davidson Union Hospital, Kay Schultz, was moved after six weeks from Davidson Union to Kyle for six weeks and is now in Outlook. Nine patients have been relocated from Davidson hospital in the last month and one-half. And, Madam Minister, this is not exclusive to the Davidson hospital. Respite patients are being swapped from facility to facility all over rural Saskatchewan.

Madam Minister, what sense does it make to uproot respite patients from their families and their communities just to satisfy a six-week respite care limit that you have placed on all rural health facilities? Madam Minister, what sense does that make?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — As I indicated in my earlier response, that if there is a need for longer respite care in a district, this should be brought to the attention of the district board. There is

flexibility based around what the needs are, what the real needs are with respect to what is being done in districts.

Now there is some misunderstanding out there as to what for example can be done and what can't be done. And in a situation like that, where the member opposite thinks that the rules that are being applied by the facility are not appropriate, I would suggest that he contacts the district board and inquires as to whether or not they can engender some flexibility into their rules or what they are doing with respect to needs assessment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — Well, Madam Minister, we all know that there's a great cost involved in transporting patients from one health facility to another. How much money is being saved when these patients are being transported all over rural Saskatchewan? Would you tell us that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, what the members opposite are failing to recognize is the fact that the district boards have been up and running since the end of August, but have not in effect really taken over until their amalgamation agreements were all concluded. They are in a transition phase, and they are doing needs assessment, and they are looking at all of these particular issues right now. And this will all be sorted out over the next few months, as I indicated in my earlier answer.

If you have concerns, bring it to the attention of the people in your district who are doing these needs assessment and looking to these issues at this point, so that we . . .

The Speaker: — Next question.

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, it's strange that you wouldn't understand what we're trying to tell you. We're trying to tell you that you are placing a hardship, not only on the seniors — and in most cases this is seniors — but on their families. Your associate deputy ministers say you're going to make further cuts to acute care and long-term beds in rural Saskatchewan.

Madam Minister, how can you justify even considering this, being that the patients are already being moved all over rural Saskatchewan? Where is your compassion? Where's your understanding?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — And, Mr. Speaker, with respect to further reductions, the members opposite know full well that there are further reductions in acute care

coming in this budget. They were announced in the last budget. And they will be forthcoming and they'll affect Saskatchewan people across the province. This is old news; they know that.

I want to say something about what our government has done. From the very first month that it took power, it started to put together a plan with respect to health reform. When we formed government, we started immediately putting together a plan to deal with health reform, anticipating the need for . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I don't think the minister's answer has anything to do with the question that was asked.

Faulty Furnaces

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I took notice of a question yesterday from the hon. member from Regina North West regarding Flame-Master furnaces, and I want to report to the House today that the Canadian Gas Association has in fact issued a notice of concern about Flame-Master furnaces. And there are some units that were installed over the past 10 years, more specifically 1986 and '87, which are prone to premature heat exchanger failure.

Mr. Speaker, the gas inspection division performs approximately 70,000 gas inspections per year, and the number of defective heat exchangers found of various brands of furnaces is fairly consistent between some 14 and 1,800 per year. Also in connection with the question, I'd want to say that only one death has occurred from a heat exchanger on record and that was in 1984 — a very unfortunate incident — so it is a dangerous situation.

I would also caution people to have their class A-type chimneys inspected, because there have been deaths because of carbon monoxide poisoning as well. SaskPower gas inspection division makes inspections and issues warnings on a regular basis, and I'd suggest anyone who does have a older furnace, a Flame-Master furnace or a class A chimney, in fact have them inspected.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Rural Health Care

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, maybe you did start at the wrong end of your wellness program. You didn't look to see what you were going to do to these seniors. Madam Minister, this is very hard on seniors. This six-week rule in rural health facilities, Madam Speaker, is hard on seniors. And you give them no choice. You give the facilities no choice. It's getting so hard to keep track of respite patients, Madam Speaker, that seniors are starting to put information into the paper, to inform their friends and family where they are probably going to be.

And I have an example of that right here, Madam Speaker. A senior from Davidson, Rudy Schmiedge, was moved from the Davidson Union Hospital after his six weeks was up. He went to Lucky Lake, Madam Minister, and is presently in Kyle.

The January 10 issue of the *Davidson Leader* reads, and I quote: Rudy Schmiedge is presently living in Lucky Lake

Health Care Centre. Rudy sends his greetings, and if you have a spare day, he would enjoy a visit from you and his relatives.

Madam Minister, would you like to do this to your mom or your dad?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the member's concerns, I want to once again reiterate that respite care is not intended to be long-term care; it's only intended to be temporary care to give family care-givers a break. That's what respite care is for. It's not intended to be long-term care.

Now if there are some problems in the system with respect to people being moved, I suggest you bring this to the attention of your district board, because as they go through this transitional period, these kind of problems are being sorted out.

And I'm proud to say that this government has a plan in place to do needs assessment and to minimize the impact of acute care reductions that you have heretofore referred to, unlike some other jurisdictions such as our neighbouring province, Alberta, that is cutting their health care budget by huge amounts without a plan in place to deal with these reductions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Curtailed of Throne Speech Debate

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Government House Leader. And I say to Mr. Minister that the current throne speech that we are engaged in is no longer serving a useful purpose, because this throne speech is so lacking in substance, so vague by all accounts that we hear from everyone, that it has degenerated to nothing more than an opportunity for MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) to score political points, while the real issues, Mr. Minister, of the province are being neglected — the issues of jobs, the issue of government reform, the issues of taxation.

Mr. Minister, every party has had an opportunity to express itself. The official opposition leader has spoken, the third party leader has spoken, the Premier has spoken through the form of the throne speech itself. So last night, Mr. Minister, the official opposition moved to move directly to the throne speech itself.

Mr. Minister, we are asking you now to use the majority that you folks have in power to move directly to the business at hand that is so dire in need of discussion.

Mr. Minister, will you do that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the idea of using closure on the throne speech is a new idea, one that the members of the opposition may want to bring to the Rules Committee, Mr. Speaker.

I understand that there will be a Rules Committee sometime in the near future. And if the member opposite wants the government to have more power to use closure to end debates, that's an interesting proposal, but it's one that we haven't considered before.

The idea that as soon as the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party give their speeches, you then end a debate, is an interesting proposal. None of your other members have spoken yet. I understand the House Leader has spoken and the Leader of the Official Opposition and no one else — nothing to say.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Question period has officially ended.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 3 — An Act to Create, Encourage and Facilitate Business Opportunities in Saskatchewan through the Establishment of the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — It's with pleasure that I move first reading of a Bill to create and encourage the facility of business opportunities in Saskatchewan through the establishment of the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation. I so move.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it would relate to questions 19 to 21, I request that they be converted to motions for returns (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motions for return debate.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to concur

with our House Leader that I'm delighted that we didn't move to closure and that I indeed have an opportunity to continue my speech as it relates to the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, last evening I was reviewing an issue of some importance that has received a great deal of attention and, in fact, a great deal of misinformation in recent weeks. Of course, I'm talking about ministerial assistants' pay and just to summarize what I was saying last night, I stated the pay schedule and the regulations that were available to this government on election in October 1991 were a shambles — chaos — much like government accounts and virtually everything else that we inherited, and that was simply the hand we were dealt with and what we had to deal with.

I pointed out that the Premier, upon being sworn in and taking office named, appointed his cabinet. His cabinet was sworn in and they were expected to get their offices up and running very, very quickly. We demanded that.

I pointed out that there was no shortage of crises to be dealt with by the Premier and by the ministers, and I know that the Premier and the ministers and indeed the entire government caucus have done their very best to deal with those crises in priority from what seems to be the most urgent and important on down. Somewhere in the mix classifications and pay rates, regulations for ministerial assistants, was addressed, but I'm sure that you and the good people of Saskatchewan would appreciate that was not the number one priority to a government; that indeed there was some question that we could meet payroll when we took office — and I'm not talking just payroll for cabinet or ministerial assistants or back-benchers, I'm talking about the total government payroll. There were some priorities that we dealt with.

I pointed out last evening that reclassifications of pay are done throughout not only government — certainly the Public Service Commission deals with many hundreds of reclassification requests on an annual basis — but also in the eight years I was in the human resources division as a safety officer with Saskatchewan Wheat Pool there was a constant flow of requests for reclassifications.

Reclassifications happen for any number of reasons, not the least of which is the person is hired, does the job to the best of their ability, and in fact sometimes become very, very good at the job and can clearly handle additional duties. And of course, they take on the additional responsibilities and additional duties and from time to time you would reclassify to acknowledge that extra work and the additional duties that those people are doing rather than posting a job and having them bid for, in effect, the job that they're already doing.

I pointed out that all MLAs are classified according to a pay scale, and according to our regulations and the

agreements with all parties, reclassification happens when extra duties are performed. Certainly as I pointed out — and I hope the Premier is listening very carefully to this — if I were appointed to cabinet, I would receive a pay raise. I say this very much tongue in cheek. But I'm serious about the pay raise. There's extra duties for cabinet ministers and cabinet ministers receive extra pay. Leaders of all parties receive extra pay for the extra duties that they do according to the classification system that has been long-standing.

I find it somewhat interesting, and I pointed out last night that the Leader of the Third Party, the Leader of the Liberal Party, when she received one additional member making it two Liberal MLAs, that the Leader of the Liberal Party received in fact a pay reclassification. That reclassification resulted in additional \$17,389 raise for the leader, a 37 per cent increase in her pay, \$17,389 increase in pay.

It also resulted interestingly in an additional, for the Liberal Party, \$42,312 for sessional staff, an additional \$70,262 for research, and an additional \$59,902 for office expenses according to the classification system.

And this, it's interesting, this classification system seems perfectly okay at this opportune moment for the Leader of the Third Party. It's just fine. Oh, I can receive a 37 per cent increase. I can receive an additional \$17,000-and-change, and the extra money for office and research and staff. This is fine because it affects me, says the Leader of the Third Party.

But I had to question and I have to question the double standard that this poses with working people. It seems to me the new politics should not be about double standards, Mr. Speaker. It seems to me the new politics should be about discussing with honesty and integrity — straight up — the facts, the way things are. Not just, oh, it's convenient or it's not.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — And I find it somewhat distressing, Mr. Speaker, that the new politics is so hypocritical. It is a shame that people working in ministers' offices and in the Premier's office, as they take on additional duties, as we bring a standardized pay scale in, that somehow this is no good. We're better to keep and maintain the chaos that there was when we formed government. That's somehow not okay with the Leader of the Liberal Party but her own reclassification is bang on because, after all, it's 17,000-and-change pay raise into her purse.

Mr. Speaker, as I've observed the news in recent months, I noticed a news report on the Liberal nominating convention in Regina North West. As you know, we had a by-election well within the six months of the vacancy being created — that because of the democratic reforms that we have implemented. But as I was watching this newscast I was somewhat surprised to see a former senior adviser to the former Progressive Conservative government, big as life there, amongst the 70 or so Liberals gathered. Former senior adviser and Regina bagman for the Conservative Party, now a born-again Liberal. I'm talking, of course, about Ted Yarnton.

And, Mr. Speaker, I was equally amazed when yesterday we introduced guests in the legislature — and that's a very fine

tradition and it's nice to acknowledge people who care to come and share their time and observe the goings on in our legislature. I think it's important for the democratic process — yesterday, to my amazement, the Liberal leader introduced some group of people in the gallery and introduced them as part of the Liberal family.

(1045)

And to my utter amazement, I was astounded to see that in that cluster of Liberal insiders, the Liberal family, the cluster of Liberal advisers, shakers and movers of the new politics, in that, lo and behold, Ted Yarnton, the born-again Liberal, former senior adviser and Regina area bagman for the Progressive Conservative government, now senior adviser for the Liberals.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that many people will not have had the opportunity to find out a little bit or know a little bit more about why I'm singling out the former bagman. I want to refer from the *Special Report by the Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan* dated April 21, 1992 to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, of which, I point out, the Liberal leader has always been a member since she was elected to this legislature. But on page 20, part of the review says:

The Saskatchewan Liquor Board reported that it paid expenses totalling \$16,162 for ministers to attend Big Valley Jamborees.

It goes on:

The Liquor Board did not have adequate systems and procedures to safeguard its assets. The Liquor Board reported approximately \$19,285 of liquor was supplied to ministers' offices.

And get this, Mr. Speaker. It goes on:

A Liquor Board official (a Liquor Board official, not Liquor Board officials) signed memos or store transfers to have the liquor either sent to ministers' offices or released into his custody . . . Accordingly, there was a loss to the Crown in the amount of \$19,285.

The conclusions drawn in this report to the Committee on Public Accounts — the *Special Report By The Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan* — the conclusions:

We are concerned when goods and services are provided without charge to ministers.

The integrity of ministers may be questioned (it says). It leads to an increased level of cynicism

about government and a loss of confidence in government and public institutions.

And I couldn't agree more. Of course it does and well it should. That's why we have moved there is no liquor in the cabinet ministers' offices.

But I want to come back to where I read from the report: "A Liquor Board official signed memos . . ."

And, Mr. Speaker, in the Public Accounts Committee these documents are tabled. They should come as no surprise to anyone; it's available to the public. We have a memo here dated December 18, 1990, from E.A. "Ted" Yarnton. And it says:

Please arrange to have delivered by 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (underlined) the following to our minister, Hon. John Gerich, Room 348, Legislative Building . . .

And it calls for in the list: one beer tub, 150 beer cups, 100 wine cups, 200 spirit cups. Let's see, December 18. I suspect it wasn't a Hallowe'en party. Probably not a birthday party. Two 22-pound bags of ice and three 5-pound bags of ice.

Now let's see here, there's one bottle of Jim Beam, four bottles of rye, three bottles of white rum, three bottles of vodka, two bottles of Lemon Hart dark, a bottle of scotch, a bottle of gin, six bottles of white wine, six bottles of red wine.

Also please have delivered one case of elevators for the minister's personal use and one case of Roughrider decanters for the minister to give as a gift to Coach Gregory. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

And the signature is none other than the former senior adviser to the Conservative government of the day and the now senior adviser to the Liberal Party, the born-again Liberal, Ted Yarnton.

Mr. Speaker, included in this there's another memo outlining the summary of Mr. Ted Yarnton's expenses. And I see that there was of course trips to Edmonton and Saskatoon and Toronto and Quebec and Montreal. But there's also two trips to San Francisco and a trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico. Quite an astounding array, Mr. Speaker, from this born-again Liberal. And I just wonder how this squares with the new politics.

The Leader of the Liberal Party knew this about Ted Yarnton. The Leader of the Liberal Party cannot deny that she knew. She is a member of the Public Accounts Committee. She received this documentation long ago, long ago. But when it's convenient, one must look the other way. When one might inherit a bagman, money to the Liberal Party coffers, one maybe has to look the other way.

It's real interesting, this new politics, Mr. Speaker. I wonder when I see . . . I hear the words of the Leader of the Liberal Party, and frankly, they're nice-sounding words. And it reminds me of something that my minister was telling the congregation in church about a traveller who had been robbed and beaten and was laying by the side of the road. The first person by was a priest; the priest walked on the other side of the road, past the beaten traveller. The next person came along the traveller, and

walked around. But a Samaritan came by, stopped, bandaged the wounded, injured person, fed that person, took the injured person to the next inn, stayed with that injured person for two days, helping nurse them back, seeing they're okay. That Samaritan gave the innkeeper two denarii and said, I have business to attend to; I will go attend to that business and when I come back I will gladly pay you whatever you spend looking after this man. The good Samaritan.

Mr. Speaker, the new politics doesn't seem to me — according to the Liberal leader — doesn't seem to match. The words are good, but the actions are different. The words are wonderful, and we can all mouth them. Every individual in the world knows how to mouth the right words. But the actions are what counts. The actions speak louder than words.

I'm reminded of Confucius, who has a saying that I like to live by. And Confucius said: fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. And I think we've been fooled once, I think twice, maybe thrice; the shame is now falling on us for being fooled.

And the Leader of the Third Party I think owes the public, owes us, an explanation. When did the conversion take place? Did Ted Yarnton, the former Conservative bagman, the former senior adviser, did he experience a conversion on the road to Liberalism? And when did that happen? Or did the Leader of the Liberal Party experience a conversion? Did Ted Yarnton convert the Leader of the Liberal Party? Did that happen? How can this be explained? How can this circle be squared?

Now is this the new politics, Mr. Speaker? I think not. How can this possibly take place? How can the Liberal Party run a by-election on one issue, that of MA (ministerial assistant) increases, ministerial increases, spreading lies, and yet it's perfectly all right for the Leader of the Liberal Party to accept a \$17,300-and-some personal reclassification — \$17,000 into her personal pocket and that's fine. It's wonderful. This is good because it affects the Leader of the Third Party personally. This is somehow justified.

But working secretaries, working people, working people who can take on additional duties, working people tagged with the responsibility of keeping our ministers fully advised and dealing with the public on a regular basis, somehow it's not all right for them to be brought into a standardized pay scale.

The real explanation that we really need, that the public really needs, is that of the former Conservative adviser, former Conservative bagman, Ted Yarnton. How was it? Who was it that was converted? Was it Ted Yarnton or was it the Leader of the Liberal Party?

Who received the conversion? Why is it what Mr. Yarnton did when he was with the Liquor Board was not acceptable, and clearly not, according to the Provincial Auditor, according to the public accounts documents, why was that not acceptable then, but now it's perfectly acceptable in the new politics from the Leader of the Liberal Party?

Mr. Speaker, integrity seems to me to be a key part of the new politics. The new politics to me, Mr. Speaker, is about honesty, being honest with the public.

And it's not so much about conveniently looking the other way when there might be a shekel or a penny or a dollar or \$17,300 for your own pocket. The new politics is about meeting challenges head on. The new politics is about dealing in an upfront manner with the hand that you're dealt with. Mr. Speaker, the new politics is about doing in a frontal manner the proper things for all of the people of Saskatchewan.

I wonder how it is that the proponent of the new politics, the Leader of the Liberal Party, could have possibly known about Ted Yarnton and could have welcomed him, not simply into the Liberal Party, but as a senior adviser in the Liberal Party. A senior adviser for the new politics. She knew about him. Why? Why? Why? There's some real questions that the Leader of the Liberal Party must deal with.

Mr. Speaker, others of course will be judging us on how well we're doing with the new politics, and how well we are addressing the issues that profoundly affect our province. Our government is dealing with the hand we were dealt with, not with some airy-fairy wish list, but with the reality that we were dealt with. We're firmly rooted in establishing that firm, solid, solid foundation that is described so eloquently in the Bible.

But you need a solid foundation from which to build. That's what to me the new politics is about. It's about being straightforward, upfront with everyone, with the people of Saskatchewan. And it's about telling the whole story, not simply what's convenient at any given issue.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of this government that I am a part of. I'm proud of the straight-ahead reality that we're dealing with even when that straight-ahead reality isn't always the pretty, straight-ahead reality that we would want. Clearly there are individual things that we're forced to do or that become, in some instances, the only alternative; in other instances the least bad of some not-pleasant alternatives. We're forced to deal with that. I'd be less than truthful if I said that I am delighted with every single decision that we take, but I'm very, very proud of every one of my colleagues. I'm very proud of the openness with which we can discuss reality, the openness with which we can debate the reality, the openness with which we can share that reality and come to the best possible decisions.

To me, Mr. Speaker, that's the straight-ahead, new politics. That is what is so much an integral part of this Speech from the Throne and that, Mr. Speaker, is why I am so proud to be a part of this government, to be a New Democrat, and to stand in support of our Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1100)

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I count it an honour to indeed be able to stand in my place today and make a few comments regarding the Speech from the Throne. As I was sitting here listening I think a case in point of why we should at least heed some of the direction that my colleague, the member from Rosthern, made this morning or during question period about reviewing the process of debate on the Speech from the Throne, I think was further reiterated in the speech we just heard from one of the Regina members — a speech that basically was totally enveloped around defending the increase in rates and salaries to MAs (ministerial assistant) of 43 per cent and more that this government has already implemented. And whereas many people across the province of Saskatchewan are struggling with less because of a number of the policies of the government.

And I found the speech very interesting in the fact that it had nothing to do really with the throne speech debate, which kind of suggests to me that the throne speech was very vague and had nothing really to offer, and so it's difficult for members on the government side of the House to stand there and try and defend the throne speech when it has nothing really in it.

That's why as an opposition we're suggesting as we found when we were knocking on doors — and many of us took the time in the 30-below weather to contact residents on behalf of our candidate in Regina North West — and we found that the major concern even in Regina North West was increases to MAs salaries, and jobs, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why . . . And another area of concern that people were raising was how the House operates, how politics works in this province, and the fact that it's time we took a serious look at the way the Legislative Assembly operates and got down to the serious business of trying to deal with the many problems that we as Saskatchewan residents face.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss in not extending my congratulations to the new member from Regina North West and inviting her to this . . . joining my colleagues in extending a welcome to her as she takes her place in this Assembly and I'm sure will be involved in much of the debate over the next few months.

Mr. Speaker, I think when we look at this throne speech, one of the areas that really concerns me is the government again talked about job creation or the need for jobs, very vaguely referred to job creation, and yet when we look at the statistics we see that the statistics are telling us the government's own records

and statistics are indicating that there are 12,000 fewer people working in the province of Saskatchewan than there were in October of 1991 — 12,000 fewer people.

The government also indicated that by the end of the decade, they hope to have 30,000 more people working in Saskatchewan. My simple mathematics indicates that if they were going to put 30,000 people back to work, they've already eliminated . . . or there's 12,000 fewer people working, then they're not just reaching for 30,000 — 42,000 people actually are going to be looking for jobs in the province of Saskatchewan. Which again brings us to that major concern out there: where are the jobs going to come from?

And I think one of the areas that we must look at, and as I've had the opportunity of talking to constituents, certainly knocking on doors in Regina North West, talking to people throughout the province, many people are indicating that the small-business sector is one area where jobs have the potential of being created. But with the regressive nature of this government's taxation, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's becoming more and more difficult for small businesses to even operate in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I talk about the form of taxation the government has adopted. The government continually tells the people of Saskatchewan that there haven't been any tax increases; there will be no tax increases in this budget.

And I guess that's all fine and that's all fair for the government to say that there won't be any tax increases, but what do you call utility rate increases? When people across Saskatchewan have seen three and four and nine and a half per cent increases in their utility rates continually over the last three years, I'm wondering exactly what you call that, if indeed it isn't an indirect form of taxation.

So I think the government isn't being totally honest with the people of Saskatchewan by indicating they haven't increased taxes when every time people have turned around, they have found an increase in the very necessities of life — the power supply, their heat supply, Mr. Speaker, their telephone bills, and the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, that is why we feel it is important that we get on with the business of this Assembly. And as we have looked at this and as I've reviewed the Speech from the Throne, I don't believe there is enough substantive nature to that speech for us to justify this Assembly taking the seven or so days to sit here and spend \$35,000 a day debating a non-issue when there are greater issues and in fact there are Bills before us today that we could get on debating, such as the Bill that we've introduced calling for a utilities review committee.

A committee made up of sitting MLAs from all parties, an all-party committee, so that indeed, Mr. Speaker, we give credence to the committee. We allow the committee to sit down and review the increases that have been brought forward or that would be suggested by any utility committee. That is a committee that is fair and a committee that doesn't cost the taxpayers . . . that isn't an increased cost to the taxpayers simply because MLAs are already being paid to be here and to represent their constituents.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be asking the Government House Leader — I'm not asking him to close the debate — I'm asking him to allow this House to move on to the real issues and the real debate that is taking place.

And the reason I say that, Mr. Speaker, is one of the issues that came up and was raised again in question period is health care. The government talks about job creation, and yet you take a look through rural Saskatchewan, an area that I represent, and there are numerous jobs that have been cut out of rural Saskatchewan in health care alone.

Just the other day Mr. McMillan gave his report. He's again suggesting that there be jobs cut in rural Saskatchewan, when he suggests that acute care beds be cut from just over 3.3, I believe, per a thousand, to 2.7 beds per a thousand individuals. When you apply that across the board, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what it means is that there is a further reduction of jobs, because as you cut the funding for beds, hospitals and regional hospital boards are going to have to then reduce the number of staff persons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. McMillan also I believe called for heavier care facilities, or care homes, to take in people with heavier care, heavier needs. And that's all fine and dandy. But what I find in my constituency is that the government has not allowed the appropriate funding so that care homes can indeed hire the personnel they would need to work with the heavier care load patient.

And so it's fine to ask and suggest we shouldn't take on lighter care patients in care homes, we'd better put the funding in place to allow these care homes to work with the individuals they already have there.

I commend Mr. McMillan and his suggestion that there be an increase in funding for home care because of the heavier workload that has been placed on the home care program and that will be placed on the home care program by these suggestions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one other area of concern, and certainly it came from the community of Moosomin, is the community is wondering where their proposal for a new hospital facility sits. And of course, I'm sure the Minister of Health would argue, well because of the terrible debt load that they inherited, that they won't be able to give Moosomin a new hospital. And yet if I'm not mistaken, the government has already committed itself to a new hospital in Gravelbourg, a hospital which one has to question when there were five excellent facilities in the surrounding area. I guess maybe it's appropriate that the hospital go into

Assiniboia-Gravelbourg because the seat happens to be represented by an NDP (New Democratic Party) member.

But if, Mr. Speaker, if there's such a tremendous deficit and if funding is needed elsewhere and if other communities have been told that no, your hospital doesn't go ahead, but this one does, it would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, there shouldn't be any hospitals or any capital projects funded anywhere.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated earlier, it's not my intention just to stand in this Assembly and just to tie up a lot of time addressing the debate and the Speech from the Throne. Because I feel, Mr. Speaker, that my colleague and the Leader of the Opposition, my colleague from Rosthern, have brought out some very significant points. The Leader of the Third Party has also indicated over time that this House should take a serious look at how it operates and I think it is time for us to get on with life, to get on with the real business, the real issues that are affecting people out there, to address the job creation or how we create jobs.

And my colleagues and I will be presenting some proposals to this Assembly to allow this Assembly to . . . And we trust that the Government House Leader will allow these proposals to come forward so they can be debated and we can show the people of Saskatchewan that we have some solid and sound ideas that would, if the government wants to implement them . . . they would have that opportunity. And they would have the ability, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And they can take the credit if they want. But the main focus is to make sure that we create an opportunity for young people to look at continuing to live in Saskatchewan rather than moving out.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by my colleague, the member from Souris-Cannington:

That the House do now proceed to Bill No. 1, a Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Legislative Utilities Review Committee).

Motion negatived on division.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's very much a pleasure for me to be able to rise in this Assembly and to participate in the throne speech debate and, in the time-honoured tradition of the British parliamentary system, to use this as an occasion to express some of my thoughts, some of the thoughts from the people in my constituency, and to be able to reflect upon the direction which our province is going and which this government is going.

Before I do utter these remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would like to be able to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your continued efforts to keep peace and order in this Assembly. I know that at times things get a little difficult. However, I do want to mention that through your continued efforts and consistency I have noticed over the last two years that the tenor of the House has changed, has improved, and I think a lot of the credit, Mr. Speaker, goes to you.

I'd like to be able to congratulate the member . . . the new member in the Assembly, the member from Regina North West, who has taken her place this week. I was very pleased with the

cooperation extended from the opposition that allowed us to make adjustments necessary, legal adjustments, so that the member could take her place here in the House immediately.

(1115)

I was very pleased as well that the member . . . that the election was held early, Mr. Speaker. According to the new rules for elections, that election had to be held within six months, and the good people of Regina North West will be represented throughout the course of this session. I wish the member from Regina North West the best as she takes her place here in the legislature and I hope that she finds her career in politics to be rewarding.

Mr. Speaker, when I listened to the throne speech and the comments in the throne speech, I was trying to assess it and to establish a mood of the throne speech. And I was helped by a friend from Prince Albert who told me he thought there was an air of tranquility about the throne speech and that it instilled confidence in the direction that the government was taking the people of Saskatchewan, or perhaps maybe following the people of Saskatchewan. The throne speech committed us to action in the areas of social justice, and the throne speech endeavours to call on the power of the community to cooperate to achieve these objectives.

I want to congratulate both the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the member from Regina Lake Centre, and the seconder, the member from Biggar, who together I thought set a good tone for us, Mr. Speaker. The member from Regina Lake Centre has always contributed and continues to contribute to the government caucus with her expertise on interrelationships of parts of government, interrelationships of people working in one part of the country with another. And I did appreciate her comments about the role and the nature of government in today's society.

The member from Biggar mentioned that compassion was a constant theme that runs through our financial and program decisions. He says, but compassion alone is not enough. And he mentioned the need to bring people back from the sidelines — those people who are unemployed and those people who are on welfare — and welcome them back as participating, productive members in our community and he indicated that that was our task as a government partially, partially the community's task, and partially of course the individual's task. I thought those remarks from both of the members were very, very appropriate.

And over the last two or three days, Mr. Speaker,

throughout the week, listening to the members speak in the House, I just want to say that it makes me feel proud to have colleagues who are as thoughtful, as intelligent, and as willing to go to work as I do have, the colleagues that I do have in the legislature. And it's an inspiration, I think, I know it's an inspiration to me, to be able to work and to say that I work alongside people of this calibre.

And I want to give you a couple of examples of what the members are faced with and what they're dealing with, to back up what I say. I guess everybody who comes into this place questions himself or herself about motives. What are my motives when I come into this place? And are my motives always honourable and how can I keep them honourable? I suppose one of the most honourable things we can do is keep in mind that whatever we do is to always remember that our objectives should be to the making and improving and adjusting of good laws and to the implementation of good laws. It's very simple. The statement is very simple but the implementation and the effecting that is quite difficult.

Consider, Mr. Minister, the difficulty of the situation faced by the Minister of Justice as he had to steer, alongside with the Minister of Social Services, as he has to steer a government position through the very, very difficult period of the Martensville trials. The Martensville tragedy affected all of us in Saskatchewan in a way which we can't really describe very well because it's something that we feel but we don't really have that good a handle on it. It's something new to us.

And it was important that as we went through all of the motions of that and we're still going through it, that the integrity of the justice system and the social service system in Saskatchewan remained intact. And I have to congratulate both ministers in the way that they were able to and that they are steering us through this.

The people and the parents, the victims that are involved here — and I suppose we're all victims to some extent — have had access to the best of professional help, and both ministers have acknowledged and are making adjustments from those things that we are learning as a result of this tragedy. I congratulate them for that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased with the leadership provided to us by our Minister of Finance in response to the smuggling tax or the cigarette tax or the smugglers' caper in eastern Canada. Here we have a situation where people started taking the law into their own hands for the sake of greed. Now most people I've talked to about this tobacco tax revolt have suggested to me that the best solution to reduce that smuggling was, first of all, to put a substantial export tax on the cigarettes; and secondly, to enforce the law. When I considered the other options, I thought that that made a lot of sense.

Unfortunately that's not what the federal Liberal government did. Instead they have reduced some of the tax and asked us to match as well at \$5 dollars a carton. Mr. Minister, just from a strict dollars-and-cents point of view, that would have cost the treasury of Saskatchewan \$35 million. Or another comparison

would be, it would take a tax increase of 3 cents a litre for every litre of gas that you and I burn — 3 cents-a-litre increase.

So, Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased that both opposition parties endorsed the position taken by our Minister of Finance on this. And I'm still kind of surprised why it was that the Liberal Prime Minister didn't use the export tax solution. I can think it was only done for political reasons, Mr. Speaker.

When you consider that a large portion of the tobacco industry is based in Quebec and that the Liberal Premier Johnson's re-election is threatened right now by the separatists, I come to the conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that at this time what is good for all of Canada is not necessarily good for Quebec, or good for the Liberal Party in Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, that new politics does not impress me, but I am hoping that perhaps after that election we can get an all-Canada policy to deal with matters such as the tobacco smuggling.

Mr. Speaker, I want to single out one other minister as an example of a government that is thoughtful, that is careful in implementing policies. And I want to make special mention of my colleague, the member from Prince Albert Northcote, who has the job at this time of steering through new gaming policies.

Mr. Speaker, when you consider the different pushes and pulls dealing with gaming and the competing interests and the very sincere ideas that are put forth about whether we should be going into gaming at all or not, because on both sides of the House there are people and proponents who have very strong ideas on both sides of the issue, I think the political management of this kind of an issue is very, very difficult. And I want to be able to commend the minister who is responsible for this, the minister of gaming, my colleague from Prince Albert Northcote, who has taken it in stride and is carefully and slowly working our way through this, and continues to be open to suggestions and consideration and consultation for anything that may be of assistance. And I can assure the members and anybody that's listening here today that my colleague will listen.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, as I was going through the throne speech and listening to it and seeing what we were faced with, I recognized that one of the repeated themes was that we are on a journey of renewal. And we need to go on a journey of renewal because in four areas we find that we need some changes.

People in agriculture have found themselves in a situation where they were being crippled by debt, a lot

of grain they were able to produce but there were no markets — clearly some changes were needed.

One of the most pressing problems in Saskatchewan right now, and throughout our nation, is the need for jobs for the unemployed and for our youth. There was a tremendous number of bankruptcies that we have gone through in the last few years. We'd found that some of the megaprojects that were supposed to make us all rich ended up putting us in difficulty, ended up making us poor. So what we needed there was a change.

We found that in the region of health there was again a need for change. We had an excess of delivery rooms and operating rooms around the province that were being bypassed — they were being funded, but they were being bypassed by the people of Saskatchewan because they were looking for better technology and they were going to where the doctors and the technology is. We needed more of a shift from a curative, illness approach to a preventive, wellness approach.

Clearly, again there was a need for change in health. Agriculture, economic development and health — a need for change.

And when you looked at the fiscal position of the province, we found that there also was a need for a change. And we were being reminded daily, almost hourly, by the bond-rating agencies, through the media, that Saskatchewan was on the verge of bankruptcy — crippled by debt, paying \$800 million in interest payments. Clearly there was a need for a change.

The difficulty was, how was it that we were going to go through this transition? Not only did we need a change in methodology, but we needed a change in our spirit; a change in the way we think in order to be able to properly and effectively manage these changes.

(1130)

I want to refer to two lines written by a British essayist from the Victorian era. His name is John Ruskin. Lived from the years 1819 to 1900. He came up with a statement, even at that time, that reads as follows. John Ruskin said:

Government and cooperation are in all things the laws of life.
Anarchy and competition are in all things the laws of death.

I've thought about that statement and how it might apply to us today. What he does is he contrasts cooperation and life with competition and death. He uses the word, government, to talk in contrast with anarchy — government being the way we organize ourselves.

Government and cooperation are in all things the laws of life.
Anarchy and competition are in all things the laws of death.

I thought that that quotation was representative of the kind of transition that we have to take place in Saskatchewan. To go from a concept of competition to cooperation, to go from the concept of anarchy and everyone doing something for himself to a concept of government as being good, to go from the concept of something that leads to death to something that leads to life and openness.

Mr. Speaker, how did we end up there where we had ended up after the '80s, when anarchy and competition were all of the things that we were concentrating on? We have gone through a time when the theory of greed is good, was emphasized. Probably started on Wall Street but it penetrated right across the free world and around the globe. It was the theory that was propagated by Thatcher, Reagan, Bush, Mulroney.

It's what I call the rise of the hard side of politics, the hard side of living. It was the law of the corporate jungle — corporate mergers where the winner takes all and losers are at fault. It was the law of unbridled competition, the law at the time when we had leveraged take-overs exemplified by disasters like Canary Wharf in Great Britain, and the U.S. (United States) savings and loan fiasco, and junk bonds in the United States. It was the law of deregulation and of free trade and of privatization. It was a portion of a theory derived by . . . what's described by Marx, the portion which emphasizes the competition of people in the workplace. And as a result of that we had a loss of ethics, which you have to have overriding and placed upon in the free world, in the free enterprise system.

My colleague from Regina, the Minister of Labour, Regina Churchill Downs, has described what happened to us in the workplace as a result of following this old theory of competition. And he mentioned in a discussion that what he saw was a sort of a new kind of ruthlessness in the '80s that was brought out. And it's now being characterized and we see it in the workplace. A ruthlessness on the part of some employers and a ruthlessness which was embraced by governments, and which is leading us and which has led us to a situation where we feel that people who are working are not nearly as well looked after in a comparison fashion as they should be.

And I think of specifically part-time workers. Mr. Speaker, one of our daughters has a degree in interior design. She has worked, I believe, for three or four different employers part time over the last two or three years, fully qualified. She finds herself in very much a situation of many other people who are in a part-time position — capable, educated, competent, eager to go to work, but not much work there.

And I think of her and how she has at times sat beside the telephone, waiting for the phone call to be able to go to work. And there are many more people like her who have found themselves in a situation where they are dependent on that phone call, tied to the phone. And if they're not there when the phone rings, then

they might have to lose their job. Clearly I feel that this is something that we have to address in this throne speech, that is, the plight of part-time workers who, along with other workers, have suffered from the ruthlessness of this unbridled competition that we have gone through.

And yesterday in this House there were a group of perhaps 50 or 100 people, employees of Woolco from Moose Jaw, who came here because they were frightened of what could happen to them because Wal-Mart has refused to buy the Woolco store because they are unionized in Moose Jaw.

Now think of this, Mr. Speaker. What has happened is the people are afraid of losing their jobs. They are afraid of losing . . . and they are almost pleading at this stage to be able to work for less. That's rather . . . that's hard to fathom, Mr. Speaker. You can understand . . . I mean I can understand their definite need and their desire to want to maintain their jobs. But the fact that a company who's been given free reign because of the ethics of competition is in such a position to threaten them that their jobs will be lost by not buying their company . . . And Woolco was doing well. Woolco in Moose Jaw is perhaps in the top three of sales in Woolcos in Saskatchewan.

We have a new breed of entrepreneurship and a breed of corporations who continue on this concept of taking over, managing directly from outside, forcing people to take less, lower their wages, and they do it by luring us all with the concept of cheap prices.

Well we have to re-examine this. We have to re-examine the workplace so that things like this just don't happen. Because if it does, it leads everything to the lowest, lowest common denominator; puts us into a situation that I just don't want. Because in the end, the ethics of competition, Mr. Speaker, is such that to the victor — maybe the Wal-Mart in this case — go the spoils, but to the conquered, the toil.

And we end up in a situation, as we see in Mexico, we see in different places in the world that have not developed rules and regulations by which employers and employees can work together to solve a common problem — a cooperative approach. I believe that, Mr. Speaker, is the challenge of this government, to put that type of an ethic into place.

And we are guided, Mr. Speaker, by words of Tommy Douglas which were so well paraphrased or so well phrased by the member from Biggar that I would like to repeat them for the record again. Tommy Douglas did make these remarks: The measure of a nation's greatness does not lie in its conquests or in its gross national product or in the size of its gold reserve or the height of its skyscrapers. The real measure of a nation is the quality of its natural life. What does it do for its less fortunate citizens, the opportunity it provides for its youth to live useful and meaningful lives. Equally important, what does it do to share its affluence with those people around the world who suffer from poverty and disease. Those are the guiding principles, Mr. Speaker, that I want to see this government embrace. Those are the principles, Mr. Speaker, that I will strive to work for in this government.

Mr. Speaker, we have a philosophy; we know what the difficulties are from where we go. The problem is, how do we

create a climate for jobs, how do we create a climate for the survival of farms, how do we create a climate for the provision of health care that's affordable, how do we create a climate to continue education?

We can look quickly by studying some of the methods of the governments past, the governments of Woolco, the governments of . . . excuse me, that was a very bad slip, Mr. Speaker. I was going to say Woody, the governments of Woodrow Lloyd and Tommy Douglas who talked about co-ops, producers, and retailers. They got people together, used the common approach of one vote for one person, not one vote for one share. We could use the example of Blakeney who developed utility corporations like SaskTel, SaskPower, and added to that Potash Corporation, using Saskatchewan's resource revenue for Saskatchewan people. Again using the partnership approach, we were able to distribute services and income to people in Saskatchewan. But that was before free trade and the global village deregulation, and Thatcher, Reagan and Bush, Mulroney.

So how do we proceed? Well I say, Mr. Speaker, that we once again rely on partnerships, once again. And that's what this throne speech speaks to — partnerships at a local level. This government is devolving . . . in some areas we are attempting to devolve a lot in the areas of economic development and in the areas of health. And we're using the guidelines, the words, cooperation, community, and compassion.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there are other members who have things that they want to say. I have a few examples I want to mention from Prince Albert. I am going to save some of those words for remarks that I will make instead in the budget speech.

I want to close my remarks, Mr. Speaker, by . . . I want to close, Mr. Speaker, by saying that the methods that we use are . . . and that we will be using and we will use as a guideline are the methods which are exemplified by John Ruskin, the statement that I used earlier, and that is that this government will work so that "government and cooperation are in all things the laws of life." And we will not work in a manner where "anarchy and competition" are our guidelines because they "are in all things the law of death".

And the last thing I want to say, Mr. Speaker, is that we can do these things only properly if we have confidence and continue to have confidence in ourselves, in our colleagues and if we have confidence in our leader, the Premier.

And I want to say without equivocation, Mr. Speaker, that I continue to be impressed with the tireless, openness and committed work that our Premier has exemplified and continues to show and the leadership

he provides to caucus and to cabinet. And I know that as we go through the tough times, as we keep on turning the corner, as we continue on this journey of renewal, I am confident I can depend on his leadership and on the cooperation of my colleagues to really continue to make Saskatchewan a place where we can bring our children back home to, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1145)

Mr. Wormsbecker: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to enter into the debate on the Speech from the Throne on the occasion of the fourth session of the twenty-second legislature.

First of all, I would like to extend my best wishes to you, Mr. Speaker, during this session knowing that you shall perform your duties with dignity and equity in light of the arduous task of keeping order in this venerable Assembly. I personally shall pledge my commitment to you to do my utmost to maintain a decorum of respectability during this session. I encourage my colleagues to do likewise.

Secondly, I wish to extend a cordial welcome to all of my colleagues who have returned on this, the fourth session, and a special welcome to the member from Regina North West on her election.

Finally, I'd also like to welcome the pages to this session and I look forward to having a pleasant session with them.

Time waits for no one, Mr. Speaker. It seems like yesterday that we commenced the first session of the twenty-second legislature. But here we are today, the fourth session.

We've all journeyed a long way together from the day of the election of this government, on October 19, '91. This has been indeed a journey of renewal, a journey of restoration, a journey fraught with its difficulties, but most significantly, a journey of hope with its accomplishments along the way.

I think it is only fitting that I should pause for a moment and acknowledge with gratitude the trust that my constituents have reposed in me as their elected representative. It is an honour and a privilege to represent the constituency of Weyburn. My constituents, and indeed all the people of Saskatchewan, deserve the credit for the difficulties each have endured — and I acknowledge some have endured more than others — each have endured over the past two years in the course of putting the province's financial house in order after years of deficit financing and \$15 billion of debt accumulation.

Mr. Speaker, I shall review briefly the financial condition of the province at the time that we took office; and in particular, I'll restrict my comments to the operating budget.

If you'll recall, Mr. Speaker, the Tories did not pass a budget in the dying days of their administration, electing to pay the daily government operating expenses by special warrants. When the newly elected government of the day assumed office, the projected deficit was \$1.3 billion. However, this \$1.3 billion was shaved to \$842 million by March 1992.

Over the next year, that is '92-93, the deficit was further shaved to 592 million. And for this present fiscal year, '93-94, the deficit is on target as projected 12 months ago at \$295 million. This is indeed a good record for the present government in reducing the operating deficit. Our government is on top of its budget plan for this year even though an extra 31 million was spent on Social Services, an extra 4 million on Agriculture, and an extra 15 million on Environment and an extra 2 million on Education.

Our government does have a plan, a well-thought-out plan I may add, to balance the budget in 1996-97. As I stated before, the people of Saskatchewan deserve the credit for having to endure the sacrifices required to tidy up the financial mess they inherited.

Now that the sacrifices have been made, there are positive economic indicators which point to a more favourable economic climate for the benefit of our children and our grandchildren. One of the bright lights in my constituency has been the oil patch. From January 1993 to October 1993, 1,740 oil and gas wells were drilled.

This represents an increase of 225 per cent over the same period last year. With the increased activity in the oil patch, royalties also increased by an additional \$61 million, allowing the government to remain on target with its four _year deficit elimination plan. With sound fiscal management and a little good luck, I may add, Saskatchewan may very well be the first province to receive a credit rating upgrade.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wormsbecker: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to spend a few minutes discussing health care reform which is by far the biggest undertaking of this government. Saskatchewan pioneered hospitalization and medicare. Saskatchewan is now pioneering the integrated delivery of all health care services at the community level through health districts with emphasis on promoting wellness in conjunction with treating illness.

I attended a legislative conference in Alberta last month with representatives from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Quebec, and eight American states. Health care was an agenda item. It was the general consensus of the American legislators in attendance that the Canadian health care system is an enviable model but unfortunately it's too costly for the Americans, so they state.

One of the state senators acknowledged that the Canadian model of health care was pioneered out of a sense that it was the moral thing to do, it was the right

thing to do, while the Americans implemented a patchwork of public health care delivery but not universally accessible in response to public pressure. Consequently, our American neighbours have been more conscious of the public cost.

President Clinton has defined the principles of health care for a national health care policy. The individual states are concerned that they may be legislated to provide the service without receiving adequate federal funding. Federal funding is a big issue across the 49th parallel as it remains here in Canada. Without adequate federal funding, health care will be jeopardized in Canada.

Returning to health care reform as it applies to my constituency, it is fair to state that there are some sceptics. The vast majority of people realize that health care designed for the '40s and the '60s does not meet the needs of the '90s and the next century. The difficulty with any reform is the transitional period. There are the visionaries who can picture in their mind's eye the new health delivery system. And on the other hand, there are the pragmatists who wish to see the finished product prior to embarking on changing the present system.

One of the most important factors in health care reform is communication. The South Central District Health Board, which is located in my constituency, is taking the time to meet with health care workers and community groups to establish a communication rapport with groups and communities within the district.

A good example of board communication is its willingness to dialogue with the Souris Valley task force. Souris Valley is a regional fourth level care facility located in Weyburn and provided care to all of south-east Saskatchewan.

The geographical catchment area was equivalent to five health care districts. With the reduction of beds to meet certain target levels established by the Department of Health, the Weyburn community quickly formed a task force to look into integrated delivery of health care services, including the feasibility of such services being provided from the Souris Valley physical plant, or alternately, promoting Souris Valley to neighbouring health districts as a centre specializing in management of level 4 patients with multiple care needs. A process is in place for a dialogue, and many options are being discussed.

These issues must be resolved at the community level. This government chose, and I must state, to its credit, to reform health care with community input rather than dictating health care boundaries. This consultation process has worked, is continuing to work, and shall work well into the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, this session will see the introduction of approximately 60 to 75 Bills for debate and passage. These Bills will be supportive of our government's long-range plans to maintain sound financial management, to promote jobs and economic development, to encourage value added agricultural businesses, to support children through the children's advocate, and to support working people and families through amendments to The Labour Standards Act and The Trade Union Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment briefly on agriculture and

The Labour Standards Act. The farm industry has undergone significant economic changes over the past several years. The Saskatchewan farmers have responded to adverse market and commodity prices by shifting some of their production to non-traditional cash crops. With the federal government shifting the cost of agricultural support programs to the provinces, Saskatchewan has been dealt a burdensome financial blow. Costs which it didn't have prior to 1988 are now being asked to be paid by them, and the federal government had paid these costs previously. Saskatchewan has 40 per cent of the cultivated land in Canada and 60,000 farmers. Per capita the Saskatchewan taxpayer has unfairly paid more towards safety nets than taxpayers in other provinces.

The Saskatchewan Farm Support Review Committee has recommended three optional safety net programs as alternatives to the present GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) and NISA (net income stabilization account) programs. It is important that the federal government acknowledge and accept its responsibility to provide adequate funding, because it is unrealistic to expect a province like Saskatchewan to shoulder significant safety net costs for premiums when the treasury is dependent on a vibrant agricultural economy. If the agriculture sector is faltering, the tax revenue isn't there to cost-share safety net programs.

All farmers would like to receive their income at the farm gate. With the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) agreement there shall be some reduction in subsidies, but is not expected to have any immediate impact upon the upward movement of commodity prices. Therefore an adequate safety net program is essential.

As farmers would like a fair return for their produce, farm workers also would like a fair return for their labour. Farm workers are presently excluded under The Labour Standards Act and some other workers have partial protection only. I'm of the opinion that the day is long gone when any workers should be excluded from The Labour Standards Act.

What is debatable is the extent to which each class of worker is afforded protection under the Act. However, exclusion should not be permitted.

Farms are very mechanized and require skilled machinery operators. Any skilled worker is worth the minimum wage. All employers should be required to pay their employees in a timely fashion. Shouldn't farm workers have the benefit to wage recovery similar to other workers? These are a few issues some constituents have raised with me, as representing minimum labour standards for farm workers.

(1200)

Addressing the workplace generally, Mr. Speaker, the workplace has changed dramatically. There are more temporary, casual, and part-time employees in the workplace. It is not uncommon for an employee to have three part-time jobs today, scurrying about to three different places of employment. Couple this difficult task with raising a family and it is no small wonder that there is tremendous stress on a working family.

A part-time worker can be imprisoned in their own home, being tied to the telephone waiting for an employer to call. It is only fair that part-time employees should receive a minimum of several days advance scheduling notice as well as prorated full-time employment benefits. Legislative amendments implementing the foregoing shall assist in restoring some equity to employees in the workplace.

Equity, balance and fairness are concepts everyone subscribes to; however, there is divergence of opinion when it comes to the application of these principles. I am proud to be part of a government which is restoring financial stability in this province and monitoring with sensitivity the social programs and services like health care and education within a framework of equity, balance and fairness.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the journey of renewal and restoration of this province is continuing and one day, not too distant in the future, our children and grandchildren will reap the benefits of the difficult decisions having to be made today for tomorrow.

I join my caucus colleagues who have spoken before me in support of the Speech from the Throne. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Keeping: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure and an honour for me to enter into this debate in response to the Speech from the Throne for 1994, not only on my own behalf, Mr. Speaker, but on behalf of the people from the Nipawin constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I must say I feel somewhat under-prepared today as I attempt to reply to the Speech from the Throne. I haven't given as much time to this preparation as I would have preferred. My office has been moving in this building. It has moved from the first floor up to the third floor, so on the more positive side you could say I'm on the way up. Or if we were looking for a headline you could say: Keeping on the move.

But to begin with, Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the member from Regina Lake Centre, and the seconder, the member from Biggar. Mr. Speaker, I listened to their addresses the other day and I was very impressed with both of their speeches, both in the moving and the seconding of the Speech from the Throne.

As others have already done, too, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the newest member of the legislature, the member from Regina North West.

Mr. Speaker, I thought today I would open my speech with a funny story so I brought the best story I knew. It's the kind of a story that just knocks the hair right off the top of your head, but I see, seeing as you've already heard it, Mr. Speaker, I will just omit and proceed on without it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn now for a few minutes and tell you about my Nipawin constituency. It's a beautiful part of the province, and I recognize the responsibility that the people from that constituency have placed in me. I have tried to represent them to the best of my ability and I will continue to do so.

The constituency of Nipawin, as we all know, lies in the north-east part of the province, the north most and the eastern most part of the agricultural lands. It also includes the southern edge of the forest boundary.

As is in the case in much of the province, most of the province, agriculture is the most significant industry or occupation of that area. But in the Nipawin area our agriculture is very, very diverse. Besides the regular crops that are grown all over the province, farmers in our area have grown for many years now, many, many specialty crops. And we have in that area of the province a large number of pedigreed seed growers and companies. We also have in that area of the province, a lot of alfalfa — both for dehydrated alfalfa for export and for seed production.

Along with the alfalfa industry goes the leaf-cutter bee industry. Also, as most of us know, canola is — and has been for a long time now — a big market, a big part of our seeding plans in that area. And we have at Nipawin, the CanAmera canola seed crushing plant.

Another significant influence in that area, in the economy of that area, is the forestry industry, Mr. Speaker — one that I've worked in all of my life. And we have at Carrot River the government-owned saw mill and planer mill at Carrot River, but also in the area we have many, many small farmer-owned or privately owned saw mills that create much-needed employment in that area of the province. And as well we have livestock on most of the farms, or a lot of the farms have livestock either as the sole industry or as part of their industry. We have also, Mr. Speaker, three provincial government pastures in the Nipawin constituency.

I think the thing that's the most unique about the Nipawin constituency is the flourishing tourism industry. Year-round tourism is flourishing. It's based mainly on snowmobile, golfing, hunting and especially fishing. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have in that area of the province the best fishing in the province. And fishermen and fisherwomen from all

over the province and all over Canada, and in fact countries far away in other parts of the world, are coming there to Nipawin to fish for record-size wall-eye and northern pike that are caught relatively easy — at least I've been able to catch them and I am sure not an expert fisherman.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the Nipawin constituency have done an excellent job in promoting and marketing this natural resource. And over the years this industry has grown and grown and expanded, year after year.

Mr. Speaker, I think I've probably taken enough time talking about or bragging about the Nipawin constituency, but I really do believe that the people in my area of the province are the biggest asset that area has. They are innovative, ambitious, friendly, and they plan for the future. And each generation has left the environment and the opportunities better for the next generation than they received it.

Another important event probably that I should mention, Mr. Speaker, before I leave talking about my constituency altogether, is the fact that Garry and Bonnie Meier from the Nipawin constituency were selected last year as the most outstanding young farmer in Saskatchewan. We are very proud of them. And last fall at Agribition, when they came to Regina here and met in competition with farmers from all over the Dominion of Canada, they were selected as one of the top three most outstanding young farmers in Canada.

We are very, very proud of them in our constituency. They are an example of the hard work and the innovation and the forward planning of the people in that area. We're proud of the award they've received; we think they're worthy of the award, and they are to be very much congratulated.

Mr. Speaker, just over three years ago when I decided . . . when I made the decision to try to win the opportunity to represent the Nipawin constituency, many people asked me at that time, why would you even want to take on such a task? They were probably referring to the debt of the province and the measures that they realized even at that time that would have to be taken as the government got its spending under control. I believed at that time, Mr. Speaker, the New Democratic Party was the best able and the most likely to succeed, to succeed in renewing our province and rebuilding our province — which at the time, Mr. Speaker, by the former government's own admission, was at that time teetering on the edge of bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, I believe our government was the best choice. That is what I believed at that time and I believe it even more strongly today.

The reasons that I believe that the New Democratic Party and the New Democratic government is the best choice for Saskatchewan are many. These reasons involve not only what is promised by various political parties during an election campaign, but more importantly, what is the track record of the available choices? What was the record of the two right-wing parties? What was the record of the Tory Party? What was the record of the Liberal Party? What was the record of former New Democratic parties?

Mr. Speaker, it has already been mentioned today, but actions

do speak louder than words, or as my mother used to say, the proof is in the pudding, or as Randy Travis used to sing in the song, don't call him a cowboy until you've seen him ride.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of being a community pasture manager for eight years and I worked in one for another five years. It was one of the most enjoyable times of my life. I was very young at the time, in my early 20's, and I met and got to know many, many cowboys, and many, many would-be cowboys. And I can say with Randy Travis — a certain amount of wisdom in his song — don't call him a cowboy until until you've seen him ride.

As I've already mentioned, Mr. Speaker, I was in my early 20's. I think I was 20 when I got the job as community pasture manager, and I shortly turned 21. And when the weather was nice and the job was enjoyable and the weather was warm, it was easy to find lots of cowboys and cowgirls to help — very enjoyable. But, Mr. Speaker, when the days were long and the work was hard and the weather was bad with snow and rain, freezing rain and snow, those are the days when we found out who was a cowboy and who wasn't a cowboy. And I can say with Mr. Travis, don't call him a cowboy until you've seen him ride.

It's much the same with government. It's much easy to govern in easy times when things are going good, economies are booming and growing and you are trying to figure out ways to spend the money, ways you could be a better government and spend more. Some even figure out ways to spend money they haven't got yet. We've experienced that in the province.

I remember the former premier, the member from Estevan saying: Saskatchewan had so much going for it — when he was looking to govern — Saskatchewan has so much going for it you can even mismanage it and still break even. Well, Mr. Speaker, he certainly proved to be half right. He certainly proved he could mismanage the province.

Mr. Speaker, actions do speak louder than words, and the former right-wing governments have said all the right things. And that right-wing talk sounds great, it sounds good, but look what it does, look what it brings. We've got many examples, not only in Saskatchewan, but in other places in Canada and other places in the world. People in Saskatchewan have seen the right-wing ride. They've seen the right-wing ride. People in Canada have seen the right-wing ride.

(1215)

I am pleased with the progress that our government

has made to date on our journey of renewal. I am more optimistic now than ever in our term of office. The hard choices, the sacrifices that were necessary to be made have been made and optimism is starting to grow. People of the province are to be congratulated and thanked for their part and their cooperation in turning this province around.

Last March, as everyone knows, we introduced a detailed balanced budget plan that would balance the budget in four years. It included all the major decisions, both on the taxing side and the expenditures, to reach the required goal. Three months ago we released a mid-term financial report that shows we're right on track. I'm encouraged.

That's amazing when you stop and think it's a billion dollar turnaround in just two years. It wasn't easy. And again the people of the province are to be thanked and congratulated for their part.

While our economic renewal cannot be described as a boom, nevertheless the economy is recovering. Retail trade, an important indicator, was up by over 5 per cent in 1993 compared to '92 — 5.3 per cent. That is the highest increase in retail trade on the Prairies — higher than Alberta which was only 3.8, and higher than the national average which was 4.4.

Wholesale trade was also up in Saskatchewan. Urban housing starts were down by 8 per cent in Canada, but here in Saskatchewan housing starts were up.

Oil and gas drilling were up by 174 per cent over the previous year. That's good news, Mr. Speaker.

I believe the expansion of uranium mining, stronger prospects for potash, the fourth largest harvest in the history of our province, are all reasons for optimism in this upcoming year.

Mr. Speaker, 1994 marks the 50th anniversary of the election of the Tommy Douglas government in Saskatchewan. This historic election changed not only this province, but had a very positive influence all across Canada. This was the first experience people in Canada had at watching a social democratic government rise.

The policies and ideas that were introduced by that government have been much copied and admired all around the world. Tommy's government had a deep commitment to economic and social justice and an unyielding faith in the power of community and cooperation.

I believe this Speech from the Throne that we heard the other day has those same kinds of plans and ideas that will outlast any of us that are here today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Keeping: — And I think that those kind of plans and ideas will restore confidence in governments in general and will restore the idea that government is to be the servant of the people.

Mr. Speaker, when I came into this building a few days ago I did so with optimism and pride of being part of a government

with a plan that is working and having the courage to stick to it.

Mr. Speaker, I've often asked myself, why do I believe in the New Democratic Party? Why am I a New Democrat? Mr. Speaker, I believe it is because I believe in the community; I believe in sharing; I believe in compassion; I believe in fairness; I believe in using the resources of this province for all the people in the province. Why do the New Democrats believe in that? Why do people in Saskatchewan, the majority of people in Saskatchewan, think that way as well? I don't know. Perhaps it's because of the experience in the Depression. Perhaps it's because of our sparse population. Perhaps it's because of our climate, the cold weather, etc. Maybe it's a combination of those.

But whatever it is, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have learned to cooperate. The people of Saskatchewan have learned to share. The people of Saskatchewan have learned to help one another and learned to care for and care about one another. More recently, Mr. Speaker, I believe we have learned to not elect governments that will spend more money than they take in — will spend money they haven't got.

Mr. Speaker, when we balance this budget, and we will, no one can ever say we did it because times were easy. We have been riding in some of the hardest weather and the toughest times to ride, but we've been riding straight and true into the storm, and we will win.

Not only are we on the road to recovery, but we're doing it the Saskatchewan way. We're doing it the slow, steady, sure, and careful way. This, I believe, is the Saskatchewan way and I believe it is the right way.

Mr. Speaker, when I walked into this floor of this legislature the other day, I was somewhat excited and happy to be back. And I found myself as I was walking across to take my place here, humming an old cowboy tune that I remember singing quite often as I rode out across the pasture for the first time. And I'm sure that perhaps there's a member or two, even in the opposition side of the House, that would recognize that old tune. The old tune of, "Back in the saddle again, back where a friend is a friend."

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be part of this government, I'm pleased at the progress we have made so far, and I am pleased to support the Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise in my place today and take part in this throne speech debate. I want to join with other members in congratulating my colleague from Regina Lake Centre on the great job she did in moving the Speech from the Throne; also

congratulating the member from Biggar on the good job he did on seconding the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, it also gives me great pleasure that our House Leader has refused the call by the Opposition House Leader to implement closure on this debate. Because he has done that, I still get the opportunity to speak on the throne speech.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, I also want to join with my colleagues in welcoming the new member from Regina North West to these chambers. I am sure that she will find some of the proceedings that go on in these chambers very frustrating, but I'm also sure that she will find much of her job as an MLA very rewarding.

Mr. Speaker, I think everyone has took their place and told you what a wonderful job you do up there, so I don't think I have to say it again. You know you have done a good job and we all do, and we thank you for it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — I also want to take this opportunity to once again thank the people of Last Mountain-Touchwood for giving me the opportunity to represent them in these chambers — also allowing me to be part of the government that has taken the province of Saskatchewan from the road of destruction that we were under under the previous Tory administration and now put us on the road to renewal.

Mr. Speaker, on December 3, 1991, I had the pleasure of seconding the first throne speech delivered by this government. Mr. Speaker, at that time I stated that the first throne speech removed the climate of fear, frustration, and failure that the former administration had impelled on the people of Saskatchewan, and it replaced that climate with a new hope for the future — a new hope of no more deficit budgeting, no more unnecessary deficit budgeting, and the hope that they had elected a government that could make the difficult decisions to bring financial stability to the province.

In order to regain control of our finances, we have to make those tough decisions, not just for ourselves but for the future generations of Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, I said at that time we had to establish new goals that stress equity, fairness, and sharing. Our objective must be wealth creation that is as widely distributed as possible, and reverse the obvious mismanagement of government, government departments, and Crown corporations and return efficient, effective public administration.

We said at that time that we were not going to rely on Bay Street to create jobs, but rather rely on Main Street Saskatchewan to create those jobs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — And, Mr. Speaker, we have come good on all of these statements. And our job creation is working and the province of Saskatchewan is on the road to renewal as we promised back in 1991.

I also stated at that time that we stood ready and willing to go to work with the people of Saskatchewan to build a better, more decent society for all the people of this great province. And I believe as this throne speech states, Mr. Speaker, we have done that.

We are in fact building a better, more decent society in cooperation with the people of Saskatchewan. The faith that the people of Saskatchewan put in us in 1991 has been tested and sustained over the last two years as the people of Saskatchewan have joined this government on that journey of renewal — renewal of our economy, renewal of the Saskatchewan spirit.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, as the speech states, the journey has often been difficult, with unprecedented challenges along the way. But Saskatchewan people have undertaken the journey together, and together we have made great progress. The greatest problem that we faced in the renewal was the legacy of a decade of deficit spending by the past Tory administration.

One of the first priorities was to restore confidence in this province's ability to manage its financial affairs. We are well on the road to achieving that priority. Next week we will table a budget in this House that will confirm the deficit for this year at \$294 million. That means that this government, along with the input from the people of Saskatchewan, has reduced the annual projected deficit by \$1 billion from the time we took office.

We still believe that we must balance the annual operating budget. That's important — not as an end in itself but as only the means to moving forward to restoring confidence, thus allowing us to create jobs and enrich the growth of our province.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech dwells on six main topics. I want to speak on but a couple of those today.

Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, under the former administration, farmers were led to believe that all they had to do was to plant wheat, insure it for \$127 an acre, and the government would keep them.

Well to me that was silly to have people rewarded for not growing a crop or not growing what was needed by the government or not needed by the market-place or what the market-place demanded, and to do all of that at the expense of the taxpayer.

The program that allowed this to happen was a program that was brought in by the previous administration in a hurry — after eight years in government, a plan they knew they could not afford, a plan that was used to bribe the farmers, because

farmers were told that in order to qualify for third line of defence payments they would have to enrol in the GRIP program. So they brought in a program, not to develop the industry, not to get farmers the greatest return from the market-place, but a program that was developed as an election ploy — an election ploy that did not work.

(1230)

The Minister of Agriculture, along with consultation with the industry, has put together a direction paper called *Agriculture 2000 — A Strategic Direction for the Future of Saskatchewan's Agriculture and Food Industry*. This paper was designed to plan a strategy for the future of agriculture in Saskatchewan. It was put together by people who were concerned about how agriculture is going to evolve and develop into the future, people who have a stake in the future of agriculture.

Over the last decades farm families have adapted to change. But most of the time that adaption has been in conflict with government programs — programs that were developed with politics in mind, not the agribusiness. Our government is committed, Mr. Speaker, to working with the stakeholders in the agribusiness to develop programs that will not work against the development of new products and crops, but will in fact encourage the producing of new crops, pulse crops and other speciality crops.

The acres committed to speciality crops have increased sevenfold in the last 12 years. The production of cattle and hogs has increased to a point where livestock-related farm income in our province exceeds \$1 billion per year.

We as a government will adapt these programs and services to support more diversity in Saskatchewan's agricultural production. An agri-food equity fund will be established to encourage new value added agricultural businesses in Saskatchewan because, Mr. Speaker, we realize that we have to change from a province that exports the raw materials for someone else to process and to make the value added dollars. We have to change to a province that processes more of its produce at home, and if not processing it fully, at least adding some value to it by partial processing before it leaves our province.

The example used in the throne speech is a Saskatoon-based biotechnology company who plans to build an \$8 million manufacturing plant in Saskatoon. That plant will employ some 40 people and will manufacture livestock vaccines for the livestock industry and export them worldwide. Mr. Speaker, I want to note the words: export them worldwide.

A beef industry development fund will be established to improve products and enhance markets for the beef industry. Mr. Speaker, the beef industry requested that this fund be set up and established with cooperation of the federal government. This shows how our government is working in cooperation with the stakeholders to enhance the industry so it can develop and strengthen it for the future.

The Saskatchewan Farm Support Review Committee was set up by our government to bring forth a report and recommendations on safety net options. This review committee consists of 12

representatives of farm organizations, stakeholders in the industry, along with 19 farm members at large, again stakeholders in the industry. This again shows how our government is working in cooperation with the people of Saskatchewan to develop a safety net program that better reflects the needs of the family farm.

As my colleague from Biggar has stated in his address, we now see the fields in rural Saskatchewan dotted with many different crops that would not have been grown years ago, because farmers know that if they are to make a profit in farming, that profit can't come from government programs.

Mr. Speaker, farmers do know that the profit, if they are going to make it, must come from the market-place. I believe that a government should be there to help people help themselves. Mr. Speaker, a government should not be there to drag people along, but instead work with them to find the best road for a better life. Our policies in agriculture have been and will be developed to do simply that.

The second topic I want to talk today is the reform of the health care system. I think everyone knows that the health system needed to be reformed and streamlined, but the previous administration either never had the courage to do it or never had the knowledge of how to do it. Even after the conversion of some 52 hospitals and the closing down of a great deal of acute-care beds in our province, we still have just about three times the average of hospitals per 100,000, as was pointed out by my colleague from Saskatoon Idylwyld. The national average is 3 per 100,000, and we still have 8 per 100,000 in Saskatchewan — three times the national average.

I believe that putting local people, people from the communities involved in local district health boards — 30 of them in total — in charge of the administration of their local health needs is the correct way to go. It has always bothered me that some bureaucrat in Regina has made decisions about what kind of health care facilities would be provided in Last Mountain-Touchwood. And I don't want to run down the bureaucrats, but that person may never have been in Last Mountain-Touchwood but is making the decisions as to what is best for those people — or on the other hand, some politician building a hospital in a town, not because of the need, but simply because to buy votes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just touch for a minute . . . Last year I went on behalf of the Minister of Health to take part in the opening of two hospitals in the Arm River constituency, two identical hospitals — nice buildings, built by the former administration. On those occasions I had the opportunity to talk to many

of the people from those towns, and many of them told me in no uncertain terms that they did not want those hospitals. In fact, they realized that they could not afford them. But the member from that constituency did not listen to his people; instead he wasted taxpayers' monies to try to buy votes. Those two hospitals now have been converted to wellness centres. Mr. Speaker, what a waste of taxpayers' dollars by the past administration.

Mr. Speaker, district boards are now beginning the task of shaping the health system to meet the particular needs of their residents. These boards will bring forth a more coordinated, responsive, community-centred health system. The government will continue to enhance its support of the district health system.

Changes being brought forth in this legislature to The Public Health Act will assist the boards in achieving that community-centred health system. This government, along with the district boards working together, we will renew our health system to keep it secure for our communities, for our families, for our children, and for our grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I want to spend a minute or two on the fiscal policy of our government. When we came to power in 1991, we were handed a province that was on the very edge of bankruptcy; an enormous debt load that was left by the former administration, leaving the people of Saskatchewan with an \$800 million per year interest bill.

Mr. Speaker, I relate that to entering into a poker game, being dealt a terrible hand but not being able to fold — you have to stay and play the hand. And we are playing the hand that we were dealt the best that we can. We have drawn to that hand — still doesn't look that good — and we are going to try and make something out of it. We're going to try and win that pot.

When those people from the former administration took over in 1982, interest on the provincial budget was not even a budget line. It wasn't even recorded as an expense. Now it is the third largest expense that the people of Saskatchewan have to pay, surpassed only by health care and education.

By the time, Mr. Speaker, that we bring this yearly deficit to zero, we will have added another \$100 million of interest to that. That will be about \$900 million per year, or over 900 per man, woman, and child in this province. This will be a cost that we will never see the end of — I know I won't. And in fact unless someone in this room is going to live to be over 120 years old, none of us will see the end of it. We will never see the interest removed from the provincial budget.

Mr. Speaker, we would have balanced the budget — in fact, we would have had a surplus in our budget last year — if it had not been for the interest costs. That is \$900 million going out of this province every year — 900 million that we have to pay and receive nothing for it.

Mr. Speaker, I said it was leaving the province, but because of our introduction of Saskatchewan savings bonds two years ago, now because of that move by the government, some of that interest is now being paid to the people of Saskatchewan. It is staying in Saskatchewan to be used in Saskatchewan, not being

paid to New York for their benefit. This interest will again be used here to enhance our economy.

Mr. Speaker, you can make health care cuts, you can make education cuts, you can cut programs of agriculture, or any other cuts. You can do many of those programs to save money, but on the interest there is no cutting. It is the first thing. And most of us know that if you go to make a loan payment at the bank and if you can't make the entire payment, the first thing they take is the interest. They worry about the principal the last; the interest is the first to come off it. It is the same with our provincial budget. There is no changing the interest. It has to come off there first before anything else. There's no way of saving on it.

And I want the members and the people in the public to realize, just imagine what we could do with that \$900 million per year if we had it in this province, or how many taxes we could cut if we didn't have to have that cost each and every year. Mr. Speaker, the horrendous debt was accumulated because the Tory administration did not have the courage or the will to make the tough choices in order to keep their spending in check.

And one would have to wonder about the courage of the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan. One would have to wonder about their ability to control spending. Well we know how much courage the member from Shaunavon has. As soon as the heat started to rise, he ran. And it would appear that his main principle is to take the easy route, just as he did on the west coast lockout. He wasn't sure where he stood so he didn't even speak on the motion in this House. And I wonder where he's going to run to when he has to come to some tough decisions over there. He could maybe move sideways if they'll accept him, but there is nowhere else for him to run.

Many of our people, Mr. Speaker, say that we are abandoning our principles as a party. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that. The tradition of a socialist government is to have control of your finances, control so that you can make decisions that help the people of your province without having to answer to anyone except those people that you serve.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has stated before we do not want to get the debt under control because of what the banks say; we want to have fiscal stability so that we never have to care what the banks say about us again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, I want to close in quoting from the *Leader-Post* of December 21, 1993, the Hon. Minister of Finance for Saskatchewan, and she says:

What is happening now in Saskatchewan is we are returning the province to its basic traditions, which is a tradition of living within your means. You believe in social programs, like health care, but you also believe you have to afford them.

She also goes on to say:

If you don't make the right choices, you permanently cripple the province in terms of what it could provide for future generations. And permanently crippled in terms of your capacity to make independent decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we are on the road to recovery, on the road to renewal. We have taken this province from a track of destruction, put it back on a track of fiscal responsibility, of fiscal stability. Because of what the Minister of Finance says, we have made the right choices so that we do not permanently cripple this province for our future generations. Because that would be a crime, Mr. Speaker, if we were to pass this province to our generations, to our children and our grandchildren with them . . . no room to move except the banks of New York and Zürich dictating to them what they can do, when they can do it, and how much they can spend on it. And I do not want to be part of any government that would do that.

That's why I think that we, as a New Democratic government, we have made the tough choices and we have done it not just for ourselves but for our future generations that come behind us, to allow them the ability to build their own country and their own province.

Mr. Speaker, for that reason I will be supporting the throne speech. Mr. Speaker, I beg leave now to adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:48 p.m.