

EVENING SITTING

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.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My first words must be words of welcome and congratulations to the newest member of this Assembly, the member from Regina North West who won the recent by-election. I know that she realizes that it is indeed a rare privilege and a rare honour to be selected by the voters of any constituency, but in a parliamentary system such as ours to serve in this legislative body — a body which has a great deal of history, lots of high drama, good debate about public policy . . . and I'm very confident that she will do very well in representing the interests of her riding, the interests of her constituents, and of course representing the interests of her party.

And on behalf of myself and my colleagues, those who have spoken and those who may not get a chance in this debate, I want to say welcome to you, and once again, congratulations. And I hope that your stay here will be a distinguished one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I must also note that, as the Speech from the Throne does, this is the 50th anniversary of D-Day and other important battles marking the end of the Second World War. It is important that we do not forget, that we do not forget not only at Remembrance, but that we do not forget those kinds of momentous events in history such as the one 50 years ago where men and women laid down their lives for the protection of freedom, for the defence of democracy — the ultimate sacrifice — those families right across Saskatchewan and Canada who served in that horrific and difficult time but who fought on the side of justice and freedom, on the side of democracy, and prevailed.

It is their ultimate sacrifice which permits many of us today the freedoms in the Saskatchewan legislature and around the world to speak our minds and to do what we think is in the best interest of the people in the province of Saskatchewan and Canada. We should not forget; the Speech from the Throne has not forgotten. And as one member of this Assembly, I want to pay tribute to the families and to others who were involved in that very memorable and momentous moment in our history, the world's history.

And, Mr. Speaker, I essentially have two parts to my remarks on this debate today. My first general approach is going to be an approach which will begin by borrowing from a quotation of that great parliamentarian, Sir Winston Churchill. Sir Winston once wrote:

The farther backward you can look, (the farther backward

that you can look), the farther forward you are likely to see.

Those are wise words indeed.

The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see.

And, Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne is a speech which talks of the future and which looks to the forward and to the future. And I would argue, is a speech that says that what's past is past; we're moving ahead; we're moving forward; that we have dreams — I'm going to speak about this — and these dreams are being realized, perhaps a little too slowly, but they're being realized.

They're being realized by the people of Saskatchewan sacrificing in the way they've had to from time to time and by building on the virtues and the values which have distinguished our province from perhaps others in Canada — the values of cooperation, community, compassion, social and economic justice.

But picking up Sir Winston's theme, I want to go back into history a little bit to sort of forecast what the future might bring. As has been noted in the Speech from the Throne and as many of my colleagues have outlined, 1994 is the 50th anniversary of the election of the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) government of Tommy Douglas — 50 years ago a North American breakthrough.

I think it's important to note that with that election in 1944, we began, as Saskatchewan people, the process of rebuilding and renewing after a period of devastation and despair occasioned by the Liberal government of the day. And I think it's also worth noting that in the 50 years since 1944, successive CCF and NDP (New Democratic Party) governments have governed for 34 of those 50 years.

Thirty-four years in Saskatchewan in this legislature, with the support of the people, enacting Bills and policies to develop progress and to build this province; picking up where devastation was inherited; and building medicare and rural electrification; Canada's first Trade Union Act, an Act which was bitterly opposed by the Liberals of the day; the first Bill of Rights in Canada; public insurance; public utilities; parent-run day care; the Family Income Plan; the prescription drug plan; the children's dental plan; and one could go on.

And above all, during those 34 years, exercising sound fiscal management, which provides the basis for all that progress. Not as a means to an end in itself, but as a means to a higher end — improving the quality of life for all of our citizens. Thirty-four out of 50 years is that history of compassion and community and economic and social justice. It all started in 1944

when we were called upon to pick up the pieces and start rebuilding.

And we have been called upon subsequently. In 1971 we were called upon to rebuild again after seven years of again devastation by the Liberals between 1964 and 1971.

And then we were called again November of 1991 to pick up, to rebuild once again after nine years of devastation, this time by the Progressive Conservative Party, now the official opposition.

Seventeen years of those 50 years were assigned to either Liberals or Conservatives to run the affairs of this government. And what did those 17 years bring? What can we learn by picking up Sir Winston's thoughts of looking backward to see what the future might bring us?

Well I want to touch on three areas as an example. First I want to talk about jobs and economic development, something which has always been a great test for Saskatchewan people, in fact anywhere on the North American prairie plain.

We don't have to go too far backwards to know what the Conservative government of the day, just recently defeated, what kind of a record it produced. Their jobs and economic development strategy is a landscape littered by the names of GigaText and Supercart and Joytec and Peter Pocklington and phantom furniture factories and phantom factories, and the list goes on and on.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of making a bad investment or making a mistake. Any government can do that, any person can do that, anyone could so suffer. Rather, this was a policy over the last previous nine years, a policy which put all of the economic development and all of our job strategy, all of our eggs into one basket. It was free enterprise and it was big free enterprise at that. It was in effect directing money away from Saskatchewan and the progress of building steadily and surely and putting them into the hands of big-business operators outside of Saskatchewan and very often outside of Canada. Subsidies to big business while small-business people and working men and women and farmers held the bag.

As a result, every man, woman, and child in this province will for years and decades pay and pay and pay for this kind of old-style, Tory-style economic development, so-called, which brought this province virtually to its knees.

What about the Liberals' jobs and economic development strategy? Well here, Mr. Speaker, we have to go back a little bit further in the words of Sir Winston, back further in history to see what the future might bring. We did have seven years of Liberal government under the late Premier Ross Thatcher from 1964 to 1971.

It's interesting how it is said that there is nothing new under the sun. I have here in front of me the 1964 Liberal campaign card.

Item no. 1, Mr. Speaker:

A new Liberal government will turn its energies to the creation of 80,000 new jobs in its first four years in office.

And how will it do it, Mr. Speaker?

It plans to accomplish this by providing tax concessions to new industries or mines moving into Saskatchewan.

Multinational, transnational mines which in fact moved in, in the case of potash, and flooded the market in potash; resulted in the United States anti-trust action, and virtually brought towns like Esterhazy almost to its knees before that situation was resolved after 1971.

And how else are they going to do it? Well they're going to do it by:

Promising to provide land at cost to new industries and to provide sewers and water on a local improvement basis and to make long-term loans available to new and expanding industries.

It says in this 1964 approach. Which, by the way, the Leader of the Liberal Party currently in this House in the 1991 campaign that she conducted had similar tones and language.

But what was the result? Not 80,000 jobs; no, just over 18,000 jobs in four years — 25 per cent of their goal. And true to their big business — like the Conservatives — philosophy of putting all the eggs into one economic basket of development, they got into bed with the Parsons & Whittmores of New York, they got into bed with all of the large potash corporations of the world. As I said, they brought us to the point where we were on the verge of bankruptcy in communities during that period. And indeed it took a CCF-NDP (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation-New Democratic Party) government to come back in '71 and to start rebuilding, as it is taking us to do in 1991.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, on jobs and economic development we have had the benefit in this debate already of hearing the vision of the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Conservative Party, and hearing the vision of the Leader of the Liberal Party, the third party.

Today in 1994, it is the same words and the same philosophy and the same message. There is no difference between the PC (Progressive Conservative) and the Liberal plans in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, summarized bluntly and simply, their approach is this, and it's simple: the taxpayers take the risk; the promoters take the profit. We say it hasn't

worked, it won't work, and the people of Saskatchewan will not give the Conservatives or the Liberals a chance to return back to those dark days again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1915)

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — I want to talk about what we learn by going backwards, about what might happen in the future on tax policy. Again the recent history is fairly easy to understand because we're still labouring with fiscal and tax approaches which again, as I have said, have virtually bankrupted this province or almost bankrupted this province.

In the 1980s we saw the spend, spend, spend approach of the Tories. And finally in 1987, I think it was, Mr. Deputy Leader, the magic year that the Tories understood that they could no longer finance their schemes, and they came in with a taxation policy. Well they talk about no taxes, but in 1987 they introduced an increase in the sales tax from 5 to 7 per cent, keeping in mind, Mr. Speaker, that they promised that they would eliminate the sales tax.

They introduced a fuel tax of seven cents per litre. They introduced the flat tax, mindful, Mr. Speaker, of the fact that they promised that they would reduce income taxes by 10 per cent. They increased diesel tax to 15 cents per litre, aviation fuel tax from 2.9 to 7 cents per litre, a used car tax, a lottery tax, and on and on it goes.

And by the way, we hear some debates about utility rates which, by the way, I think are in a different category than taxes, but leave that aside for the moment. From 1983 to 1991, as just one example, residential electrical rates rose by almost 60 per cent and farm rates by more than 50 per cent by that official Conservative opposition.

The members of this House and the public would be well advised to keep in mind this kind of history and this kind of conduct. And they did it, I might add, Mr. Speaker, in their second term. In the second term when the chickens came home to roost, they piled on these taxes. And even at that, Mr. Speaker, for nine years, from 1982 to 1991, we ran a deficit, member from Regina North West, of a billion dollars each and every year.

In other words, we spent a billion dollars more each and every year than we brought in by revenue on a government that had got drunk on its power, drunk on its authority, and sought to buy the voters and did so by allocating that money not to the people of Saskatchewan but to their big multinational, transnational corporations. We took the risk; the promoters walked off with the profits. That's where the money went.

We look backwards to see what it might be in the future. You have to go back a little further to see what it might be like under the Liberals in the future, but there's no difference, Mr. Speaker. From 1964 to 1971, I read to you from the Liberals' platform promises about 80,000 new jobs and how they were going to bring in all these companies. Well let me read what else they're going to do. On taxes, do you know what they say they're going to do? They said in '64 they were going to cut

sales tax to 4 and then eventually reduce it to 3; of course, that never happened.

And what they did, like the Conservatives, just like the Conservatives, in their second term, the moment they were re-elected, they introduced a budget which to this day is called Black Friday. It's the budget that Davey Steuart — a person for whom I have a great deal of respect on a personal basis — today admits he had to introduce from under his desk because it had so many tax increases.

The promises were one way, the taxes were the other way — sales tax up to 5 per cent; sales tax to accommodations, meals, and telecommunications; deterrent fees for hospitals and physician services. I remember that. And by the way, the promise that they campaigned on in 1964, Mr. Speaker, was this, and I'm quoting from their promise, quote: work to improve and expand the medical health insurance program.

And what they did when they got elected was to try to kill the health plan by deterrent fees, was part of their taxation approach. Increase gas and diesel taxes, doubling the fee for drivers' licence, increase vehicle registration insurance premiums.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal legacy of that budget was a legacy of the highest set of tax increases in the history of Saskatchewan, not only to that time but to the history of Saskatchewan today. The largest. And they did it in the second term, right after they snuck by the election, much like the Conservatives. They did it after promising tax cuts, but they did it and they proceeded to tax like there was no tomorrow.

You know, in this legislature we hear the Leader of the Liberal Party, and for that matter the Leader of the Conservatives, get up from time to time and say that Saskatchewan is so badly taxed. Well I would argue that, given the mess that we have inherited and given the attempt to balance reduction in expenditures with revenue in a sensible way, that our record is pretty good.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's simply not true, it is not true what they say about taxation. Mr. Speaker, if you take into account provincial income tax, all tax credit and rebates, health premiums, retail sales tax, gasoline tax, car insurance, telephone, home heating and electricity, as of March of 1993 by family income, what do you see?

You see the following. For a family of four making income of \$25,000 a year, Saskatchewan has the third lowest of that basket of so-called tax increases. The third lowest.

An Hon. Member: — Who's the highest?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — The highest? Newfoundland, Liberal; New Brunswick, Liberal; P.E.I. (Prince Edward Island), Liberal; Nova Scotia, Liberal.

If a family of four makes \$50,000 a year, in that same basket of so-called taxes, Saskatchewan is the fourth lowest of all the provinces in Canada. Who's the tops? Newfoundland, Liberal; Nova Scotia, Liberal; Quebec, Liberal; P.E.I., Liberal; New Brunswick, Liberal. The first five are Liberal governments. At 50,000.

Now if you have a family of four earning \$75,000, we are seventh lowest. And guess who leads. Quebec, Liberal; Newfoundland, second, Liberal; New Brunswick, third, Liberal.

Mr. Speaker, in all cases, at 25,000, 50,000, or 75,000, unless the Leader of the Liberal Party wants to make a case out for those at 100,000 and higher, some of her friends, but at 25,000, 50,000, and 75,000, in all cases the highest taxed provinces in Canada all are governed by Liberals.

And I say the backward tells us that the future, if ever they should be taking a chance on the Liberals, will result in the same situation in Saskatchewan and that's why neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals are going to be re-elected here for a very, very long time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Jobs and economic development, taxes. Liberals and Conservatives in the 17 years, what they say and what they do.

I want to touch on one other area, one which I find particularly interesting and in some ways sad — working people and families, ordinary people. Sir Winston says, let's look backward to see what might happen to the future. Mr. Speaker, I wasn't sure I was going to enter into this debate, but I'll tell you what decided my mind to do so.

When I listened to the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Third Party on the question of working families and the trade union legislation and what we saw, and why I decided to enter into this little backwards/forwards historical analogy and description of mine, was this spectacle: the Leader of the Conservative Party getting up and saying . . . sight unseen; he hasn't seen this legislation, hasn't been tabled in this House yet. In fact the Minister of Labour is still involved in consultations with this. Sight unseen, the Conservative Party says, we're going to fight this tooth and nail. Then the Liberal leader gets up two days later and she says — sight unseen — I'm going to fight it tooth and nail. In fact, she says, if you think the Conservatives are going to fight it, you ain't seen nothing until I get to fighting it.

Each one of them taking the position that they're going to out-battle the other on working legislation for working men and women. What is this legislation intended to do?

First of all, Labour Standards. Those who are not organized,

those who are least capable of looking after themselves, those are the people who are at the bottom end of the scale. What we want to do is to provide some basic notice and some basic provisions of compassion for maternity leave or paternity leave — a variety of those things which say to them, you have fundamental rights. And here the Conservatives and the Liberals say, you have no rights. We're going to fight you tooth and nail. Sight unseen. Sight unseen.

Then what do we do with The Trade Union Act? We said The Trade Union Act defines the rules which tries to make it a little bit more fair. Not to try to tip it one way or the other, but to make it more fair; to try to solve disputes in advance of an industry dispute. What does the Liberal and the Conservative leadership say? They say, sight unseen, we are going to debate and to fight this.

Well I said that Sir Winston said, look backward and you will see what takes place forward. And that's exactly what has taken place in the past. Members in this House may not remember, but I do.

I was elected in 1967 and the Liberal government of the day, their idea of working families help was the introduction of something called Bill 2. Look it up. Bill 2 was the most notorious, spiteful, most anti-democratic piece of legislation in the history of this House next to deterrent fees. Do you know what it did? It identified a so-called list of essential services. It was like opening up an accordion, the list of essential services, and said to all those people, you could not exercise your rights of free collective bargaining; simply taken away from you, undemocratically. You cannot exercise your rights for free collective bargaining. And finally, it took a CCF-NDP government to repeal that Bill.

And that is what the Liberals did in the past — an all-out attack. And as Sir Winston says, as marked by the words today of the Leader of the Liberal Party, that's what they're going to do in the future, both on Labour Standards and Trade Union Act.

And as for the Conservatives, of course, we know exactly what they've done. They have had a decade of poisoned labour relations as they sought to divide and conquer, as they sought to somehow play the game of rural versus urban. As they tried to say in the case of the one quotation I have here from the 1990 *Star-Phoenix* report, Grant Schmidt: Labour minister scorns SFL (Saskatchewan Federation of Labour) ideas - doesn't dispute them, doesn't debate them; he scorns them. And he introduces Bill 104, again to take away the rights of ordinary working men and women, people who simply say look, we want a chance, a chance to have our basic rights defended — set out.

Tommy Douglas used to say — and it's true — when you ask the question, why is it that these Conservatives and Liberals are so vehemently opposed to the ordinary guy, Tommy's line was: he

who pays the piper calls the tune. And those who pay the pipers of the Liberals and the Conservatives are the multinational corporations who want Saskatchewan to be a little Mexico, who want Saskatchewan to treat our working men and women with contempt and the lack of security. And I say that is not the Saskatchewan history and I say the people of Saskatchewan will reject that Liberal-PC attack on ordinary men and women.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Looking backwards to see what you can see in the forward. What in the world is wrong, I ask the Liberal leader, to giving conditions for ordinary working families, strengthening their position in society? What's wrong with strengthening those people at the bottom end of our scale? Doesn't it translate to stronger communities and more hope? Why are you and the Conservatives so bent on attacking them and destroying them?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have a situation here which is a little bit like — one of my colleagues talked about it in this House today — a little bit like Tweedledee and Tweedledum — Tweedledee and tweedledeeder.

In this House, the Tories and the Liberals fighting over the same ideological terrain. For jobs, we'll let the multinationals do the job for us and we're going to use our taxpayers' bucks to do it. For taxes, we'll tell you one thing, but when in government, we will act the other way as the top three, four provincial governments act. Being Liberal governments, we'll tax you, tax you, tax you. Liberals, Tories — tax you until you almost break the province.

We don't care whether we run balanced budgets. What we are going to do is we're going to spend and spend and tax, and if we don't get enough revenue and we rack up a billion dollars a month, a year, so be it. That's the way it goes. We're not here for a long time; we're here for a good time.

(1930)

No wonder the NDP is called on 34 years out of 50 to come back and clean up the mess. No wonder they're only limited to 17 years of power. And this is what's happening now — same old knee-jerk responses from the same old-line political parties. Fight the trade union legislation and the labour standards of working men and women. Give the jobs to multinationals and fight Main Street, Saskatchewan, Say one thing on taxation, do another. Don't provide the jobs. Same policies, same ideological base, the same programs which on two occasions over 17 years brought this province to the brink of bankruptcy and on our knees. No pride, no hope, nothing new. It's the same old bunch — the same old bunch.

You can slash and you can burn. And by the way, you don't have to limit it to Saskatchewan. Just take a look at Alberta. Premier Klein says he's going to have massive cuts, which he's doing. Mr. Laurence Decore, Leader of the Liberal Party, said massive cuts is not good enough. We want brutal cuts, is what he said. That's what he wants.

And they want brutal cuts and they want, in the case of the Liberals and the Conservatives here, what they want is

sometimes brutal cuts, sometimes when politics dictates no cuts and no taxes. And they do it this way. The member from Shaunavon gets up and he says, what are you going to do about crop insurance? What about all the write-downs? That amounts to, what, about 200 million? Roughly \$200 million, \$200 million of the taxpayers.

He gets up the other day and he says, STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company), we've got to have the routes everywhere. By the way, when he was on this side of the House, he wrote letters all over his riding saying how good a job the STC board of directors and the government and the management were doing with respect to the protection of STC. Now he wants more millions. Where are we going to get this money from?

An Hon. Member: — Taxes.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — No taxes either. How are we going to do it? I tell you, Mr. Speaker, if you believe in the Liberal and the Conservative approach to fiscal management, you'll believe in yogic flying — and I don't think that you believe in that, Mr. Speaker — that's what you'll believe in.

No, Mr. Speaker, we have a few different faces in the official opposition and third party, but it's the same message of no hope, no solution, no governance, the same old misery. That may be their way, Mr. Speaker, but I guarantee you that it is not the Saskatchewan way. And that's why they will never assume office in this legislature, given their record.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — So what I wanted to say — I think I've made the point; I hope I have, in any event, Mr. Speaker, my first message — from history we learn. And those who don't are doomed to repeat the lessons of history all over again.

And every once in a while they forget about good government and they'll elect a Liberal for a while, and then the NDP is back in to clean up the mess. And every once in a while they'll forget and elect a PC for a little while, and then we are again, elected again to clean up the mess.

And it is just Tweedledee and Tweedledum. Some of them were Conservatives supporting the Liberals in 1964; now they're Liberals supporting . . . or Conservatives supporting the Liberals in 1994. That is the history in this House.

And, Mr. Speaker, having come through what we have come through in this province over the last nine years, I know in my heart of hearts that that result politically will not come about — not come about.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words now about my second theme. I think I've made the point about the Conservatives and the Liberals and their history and their background.

What I want to talk about now is the future, as I said at the beginning. And to me this throne speech is a strong reminder of the future. The last two years and this Speech from the Throne and in the budget this Thursday, what this is all about is building today for tomorrow.

It's been difficult for us. We've made some mistakes, to be sure. And when people say to me, why do you have to do this, I try to give them all of the answers. But at the end of the day I say to them, we're building for tomorrow.

You know something, Mr. Speaker? It never gets any better in politics than if you can say that. Of course you'd like to make things better during your time, for our time. But if you're able to say that you're building for our kids and their kids — not even for yourselves, but for their future — like our pioneers, like our mothers and fathers who came over from the Old Country, from all parts of the world, who worked hard morning, noon, night and day, who founded the CCF, who rebuilt this province, notwithstanding what the Liberal leader said about Tommy Douglas in her disparaging remarks about Tommy Douglas, if you have that kind of a spirit here, which we have that kind of a spirit, it does not get any better than that.

That's what politics is all about, building today for tomorrow, a future for our youth, a future for this great land, for this great province. And this has been the challenge of every government and of every generation.

And it has never been easy. Saskatchewan people have always had to struggle — struggle to gain a measure of control over our own destiny so that we could build our own special province and unique community built on compassion and hope and cooperation. We couldn't allow the outsiders to build that for us. They weren't here. They would simply plunder. We had to do it.

And our history has been one of triumph in this challenge. We've triumphed over searing drought and killer frosts. We've triumphed over vast distances and isolation. And above all, Mr. Speaker, we've triumphed over the forces of the right, whether sometimes they have the mask of conservatism on or the mask of so-called liberalism — which is also conservatism — on; the forces of the right which constantly, constantly, constantly pressure and agitate and work against progressive change.

They fought The Trade Union Act of 1944. They fought the Bill of Rights of 1947-48. They fought medicare. This year, as I say, is the 50th anniversary of the CCF in North America. Right here, as I said to the member from Regina North West, in this Chamber amongst these chairs, Douglas and his team and even those in opposition were part of a defining moment in our history, in our province's history, in our nation's history.

Douglas and his government took a province that was on its knees and restored its pride. He rebuilt its common purpose,

and it wasn't done easily and it wasn't done overnight. But in doing so, he began the long journey toward renewal and hope and faith. And for 50 years our movement, our government, has tried to follow in that spirit — not necessarily the footsteps; in that spirit — each time daring to dream of a better future, that which sustained those pioneers who built this great province of ours, and each with the courage and the vision to make that dream a reality.

Well we're no different today. We too on this side dream of a better future. We dream of a day when we are free of the noose of the debt which has been wrapped around the neck of this province. We dream of a day when each child can use his or her unique talents and skills to earn their living right here at home. We dream of a day when no child has to go without breakfast, without shoes, without a decent roof over her head. We dream of a day when every citizen, regardless of age, gender, income, ethnic background, has equal access to jobs and education and health care and enhanced freedoms. And we dream of the day when we right the injustices, the wrongs of the past.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — And we dream. And we dream. And we dream more than just in Saskatchewan or Canada but we dream of a world. Because that is our obligation as social democrats and citizens of the world.

We dream of a world that is safer, stronger, and more secure and more at peace; of a world where an individual's worth is recognized as basic and intrinsic, not based on what he does or how much she earns.

Mr. Speaker, for us the question is never what is our dream; the question is how do we make it a reality. And every generation must seek new solutions to that question — solutions which respond to the changing needs and times. But always in pursuit of those solutions, basing our search on the fundamental principles, the bulwark of what Saskatchewan is — community cooperation, economic and social justice. And that, Mr. Speaker, is what makes us on this side different from those on the other side.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Today, as I've said, it's certainly been no easier than it's been in the past. In many ways it's been very much more difficult. Never before has this province, this country, been as financially strapped as it is today. Never before have we had to confront the magnitude of change that we face today, an instantaneous change.

The reality of global economics and interdependency, the explosion of technology, global communications, the reduction of national barriers through FTA (Free Trade Agreement) and NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and other such deals which we think have attacked our independence as a country and a province — all of these demand new responses to achieve our dreams and our goals.

So the question is, how do we build in the 1990s for the 21st century in the face of these pressures? How do we counter, for example, problems exposed and, I would even argue, aggravated by the media?

Let me give you one example — problems of violence. According to Nielsen ratings, by age 18 the average person will have witnessed — a youngster, 18 — will have witnessed an estimated 200,000 acts of violence on television, either portrayed or actual, including 25,000 murders, by the age of 18. My point is this: never before have we as a society in fashioning our province, our Canada, been so strongly influenced by those and other media messages — and negative messages, wrong messages, messages not telling us what we need to hear about the nature of our community and our country.

And finally, how do we deal with the rich lobbyists, the large corporations and multinationals and their spokespeople in this Chamber who constantly seek to slow or stem the tide of progress, who constantly seek to slow or stem, to deny our dreams that I've talked about?

Well, Mr. Speaker, if there's one thing over the past 50 years that I think the lesson has taught us, histories have taught us, it's that we have to start where we stand. That's how we go about it. We have to start where we stand and we've got to take things one step at a time. That's how we got medicare. It began with a dream, the dream that every person, regardless of means, should have the access to basic, core health services. It took 16 years to achieve, Mr. Speaker, because it was built and that dream was realized as the resources became available.

It took a bold, fighting, committed government of Douglas and Lloyd to defeat the opposition of the Liberals and the Conservatives. And that black period in history called the Keep Our Doctors committee, the KOD, it took that determination to defeat that coalition. But we started where we stood and we took one step at a time and we pioneered medicare in Saskatchewan, the first in North America. And today it's part of what it means to be Canadian. That's what we did.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1945)

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — So, Mr. Speaker, when we assumed office two years ago, we started where we stood, in the quagmire of debt, in the despair occasioned by the free-enterprise government that had ruled. And we rolled up our sleeves and we said we have our dreams and we have our goals and we're going to follow history and the lessons of history. And we're going to start where we stand and we're taking one, two, and three and four steps along the way to repair our fiscal situation and restore integrity; to provide jobs,

not on megabucks for megaprojects but downtown Main Street jobs; to renew our health care system, notwithstanding the opposition of the Liberals and the Conservatives. Just like they did in 1962, they said it would collapse.

Same old arguments. And we said we'd start also by rebuilding agriculture to give the family farm some hope and to assist their dreams too. And we've come a long way in a short 26, 27 months, Mr. Speaker, a very long way.

Because we believe in families, we have made a strong commitment to work towards the well-being of children and their parents. That's in the Speech from the Throne. Because we believe in families, that's why we continue to focus on the goal of creating full employment. That's in the Speech from the Throne.

That's why, because we believe in the families, we've increased aid to social assistance recipients of families in need — not like they've done in other jurisdictions — why we've strengthened family support services, not like they've done in other jurisdictions; why we've developed new, community-based approaches to preventative social education, and health programs.

Health reform, health renewal, is an example. After months of consultation, this goal is designed to preserve the integrity of what Douglas dreamed and what we still dream into the 21st century, and to help our families in doing so.

And so too why we've taken steps to improve the justice system. This Speech from the Throne talks about that. Or to protect against family violence; this Speech from the Throne talks about that. Or why we're protecting the working conditions of working men and women in the labour legislation. This Speech from the Throne talks about that.

I repeat again: I don't know why it is the Liberals and the Conservatives, without even seeing this legislation, somehow cannot understand that stronger families mean stronger communities and a more self-reliant Saskatchewan. What is wrong with helping those who need this help?

And you know, Mr. Speaker, we made wonderful progress. Already we're seeing communities come together to rebuild and to renew health services. Oh there had been the odd Tories and Liberals who've been out there trying to thwart it, the member from Shaunavon being the most notable one, in his territory and elsewhere — unsuccessfully. But the communities are now going above and riding above this.

The member from Kindersley still continues to chip away. Fair enough, I take his views as honestly held, as I do the member from Shaunavon. I just would say

to the hon. member from Kindersley, if you care at all about what the history books will say about your position, be careful about the level of the opposition that you mounted here, because someday you will be down in the history books, as those of the Liberals, who have opposed this reform.

A reform, by the way, which the Leader of the Liberal Party in the 1991 election campaign talked about. In fact in the 1991 election campaign, the Leader of the Liberal Party, she said she would freeze expenditures to the Department of Health. Do you remember that, madam member? You would freeze them.

And you said in your platform that you would set up regional district boards. I don't know why it is that you now oppose it so badly. Well I know the argument is, as the Conservative argument is, which is the oldest argument in the books from political opposition parties: I support what you're doing, but I don't like the way you're doing it; I got a better idea.

I don't know what the better idea is. I know you got to fight the deficit but . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh yes, thank you. Mr. Deputy points out I'm deviating from my script.

But just when I was looking this afternoon at clippings to make my few remarks here . . . This is from the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan paper. No, it's actually Kathryn Warden, *Star-Phoenix* In-Depth Editor. Party policy is a number of things — support a nuclear power plant.

Saskatchewan could develop world-class standards for plant operation and waste disposal on nuclear . . .

Still referring to the Liberal leader, the story says this:

She'd also like to see a research centre devoted to the study of energy options, including conservation.

I find that a bit interesting. First we declare that we want to build a nuclear power plant for generation, then we'll set up a study group to figure whether it's one of the options or not.

And I don't think that's the new politics, Madam Leader of the Third Party. But in any event there's a whole series of these promises much along the lines of the 1964, backwards to forward.

I'm going to give you two others here . . . three others. Health care: freeze provincial health care budget. I will be looking forward to your comments from the budget in this context. Set up regional health centres. And finally: introduce health care premiums for workers — for workers. That's the 1991 plan.

I didn't make this up, and if the Liberal Party leader disputes it — and undoubtedly she will on some other occasion tell me what's wrong with it — but that's exactly what was said.

And you see, it is this kind of a situation, this kind of a position that we take, that we see why some people say politics and politicians have slipped to the level that it has. I mean the Leader of the Liberal Party takes this point of view. I bet you the member from Regina North West didn't even know that was the campaign position in 1991. But you know now that that is the case, why they say one thing and they act another way.

Even the Conservatives haven't totally done that, I mean quite totally. Pretty close to it, but not quite totally.

And you know, I thought that the new politics was to say: look, this is where I stood, this is where I stand, and if you do what I think is right I'm going to applaud you. So we're doing what . . . maybe not identically, certainly not in the case of a nuclear power generator and the like. We have an energy institute and it will be giving us some advice on that. But I don't understand this.

But what encourages me, Mr. Speaker — coming back to the main remarks in my second speech — what encourages me the most is this . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . no, that doesn't encourage me all that much. But what does encourage me is — with the greatest respect to the member from Lloydminster-Cut Knife — what encourages me most is that the communities are not listening to these doomsayers and naysayers and backward-thinking people. The communities are coming together in regional economic development agencies to build jobs. They are coming together to build the hospital health centres. They are coming together to help diversify our agriculture. Because they know, that like we did in 1971, the NDP is now back giving them hope, and the journey of renewal is well begun and the foundations are well laid.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — And the member knows this, the member from the North West knows this, in Regina, because her only campaign literature was MAs' (ministerial assistant) salaries, totally concocted out of old cloth and air — not factually true at all. And by the way, no apology from the Liberal leader to this effect, but that's neither here nor there.

But what I found interesting, what I found interesting was this. Here you had the Liberals campaigning on MAs' salaries, period. Not a word on deficits, not a word on health care, not a word on job creation, not a word on agriculture — maybe that's not as relevant for North West in their minds, but I think it is because agriculture is everywhere in Saskatchewan. Not a word on working peoples and their concerns and interests, not a word. It was MA salaries.

And you know what their answer is, by their political operatives of the 1960s and '70s, the same ones who are back? Well we won, Roy; we won. That's all that counts — we won.

Well to me, my encouragement is that it isn't working. And our game plan is working. Our foundations of

fiscal and jobs and agriculture and health renewal is working. Retail trade up 5.3 per cent this year over '92.

An Hon. Member: — Highest in the west.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Highest in the west, my colleague says. Even better than sales-tax-free Alberta. Wholesale trade up 9.2 per cent. You know urban housing starts down 8 per cent nationally, up in Saskatchewan; 28 per cent actually in Saskatoon. Manufacturing shipments up '93 over '92. Oil and gas way up — 175 per cent. Over \$100 million in land sales, by the way — confidence.

Agriculture, the fourth largest, fourth largest . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, you're saying in oil and gas. The member from Kindersley gets up in question period and says, what about the Kindersley area? Well he should speak to his mayor in Kindersley. She got up in SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) and said that the Minister of Energy should be applauded for what he did in rectifying the energy situation in Kindersley.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Fourth largest crop in history. Of course there are trouble spots. Wheat and durum prices are up, cattle prices are up, canola's through the roof, giving our prospects . . . our farmers excellent prospects for '94-95. Ag 2000, our paper, like the budget plan, like the jobs plan, like the health plan — all written down, by the way — it's working now.

Diversification: 12 per cent more acreage in the specialty than from the wheat crops, traditional wheat crops, in '93 and the prospects of the future are better.

The REDAs (regional economic development authority) are being set up in the partnership paper that my colleague, the Minister of Economic Development, has got.

You know, at the end of the day I feel optimistic about what's going on here. And I'm not alone.

The Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* business editor, Paul Martin, says this, quote:

As we enter 1994, there's no doubt the fundamentals underpinning this economy are the strongest we've seen in years. Virtually every sector is doing better than it was a year ago.

Mr. Martin said.

And then Paul Martin goes on to say:

We should feel good about our prospects in 1994. There are plenty of good reasons to support that notion.

Well that's what the business editor of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* says.

Mr. Speaker, that's not the Premier speaking and it sure isn't the Leader of the Conservative or the Leader of the Liberal Party

speaking. And while I respect Mr. Martin very much as a columnist, even when he criticizes us, he does not write for a newspaper that is exactly our biggest supporters either, to put it mildly.

So what in the world's wrong here? Who's out of step? My son or the army? According to the Conservatives and the Liberals, it's the army that's out of step.

Look, I say to them and I say to the members of this House and to the public, as Mr. Martin says, we have many good reasons to be optimistic. Let's be confident. Confidence is contagious. If you have it, others will get it; your constituents, your colleagues, and the people that you work with in various organizations.

Take a look at the trends. We haven't overcome our problems totally but they're going the right way, the trends. Be confident. And if you take a look at this you will get involved with others in spreading the good news. We are on the journey of renewal and hope and confidence in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — But I wish to close on this thought, Mr. Speaker. At times it seems that we're not getting there fast enough. I feel that; my colleagues feel that. Not fast enough. We're impatient with the progress; we've had our setbacks; there will be some in the future no doubt.

But I ask all members and above all I ask the public to remember this: that while it may not be fast enough, the tread lines are fixed and the foundations are laid and if we pursue our plan with diligence on the goals of community and compassion, we're going to succeed.

And I'm also asking you to remember this: that in reality in the exercise of managing the resources of this great province, which is our responsibility as a government but ours collectively, we are faced daily with constant difficult choices.

Our progress from here will depend, Mr. Speaker, as it always has, on both a commitment to our dreams and our ability to make wise, practical choices in the day-to-day affairs of government. Dreaming and governing are two different things, Mr. Speaker, but I tell you this: you cannot have one without the other. Both dreaming and governance are crucial to success, crucial to good government.

(2000)

And that's what this government's all about — dreaming the dream of ordinary people, governing in the midst of difficult choices in a very difficult world, combine to provide good, compassionate government to give our people hope. That's what we're providing in this province now — opportunity

and hope.

But if our province is to prosper, I urge all members to be more committed to those goals and to their dreams and I urge all Saskatchewan people to be more patient, more ingenious in working towards their fulfilment. Because above all, above all, it doesn't get any better than to say that our task is to build and build well for the next generation, for the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, the philosopher William James put it this way: the greatest use of life is to spend it on something that will outlast it. The greatest use of life is to spend it on something that will outlast it.

That's what we're doing. That's how we're spending our lives here. That's what this Speech from the Throne is all about. That is what this government is all about. That is what our tradition and our history is all about. And, Mr. Speaker, I urge all members to support the Speech from the Throne because that is what the people of Saskatchewan want.

Thank you. I'll be supporting the main motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, sir. I am delighted to have the opportunity to take part in the debate on the throne speech. Unfortunately I chose the wrong place to take part in it; after that act, what am I going to do? A little bit of comic relief maybe and that's as much as we can expect, I suppose.

I must say that two years ago when we first entered this House, I was extremely nervous to stand here and take part in the first throne speech. My kneecaps were going up and down and my trousers were shaking furiously. My mouth was dry. But I notice that after a couple of years of practice, it's becoming a bit easier. Maybe I'm just getting older and I don't realize how bad I was.

But I must say, after listening to the mover of the reply to the throne there, the member for Regina Lake Centre and the seconder from Biggar there that — and the other members that have spoken since then — I think we've all improved. And it's becoming quite an enjoyable thing. One realizes how important the throne speech is and what it does in our life here at the legislature.

And of course it's so nice to see the Speaker there and the Deputy Speaker, for that matter — happy, smiling faces, sitting up there like some contented high school teacher who's given his students something to do and he can sit there and relax. I sometimes think they would be better occupied if they had a cane to whip around in one hand. You know, it would help to keep the members in order that much easier. Take us back to the old days. Quick slap on the desk and everybody jumps to attention.

And I would love to congratulate our new member from Regina North West on her election. I'm a little disappointed of course that she's not sitting on our benches, sir, where she would find much better company than she's got. But she's welcome none

the less. And she starts out with at least one advantage over her other playmate there; her leader has not yet called her a yahoo. But then perhaps that's because she is a real Liberal and not a turn-cap.

And I would point out to the member that she should be very grateful that it is our government that is in power at the moment. We passed a law last year saying that if there was a by-election, it had to be held within six months. And in fact we did it within four or five months. Despite the fact that the weather was so bad and there was a good excuse to say, oh we'll leave it till the spring, leave it till later, we didn't.

We had the by-election and we had it in the worst weather and we all turned out for it in the worst weather and we had a good fight. If it had been the previous administration, she'd be sitting there out in the sticks, knocking on doors for the next couple of years, might even end up having to wait till the next general election in 1996.

And I notice that the third party seems to have learned from our mistake, Mr. Speaker, sir. You notice that she's placed the new member for Regina North West behind the other member, sort of riding shotgun. We allowed him to sit on the back row, not too far from the door, and he strayed. I think perhaps we should club up and buy the member opposite a leading rein with some little bells on it or perhaps even a lasso.

Anyway there they are, sir, one little, two little, three little Liberals, as the little song goes. And that's the way it's going to be. But I'm digressing a little bit.

An Hon. Member: — Or three blind mice.

Mr. Draper: — I thought we'd dealt with that, the member from Moose Jaw, but we could get back to it. As they always used to say in the 19th century, let us get back to our muttons and be glad the lost sheep has been found — by the butchers.

Anyway, as I said, there are now three Liberals in the House. And this is a great advantage, because now one can speak to one side of any issue, a second can speak to the other side, and the third member can sit comfortably on the fence, instead of leaving all three functions to one poor member from Saskatoon.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — I was pleased to sit here and hear the new member's maiden speech this afternoon. And I went across and congratulated her and said, you know, it's really an excellent speech and I enjoyed it even more than when I heard it last time when the member from Saskatoon made it last year. But the content was all wrong. And I said I'd give her the opportunity of hearing my analysis of it. Here's me being like a school teacher now.

The member for Regina Rosemont has already pointed out one or two inconsistencies in it, and I'd like to add a couple more. The new member complained about the quality of debate here. She was surprised that the quality was so poor. When you . . . that sort of surprises me. How can she be surprised?

The galleries here are open every day we're in session — last year, the year before, and any year before that. And this lady lives in this city. Is she telling us that she's never been to listen to the debates in the House before standing for election? That strikes me as surprising that somebody who stands for election to come to this House, doesn't bother to visit the House and sit and listen and know what the quality of the speeches are.

The important thing is, she tells us that the quality of debate is surprisingly poor. Well if she's surprised, she hasn't listened to them, either on TV or here or even in the movies. It seems odd that somebody who is interested in coming to this House should not bother to listen to the debates and see what goes on.

That strikes me as inconsistent. Perhaps she prefers it to be like Christmas, where the parcel's all wrapped up and got little stickers on it and she's dying to know what's in it, but no, she'll wait until Christmas morning and then she'll get the surprise of her life. Well the lady's got the surprise of her life.

Anyway, so she's only got herself to blame. And she complains about the quality of debate and she tells us that the residents of her riding of Regina North West have been decimated. Decimated? Did somebody stand them up against the wall and count up to 10, take the 10th person, shoot him, count another 10, take the next one, shoot him, count the next one, shoot him? That's what decimated means.

And I haven't heard of any murders in Regina North West recently, or any assassinations, nobody with an uzo or an Uzi or whatever it is, or an AK-47, but the constituents in her riding are decimated. There must be blood all over the place and the population must have gone down something terrible.

It's possible that the member should have used the word devastated. I throw out that as a suggestion. She can look it up in the dictionary when she has time. The point being this, that little girls shouldn't use big words if they don't know what the meaning is.

Anyway, and then we get the complaint that we're saying nasty things to people in the gallery, or visitors were getting insulted, and they're sorry about that. But anybody comes and sits in the gallery gets to hear what they hear. They don't have to sit in the gallery. They can sit at home, they can sit in Australia, they can sit in Russia. We talk about people the way we see it.

And this is the point of being in this House, that we can. We're not going to get sued. We're always polite, we're always careful of the words we use. And the point of this Assembly is that we try to be as honest with each other as we can about ourselves and about people in the gallery or anywhere else in the country.

If the Prime Minister himself sat up in the gallery, sir, we could pass remarks about him; it's certainly acceptable. And as far as turncoats go, and renegades, it's open season on them any time of year, whether we're in session or not.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — And our Premier made several remarks concerning one of my favourites, Sir Winston Churchill. It was in 1945 during the great election in England that I took part in my first campaign. A lady stood for the Primrose League. In those days even the word conservative was not acceptable. It was called the Primrose League. And she went out in a car with a great big horn on it, you know, with a little loudspeaker . . . Her name was Barrett — very interesting. She lived across the street from me and there used to be a brand of shoes called Barrett. And their slogan was, walk the Barrett way. And she sat there shouting into her little microphone: vote the Barrett way.

And a school friend of mine from across the street and myself, we went out handing out leaflets; he took one sidewalk, I took the other. And there was a picture of Winston Churchill on the front, and turn it over and there was a picture of Mrs. Barrett. So that was my first election campaign. I was only nine years old at the time. It took me another two years to be turned to a socialist.

But it eventually stuck, it eventually stuck. Anyway, the reference to Winston Churchill and with reference to turncoats and with reference to insults and so forth, possibly the lady does not know that Winston Churchill himself crossed the floor twice — not once, but twice. First he was a Tory and then he became a Liberal and then he became a Tory again.

And it was because he was a turncoat that he was never in power in the '30s. When he did go back to the Tories, they just didn't trust him and they sure weren't going to put him in the cabinet or give him anything where he could have information which, if he decided he was a Liberal once more, that he could take it with him. So until the war broke out he got absolutely nowhere. And this is what happens to turncoats and renegades, people who betray their friends and their principles.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2015)

Mr. Draper: — And this nicely brings me back to the question, the matter, the epic, the saga of the Second World War. Most of you don't remember it but I do. And the throne speech laid a lot of stress on the year 1944. And 1944 was a particular significant year for me, sir. It was a year that my only sister, Heather, was born and I remember that event quite vividly. I was eight or nine at the time.

My family was scattered all over the globe. One uncle was in Burma, the second fought his way from Egypt through El Alamein and Tobruk, across to Sicily and up the boot of Italy. A third served with the Royal Canadian Air Force, a bit of a distant uncle, but he was there, Billy Ormisher. And he served in the Battle of the Atlantic, first on the western side and then from Liverpool on the eastern side of it there. But he took his part in it, as did the others. And although D-Day occurred in 1944 and was the culminating push in the Second World War . . . without the successes of the blockade from the west and the drain on Nazi resources to feed the battle in the soft underbelly of Europe.

And of course the Russians on their front. It would not have been possible to launch a successful invasion of France. And it is only just and right that those people who were so contemptuously referred to by Lady Astor as the D-Day dodgers should also get recognition and be vindicated in the throne speech, sir.

And after experiencing World War II to the full, I have made a point of taking part in the Remembrance Day celebrations every year — first in Lafleche and more recently in Gravelbourg. When I became mayor of Gravelbourg I took pride in laying the wreath donated by the town of Gravelbourg at the cenotaph.

And as the MLA for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, I have made a point of going to a different town every year to do the same thing. The first year, '91, I went to Assiniboia; in '92, Willow Bunch; last year in Coronach — and I laid the wreath on behalf of the provincial government. And this I have already arranged to do in Lafleche in 1994, and next year I imagine I'll be doing it in Gravelbourg.

That gives me great pleasure and great pride to do that on behalf of our government. And I'm not saying this in boastfulness, sir. I bring this up simply as an indication of one of the functions I think it my duty to perform in my constituency and perhaps as a suggestion that . . . perhaps the other members are already doing it in their constituencies or perhaps this is something that they could do. If they're doing it already, well and good. But I make this as a suggestion to members on both sides of the House, to all parties.

Now in that year of 1944 the election of Tommy Douglas was an equally seminal event, sir. I didn't know anything about it at the time, but the political repercussions were as profound in their way as the Normandy landings were in the military field. I was not in Canada at that time, sir, of course, but it was as a direct if rather delayed result of that election that my wife, my family, and myself migrated to Saskatchewan.

Medicare attracted many doctors from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Eire in the '60s, and I was one of those. Saskatchewan laid the foundations for health care, particularly here and the rest of the Canada, and the repercussions are being felt in the United States even more particularly today. Not only that, but the National Health Service in Britain has been successively improved over the years to try and stem the outflow of doctors from there because of the shortcomings in their system compared to that which we have in Saskatchewan, thanks to Tommy Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd, and those

predecessors of yours.

And you know, we've been told repeatedly and here again today, that Saskatchewan was the first jurisdiction in North America to elect a democratic socialist government. And I'd rather like to refute that, in an odd sort of way, because I believe that if you inquire further into the matter you'll find that not only was this the first jurisdiction in North America, I think you'll find it was the first jurisdiction in the whole North and South American continent that we had a socialist government elected. I don't think there was anyone in South America or Central America, from pole to pole, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And I think we ought to bear that in mind that he led the way, not just in North America, not just in Canada, but the whole American continent. And he deserves the greater honour for that.

Now the Leader of the Opposition last Wednesday spent a lot of time telling us what the Premier told the delegates at SUMA a couple of weeks ago. And I've got something to say on that score. Excuse me a sec.

As councillor, and later, mayor of Gravelbourg, I find myself spending what always seems to be the coldest weekend in the year in SUMA convention. And now I'm in the legislature it looks that I'm still entitled to my dose of frostbite, alternately in Regina and in Saskatoon. And now I'm expected to go to the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention as well for my sins. And this year I had the dubious pleasure of listening to the acting temporary interim leader of the Tory Party.

And I use the word Tory Party deliberately and specifically, sir. Tory is from an old Irish word, and you yourself helped me to look it up. I had some vague knowledge of this but I'd forgotten about it.

And I took a photostat from the page of the dictionary specifically to back up what I'm saying, because the Tory originally is an old Irish word meaning outlaw, and it seems particularly appropriate. And the official title is particularly inappropriate. I mean, progressive? It's a contradiction in terms when applied to them. And I can't remember them ever conserving anything in nine years and more of what is laughingly called government.

And the member in question, not related to Mr. Bobbitt of course, promised, and I quote this — I actually listened to his speech, sir — "to build our province in the face of adversity." And that's the exact quote.

And he never bothered to point out that that adversity was created by a combination of the efforts of his previous administration in cahoots with the federal administration of the equally discredited Brian Mulroney. He declared that he would be "happy to let

others take the credit." That's another direct quote, sir, and again very appropriate. So there's no way that they could take any of the credit. To them alone belongs the debit, sir.

And he made a pious promise to have an all-party committee to make public board appointments, which is fine. But why on earth didn't they do this during the nine years that they had the power and sat here? Don't know.

He demanded, demanded a public utilities review board, which again is fine. They had one. They produced one of their own and they called it public utility review board. By any other name it would smell just as sweet. But they closed it down in 1986 because it was far too cumbersome and too expensive. So if it was too cumbersome and too expensive then — I mean it was their own creation — why did they close it down? What's the difference now? Why is it not cumbersome and not expensive now? You know, I really don't understand this.

And then you whimpered about fixed election things, yet his government even went over the five years that were legally allowed anyway by one day, just to prove that they could do it. I just sort of wonder whether the member spent his summer holidays in Damascus. He certainly seems to be blind to facts.

And now, sir, and now, sir, he sends me a sheaf of forms, a sheaf of forms for me to hand out to my constituents for them to write questions on, to return to him so that he can ask our government those questions. Is he telling us that he's so out of touch that he's got no questions he can ask himself? And to those of his followers, those guys who go galloping off madly in all directions in search of the Holy Grail, do they not have any questions they could ask?

So I thought I could possibly give you some assistance. They could start question period by asking please, sir, what day is it? And they could follow that up by please, sir, what time is it? And then as a grand finale he could inquire, did I have lunch yet? And then he can lay back in his chair and count 138 Tory votes jumping into a ballot box and go to sleep safe in the knowledge that the member for Saskatoon Greystone will be happy to take over the duties of opposition later.

And here are the forms, sir, 10 copies, and it's not photostatted; it's actually signed by hand. The Leader of the Opposition . . . Mr. Premier, I want to know . . . possibly the other members got them, I don't know.

But it's incredible. I mean, we all know that the New Democratic Party forms the best governments that this province has ever had.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — The implication seems to be with these forms is that they want us to form the opposition as well. And if they would care to resign their seats, then I'm sure we could find 10 excellent candidates who would stand in their ridings and be elected and we could all be on the government side with the exception of . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — It just makes me wonder if the member really knows what the parliamentary process is about. Does he not think that I ask questions? I burn the telephone line. I don't use as much as the member of Shaunavon. In fact I think when any member of the cabinet sees me coming they duck into the washroom — they don't even care if it's the ladies' washroom — just to get out of the way of my stupid questions. I've answered a thousand questions — we've got them all on our computer — to my constituents over the past two years. And unlike some people who believe six impossible things before breakfast, we believe in the possible.

And that very same day that SUMA . . . we had a double bill. It's a long time since we had a double bill at the movies, isn't it, but that day we had a double bill. After the Leader of the Official Opposition spoke, came the leader of the unofficial opposition. Her first salvo was about post office and rail line closures. But she didn't make any reference to the federal government in whose jurisdiction these matters lie. She kept talking about the provincial government.

And I would appreciate it, sir, if you would allow me just to turn the lady around and face east, point her nose in the right direction, and then she can get out her little prayer mat — it is, when all's said and done, Ramadan — and she can make her obsequies to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and whichever ministers are responsible for Canada Post and the railways.

Now some people have said I'm a bit facetious. I don't know where the hell they got that idea from. But really I would appreciate it, because my constituency is very badly affected by rail line closures and post office closures, and I really would appreciate it if the Leader of the Third Party could intercede with the senior government in Ottawa.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2030)

Mr. Draper: — If she can deal with those issues, sir, and give us satisfactory answers, it would not be just my neighbour from the west that might consider joining her on the other side of the House. Well if somebody delivers, you go back to that store. But first of all you have to deliver.

But I do truly believe that this province has embarked on a journey of renewal. I know that many people fear the new and cleave to the old. But time and events move only in one direction and we have no choice but to go where this road that we all stand on takes us.

We are restoring sound financial management. We have drastically reduced the deficit and we shall balance the budget in 1996.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — It's not comfortable and it's not pleasant, but then neither is a syringe full of penicillin to a sick child, but it has to be done. It has to be done and that's it.

There are certainly disagreements as to details; some disagreements as to methods. We can't expect 54 people to agree on everything. And there's going to be problems arising along the journey, like the débâcle with the federal government and Quebec's multifaceted problem of smuggling and financial crunch and the problems they're having with their native population on the reserves. And we're going to have to deal with this and we'll have to solve it. And there's no reason why we can't. We've solved worse problems; we'll do this one.

It's a tautology to say that we need jobs and economic development. There's not a province in the country that's not competing in the market for jobs, economic development, and tourists. And Canada's not the only country. It's the same all over the world.

And we in this province are besieged daily with TV advertisements to go and ski in Montana or go to Deadwood, South Dakota, to gamble, or to Las Vegas, or take a trip on the Love Boat, which is fine. And one of the positive things that comes out of this in my mind is that there's somebody who's making those adverts and paying for those adverts, is beaming them at this province.

Now these people are not fools. And if they're spending to put adverts into this province, they must be expecting to get something out of it. And what they're expecting to get out of it is money. And if they're expecting to get money out of it, they are saying to us that there's money in this province. And there is. We just have to use it better, and we can do that.

But the avenues that excite me the most are those that lead to the so-called information or electronic highway. A couple of months ago I spent 12 very long and very intense days on a course in the use of a computer — something that had been, so to speak, a closed book to me for all these years. I've two younger brothers and they're both computer whizzes — one's a computer consultant for the federal government of Australia, and the second one is a computer consultant to one of the banks in England. I'm not quite sure exactly which because we don't really keep in touch — he's 18 years younger than I. I was just born too soon.

Maybe you, Mr. Speaker, have read George Orwell's book — *1984*. It was actually written in 1948; he simply transposed the integers. And it was very prescient. In every room in every building, for those who don't remember the story, there was a telescreen on the wall. And through that telescreen, Big Brother could watch and hear you. And at the same time it was a receiver, because they would broadcast news and propaganda and education, music, at any time and all times, day and night. And for good or for ill, that time has arrived. The prophecy has proved true.

With a keyboard, a screen, a fax, hard drive with a CD ROM (compact disc read-only memory), a modem, phone line, and now you add a video camera to it, and it's possible to

communicate with anyone in the globe at a moment's notice. That really is incredible. The possibility looms of being able to go to work and not actually leave your home.

We could have a session of this legislature with nobody coming to Regina. We sit at home in our constituency offices with our equipment, and we could debate and vote simply by pressing a button in front of it and it would show up on the Speaker's screen or the Clerk's screen, whichever. It wouldn't be the same fun, would it? Not to see all these happy, smiling faces.

But we see it in the daily news nationally every day. Peter Mansbridge links up to somebody in Ottawa, London, Jerusalem, Australia, and the reception is perfect. It really is. Even two hours later here — what the hell to do with it for two hours while it's going to get from Toronto to where we catch up in time, I don't know. But they do it. And what I'm saying, sir, is the technology is available and the market is there. We should go for it and we should go for it now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — And there's a reference in the throne speech to the Channel Tunnel somewhere between England and France. And this strikes a particular chord in my memory. This has been known colloquially in England as the Chunnel for donkey's years. As a kid, we always talked about the Chunnel. And for the information of members, the Channel Tunnel Company was formed around about 1890 — over a hundred years ago now.

And it was quite controversial. Many authorities trumpeted about the danger for the country by digging a back door into England, you know. And the argument at the time was, yes, what would have happened if there'd have been a Channel Tunnel a hundred years previously? Napoleon's Grande Armée could have come thundering through the tunnel on horseback and overwhelmed England overnight while Admiral Nelson was sailing impotently on the waves on the English Channel, you know. And it was a big problem. There were motions in Parliament to stop it in case the Germans and the French ganged up against poor, helpless England.

And two attempts have already been made to dig such a tunnel. And if you visit south-east Kent there's one place where you can actually see the entrance at it from one of the previous attempts. It failed because they ran out of money — it was too expensive — and they didn't have the technology to dig the tunnel, as we have now.

There's one machine still left in the tunnel. They let it

dig its own grave, and they've left it in there. That machine — that one machine which is about half as long as this Chamber — cost \$10 million. And when they completed it, they backed it up and they turned it at any angle and let it dig a little tunnel, and they just . . . the driver got out and they just left it there — \$10 million worth. They reckon for any other tunnel, depending on the climate, depending on the soil conditions, depending on the water conditions, they'd have to design an entirely new machine.

An Hon. Member: — It's probably in China by now.

Mr. Draper: — It's probably still going. You just never know your luck. If you hear the ground trembling under your feet, you'll know it's passing through on its way . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It could. Oh now, that's a point. Maybe we should get it — dig an underground railway between Regina and Saskatoon.

Anyway, when I was in high school in Westcliff in Essex, our mathematics teacher brought in copies of *The Times* and taught us to read the stock market tables. And one of the examples that they used was the Channel Tunnel Company. It was virtually bankrupt, and it was only worth a penny or a penny farthing a share. But it was still listed 60 years after. And as I say, it sticks in my mind. And as I say, the controversy over building the Channel Tunnel was so great that it makes our discussions over the fixed link to Prince Edward Island look like unanimity.

But since World War II, with the incredible bombing and the use of power troops and the invention of intercontinental ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads and all those sort of things, it's made all the arguments against the Channel Tunnel obsolete. And now I feel very proud to stand here in Regina and feel indirectly linked to this vision of my youth of the Channel Tunnel. I'm linked to it by a wholly-owned Saskatchewan Crown corporation — SaskTel.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — Who could have imagined when your forebears in the CCF bought out all these local telephone companies — Lafleche rural, Gravelbourg rural, Mossbank, wherever — and combined them into the one Saskatchewan government telephone company so many years ago, that the modern SaskTel would own a communications company of world-renowned quality in our own so-called mother country.

Now we talk about teaching our grandmother to suck eggs, whatever that may mean. I've never seen anybody sucking eggs, frankly — I used to blow them as a kid to collect the shells, but never suck them. But now our own home-grown Saskatchewan scientists are showing both mother countries — England and France — how to communicate. Wouldn't it be nice if Regina could teach Ottawa and Quebec and Toronto to communicate?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — But I don't think we quite have the technology for that.

And vaccination is very much in the news now. We talk about

biotechnology. And of course vaccination was introduced in England in the 18th century by a doctor. And he wasn't a specialist; he was a general practitioner. And he wasn't a city general practitioner either; he was a rural general practitioner. Just like me, only more so. Talk about horse-and-buggy days, that was it. And he discovered the vaccination against smallpox, which was world shaking at the time — very controversial again, but world shaking. And in the 19th century of course, the kudos swung to the famous Pasteur Institute in Paris.

But now Saskatchewan's developed its own vaccine and it's exporting them all over the world. And again we're competing with and succeeding against England and France and so many other countries that consider themselves far in advance of us technically. There's nothing we cannot do if we really set our minds to it — nothing at all.

But we seem to have got a very zoological trend in this debate, sir, what with mice and cats of many colours, and turncoats and catastrophes. Why even the member from Nipawin over there went rabbiting on about horses and cows yesterday.

But I would like to go on to greater things — elephants, to be precise, and white ones in particular. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the white elephants in south-east Asia are sacred. You can't kill them, and you can't make them work because they are gods.

And one of the problems is that if a person falls out of favour with the local bigwig, the local chief, you could end up with a gift of a white elephant for Christmas. And you go gradually bankrupt feeding the voracious beast, a beast that you can't put to work and it's going to out-live you. And it's a serious matter in places like Thailand and Malaya.

And it strikes me that the male member — and we'll forget about Bobbitt again — of the Liberal Party seems to be a modern-day white elephant. Now on January 22 which was a Saturday night, 1994, it was the member for Saskatoon Greystone's turn, now that she's a party, to air her views on *Provincial Affairs*, that five-minute political broadcast sandwiched between the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) national news and the provincial news.

During the whole time she repeated the phrase, your Liberal MLAs, with the accent on the plural. Yet she never once mouthed the name of you know who. She never even referred to his constituency on radio/TV. She could have used his name, used the constituency; it didn't matter. Not once. And she kept on stating that all the citizens of Saskatchewan could rely on their Liberal MLAs. It was quite noticeable.

(2045)

And this is the lady who's going to introduce new

politics into Saskatchewan. Yet when she was asked by Murray Mandryk — it's in the *Leader-Post* here, January 3, 1994 — why she didn't ask the nameless one to resign his seat and run as a Liberal candidate in the by-election, replied, no one's ever done that before.

I would have thought you would imply doing precisely what no one else has ever done. But maybe I use the wrong dictionary. Or perhaps the member from Saskatoon Greystone spent her time in wonderland or behind the looking glass with the queen who believed six impossible things before breakfast.

But I think I have a solution to her problem, now that she has a third member, and is no longer in any danger of losing her allowances. You see at one time she was an independent member because she was by herself. But then when she got her recruit she became a dependent member. Yes, because she depended on his loyalty. If he crossed the House once he could have crossed it again, or gone over there, and then she'd be back to being independent. So she's in a lot of trouble. But now she has a third member, she's safe. She can keep all her allowances, all her expenses, and she can be called a party. She can have a party every day.

And now I would suggest that, now when she's safe, she asks the member for Shaunavon to resign and stand in a by-election. But first of all she was doubtful whether the Liberals in Shaunavon would accept him. It's no problem. He can stand in a nominating convention.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — And I met the previous candidate at Reg Gross's roast the other day in Swift Current, and he would be delighted to stand again. And they can choose between the sitting member for Shaunavon or the previous, Mr. Ruehs, the candidate, and then we will know what the Liberal Party in Shaunavon wants. And after they've made that choice, then the whole constituency can make their choice in the following by-election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — And then she'll have a working elephant to which she can give an honourable name.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — But perhaps the peripatetic member's anonymity is part of the new politics. It's possible the Leader of the Third Party is teaching him to be humble, you know. Perhaps we're going to have self-effacing politicians, and that certainly would be something no politician has ever done before.

And our new member for Regina North West could end up in a similar problem because I noticed that during the by-election there, there were billboards with the candidate's name, but the photograph seemed to be the photograph for the member for Saskatoon Greystone. Do we have a new cult of the personality, a new Stalinism arising in the third party? Do we have a new Great Helmsman, like Mao Tse-tung, developing over there? Perhaps another Prime Minister Gandhi or Mrs.

Bandaranaike? Do you remember that one?

Anyway, to get back to important matters. I was very pleased to hear from the Minister of Health on Friday morning there in question period, that there was an ongoing needs assessment throughout the province for health care. She was very conciliatory in answering the question from the member for Wilkie. And that sort of reassures me. It reassures me very much because I'm very worried, as you might know, about the problems with the rural health care.

And if there's needs assessments going on, I would take it and I would certainly hope that if the needs assessment indicates that beds for respite care, palliative care, terminal care, and assessment and observation are required, for example, because this concerns me, say, at Ponteix, that perhaps they would be provided.

But one of the major problems with health care reform is the lack of comprehension of the general public and the opposition and their cohorts. We've all noticed this. But it becomes really glaring at times. And I have an article here that was published in a quasi-medical journal called *Family Practice*, February 7, I believe.

And in it there's an interview with the vice-president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association. I shan't name him and embarrass him but unfortunately he presumably will be the president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association next year. And we got a problem here.

In this article he states that there are two problems with the health districts. I'll quote here:

For starters, most of the newly formed rural health-care districts have at least 12,000 people each. This is 2,000 too many per district, according to . . . family physician and vice-president, Saskatchewan Medical Association.

Not only is the number of people in each district too great, but the actual number of districts — 30 — is also (much) too high . . .

"There's no one in the province, including the Department of Health, who thinks this new structure is sustainable."

He predicts that within five years the number of districts will decrease.

Now that's really quite fascinating. You know, I mean the districts may be too big; this is a matter of opinion. There may be too many districts — that's also a matter of opinion. And he doesn't give a number of . . . he just says 10,000 rather than 12,000. But he doesn't say

how many districts there should be. If 30 is too many, perhaps 25 is a better number.

The problem is that to comply with both this august doctor's suggestions simultaneously, we're going to have to dispose of upward of 100,000 inhabitants of Saskatchewan. If you're going to reduce the number of people in each district and reduce the number of districts, we're going to have people we can't accommodate.

An Hon. Member: — This is where the decimation comes in.

Mr. Draper: — That's where . . . Not only is she using words that she doesn't understand, she's been reading papers she doesn't understand.

Anyway, he doesn't offer any method of doing this, you see. And I would like to suggest that we could possibly buy them one-way bus tickets to Alberta and they would make up for Mr. Klein's government's loss of the citizens that he bought one-way tickets to British Columbia.

But of course it's also possible that the eminent doctor, like some other doctors like Dr. Mengele — who actually was a dentist but it doesn't matter — but perhaps he has some idea of a final solution for this X-plus population, in which case I hope that he will allow us to wait until spring when the ground will be softer so it will be a lot easier to dig the mass graves that will be required. I only hope that the eminent doctor's medical knowledge is a little bit better than his mathematics, otherwise there's going to be a lot of trouble with patients in Saskatoon.

But finally I'd like to finish on a couple of suggestions, simple measures which I think fit in well with the wellness model and cost very little, and I think these are quite important. The first is simply to clear all the sidewalks in all the towns with something like a bobcat — of snow, that is.

Now during the six years I was mayor of Gravelbourg, I did this because many of the elderly people just didn't have the strength to clear their sidewalks. And I noticed this because I was called out to do house calls; they couldn't get out of the house to come to the hospital or come to my office, so I did house calls.

And for some reason or other a family would just . . . the young people aren't interested in shovelling snow for a few bucks now. It's possible that cigarettes in Saskatchewan are too cheap, Madam Minister; maybe you should put the prices up. But if we did this, and if it prevents one fractured wrist and one fractured hip in each town, each winter, the savings to the province in medical care, surgery, would more than pay for the cost of clearing the snow three or four times every winter.

The cost of a prosthesis that goes into the hip can cost . . . it can be anything from \$1,000 up. They're made of very expensive and very good material — titanium steel and such, and vanadium steel. In fact, they're so expensive, they're so expensive, that doctors are discussing the idea of reclaiming them from the dead so that they can be used again in the same way as you might reclaim skin, or eyes, or an internal organ. They're enormously expensive. And I think that this is something that we might be interested in legislating — that

sidewalk snow will be cleared — in the same way as we legislated that roadway snow must be cleared to keep highways open.

And with all this concern of . . . about additives to our food, I'm surprised to see so many cafés in this province that provide whitewash made from inedible oils to add to our coffee. We even get it in this building. As a physician again, I'm worried about additives, but when you think of something like these coffee whiteners, which are nothing but additives and chemicals, the effect of this on the long term really worries me.

We've been eating sugar for hundreds of year, we know the effects. But we've been eating this Coffee-mate, and Coffee Rich and junk just for a few years. What's going to happen down the line? We really don't know, and I think it's something we could look into. If you go into Alberta, you'll find that every café even at the truck stop, they give you pure cream or half and half, and I think we could do the same here. And apart from its public health measures, I think it would give our dairy producers a fillip. If they can do it in Alberta, they can do it here. I don't know whether it's done by legislation. This is something that we could find out.

And I would like to leave you with one final thought, Mr. Speaker, sir. And that is this: success is the result of good judgement and good judgement is the result of experience, but experience is the result of bad judgement, which makes it seem, sir, that the absconding member for Shaunavon has at last got his foot on the bottom rung of the ladder to success by demonstrating his bad judgement by crossing the floor. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it gives me great pleasure to join in the throne speech debate. It's a little hard . . . difficult to follow both the Premier and the member from Gravelbourg, but I will certainly try my best.

I firstly want to congratulate the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the member from Regina Lake Centre, and the member from Biggar who seconded the motion.

We on this side of the House appreciate the contribution of every member in this House and I want to congratulate all of my colleagues on their excellent contribution to this debate.

I also want to welcome our newest member, the member from Regina North West, and I know you will enjoy this House immensely. I enjoyed very much the by-election in Regina North West. I took part in some

late evening canvassing, and the people in north-west Regina are no different than Kelsey-Tisdale. They're great people and I enjoyed their comments very much, and I know you'll represent them very well.

Today I want to talk a little bit about the pride I have in being part of a government that has courage to make the tough decisions. I know people in private business, I know farmers, I know people that have households, like myself, who have children that are going to university. The soldiers we talk about in the throne speech have had to make some tough decisions. We're used to making the tough decisions.

(2100)

A tough decision seems hard for the moment, but if we think about it, it's for the future that the reward is there for. Some like to run from tough decisions and I think we've noticed that in this House. But to run from a tough decision, like I mentioned earlier, just helps your feelings for the moment. It doesn't help for the future.

The soldiers made it a tough decision, but it wasn't for themselves for that immediate second; it was for the future generations, for their children, for us. And those decisions are not easy. But with determination and knowledge of what is best for the future, we make those decisions.

People expect a government that's trustworthy, they expect a government that is hard-working, and they expect a government and want a government — and I found that out in the by-election in North West Regina — they want a government that has the ability to make those tough decisions.

They also want to be a part of the decision-making process. They want to be a part of rebuilding Saskatchewan and rebuilding our economy. And they've told me, the people in Kelsey-Tisdale, the people in Regina North West, are saying that we have that leadership. They're proud of that and I'm proud of that.

We also have worked hard with all sectors of the community, and they appreciate that. They're involved in our decision-making and they feel a part of solving the Saskatchewan problems and concerns. They feel a part of giving us their ideas.

The Minister of Finance, for instance, has gone across this province talking about budget, the pre-budget of 1994, the pre-budget of 1993. She has consulted with people all over the province, asking them what they feel — are we going in the right direction?

The Minister of Labour is now talking to both business groups and labour groups, working people, small business, about what new labour legislation or new ideas in labour legislation that can be brought forth that is satisfactory to the different people that are involved.

The Minister of Economic Development has gone from community to community, from the board of trade to the chamber of commerce to working people to the industry itself, talking about tourism authorities and what role does the

government play and what role does the private sector play.

The Minister of Agriculture has gone across the province asking farmers what do they need, what do they see in a farm safety net and in a direction for agriculture?

Just the other day I had the privilege of meeting with SADD, a group of high school students from across the province, Students Against Drinking and Driving. The Minister of Justice was there and the minister in charge of SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). We talked to them; they talked to us. Very open discussion about drinking and driving.

And now today the Associate Minister of Health has said that we will consult with school children from across this province who will help determine policy and direction for this government to take in regards to drinking and driving, tobacco use amongst minors, and drivers' licence and how they pertain to you. So people are involved with this government in the decision-making process. This is what people want; this is what we've given them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Today it was almost I guess unbelievable, or strange . . . it was a strange feeling I guess, that when the Associate Minister of Health announced this consultation process with the students across this province, that even the opposition members, the members from Kindersley and the member from Saskatoon Greystone actually tried to agree with us — didn't really fully, because I guess it wasn't politically smart; I'm not sure of the reason — but sort of agreed with us that this is the right direction, with reservations. But I really think that maybe I see, and I hope I see, a type of a new willingness that maybe they're going to join with us as we move forward. I don't know; I hope so.

Our Minister of Health and the Associate Minister of Health has travelled this province talking about health care, talking about wellness, talking about regional decision making and how the different communities can decide, the different regions can decide their health care needs. Knowing that there's a core service there, but what different needs are there in Tisdale in comparison to Melville, or what different needs are there in Prince Albert in comparison to Saskatoon. We involve people in our decision making. This is what is needed and this is what the people want.

As a government we respect and recognize the talent and skill of the Saskatchewan people. We know it's not good enough just to rely on outside solutions. We look to our neighbours, we look to our communities for the Saskatchewan type of solution or the Saskatchewan solution and the Saskatchewan direction.

In Kelsey-Tisdale and across the province and indeed in Regina North West, the Saskatchewan people were telling me — and in our consultation process too the Saskatchewan people tell me — that one of the most important things is to live . . . government must live within their means. And this government has taken that to heart and since taking office just a couple of short years ago have reduced our expenditures by 7 per cent, the only government in Canada to do that.

We are running an operating surplus of over \$500 million. However, we have to look at the old Tory debt, the \$16 billion or whatever, and find \$850 million of taxpayers' money to pay the interest on it.

Well I guess we can only speculate of what we could do with \$850 million in this province. I can think of, certainly as Minister of Highways, can think of quite a few roads that I could fix. I think we could . . . \$850 million is almost like having two additional education systems like we presently have in the province of Saskatchewan. So just think of what we could do in education or agriculture.

The initiatives of our Finance minister as well has reduced our deficit since 1991 by over \$1 billion. And the people of Saskatchewan are telling me, yes, some of the decisions you make affect me, but I know they're tough decisions and I know they're the right decisions. But I will take part in it; I will help you with it, as long as we get rid of the deficit. We have a four-year plan to get the deficit to zero by 1996 and this is what the people want. They want to see their tax dollars, they want to see their sacrifice, reduce this debt load, because they're concerned not only with themselves but they're concerned also with their children and their children's future.

Living within our means has taken a little bit of a different angle as well. I think we have taken some initiatives within government. We don't get much credit from the opposition — I guess there's no political points in doing that, so they don't do it — but the freeze on MLAs' salaries is one; cutting cabinet ministers' salaries by 5 per cent is another; reducing MLAs from 66 to 58. Now that's courage, and I don't think I'd see it in either of the other two parties. But you see it here, not in our second term of office but in our first term of office.

Also there are other areas that we've had to look at in government. If we were going to be responsible to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, we had to look at the deals of the previous administration — the Weyerhaeuser deals, the Bi-Provincial upgrader, the NewGrades, the Crown Lifes, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And in doing that we have saved the people of Saskatchewan millions and millions of dollars. We don't get any credit from the two opposition parties, but eventually I think they will come onside and they will say to us, yes, I believe you're doing the right thing. I think the people of Saskatchewan will demand it of them.

Another area that the people of Saskatchewan ask for is a strong economy and jobs. The Minister of Economic Development released a few years ago the *Partnership for Renewal* and the economic strategy basically outlining 31 initiatives for economic development in Saskatchewan. Not only 31 initiatives, but these initiatives had dates so that opposition members, the people of Saskatchewan, could say to

us, look, you're off course.

That's the first time I think in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker, that initiatives have completion dates. And it forces the government to complete their strategies on a certain date. It's a timetable, it's accountability, and it's important that the Saskatchewan people . . . well that report card, I guess, they can give us a little check or a little cross if we don't do it right.

I attended meetings with the minister in Hudson Bay and in Melfort. And the one thing I found interesting, it wasn't just a meeting for that community alone but it was for many communities in the surrounding area. The understanding now is that an individual community on its own probably will have a very difficult time of surviving. But communities working together, whether it be in health care or economic development or whatever sector, must work together to succeed.

The Saskatchewan people are saying this more and more every day. They believe that working together with their neighbouring community, who they probably would have not talked to or not agreed with a few years ago, is their belief on how to succeed in Saskatchewan.

REDAs, the regional economic development authorities, is part of that initiative. Mr. Speaker, it will mean that communities will work together to develop economic initiatives, planning, promotion, and marketing of their region — rather than just one stone in a gravel pile, but it's like the whole gravel pile working together.

The Tourism Authority Act will allow the participants of the tourism industry to develop our many tourism initiatives. And I can just think of a few in Kelsey-Tisdale area. There are many vacation farms; the Elk Festival at Greenwater; the Musers Marathon in Hudson Bay. These are some of the initiatives that could be marketed around the world. And these initiatives are not government by themselves, but it is government working in partnership with industry, with communities, and with the Saskatchewan people.

(2115)

The Trade Development Act will bring business and government together to increase the province's ability to export unique products. And I'm sure in your area, in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, in Prince Albert, in many areas of the province, there are a lot of unique products made by very talented people. All they need is a little help to market them. And this Trade Development Act will not be just government by themselves, but it will be government and people, the

partnership between the private sector and government promoting this. That's the only way things work now — is partnerships and government as the facilitators and not just the doers.

The *Partnership for Renewal* strategy recognizes the importance of small-business workers, Saskatchewan people, in building our economy. We are consolidating all governments, provincial and federal, municipal services, that will allow these companies better access to information, better access to the different government programs. And this is an initiative that is supported by business.

Can government become better facilitators in Saskatchewan for small business, for entrepreneurs? The throne speech says we can and yes, we are going to. We can work together for the betterment of all.

Small business is the main job creator in Saskatchewan, and so we were able to help them a bit by reducing the small business corporations tax and introducing the manufacturing and processing tax credit to encourage small-business investment in processing. We are continuing to phase out the E&H (education and health) tax on direct agents used in manufacturing.

As Minister of Transportation, I am very pleased to oversee the operation of the Transportation Policy Council as part of the *Partnership for Renewal* economic development strategy. The aims of the council is to ensure that the transportation policy in the province of Saskatchewan supports opportunities for economic growth, and that our system meets the needs of our communities and is reliable and affordable service for the 1990s and beyond and is in partnership with the federal transportation policies. We are not doing this in isolation; we are doing this with the involvement of representatives from SARM and SUMA and we are consulting with all stakeholders.

My department is also very active in participating in the national strategic highway improvement program. Under this program we will continue twinning of Highway 16. This will offer greater safety to the people of Saskatchewan, especially in the north-west part of the province, but also to a lot of Trans-Canada travellers. It will also help our tourism industry in the north-west, Mr. Speaker, as it will allow more people access to that area.

So not only are the people and government working together now, Mr. Speaker, which is quite unusual from the last 10 years, but also interdepartmentally departments are working together to achieve strong, healthy policies that will give us a strong, healthy province with strong foundations that will not be easily dismantled.

Another area that people have said that government and they have to work together is to control government spending. In that area I want to talk a bit about the Department of Highways because I'm very proud of some of the measures that have been taken to cut costs and increase efficiencies.

This year the Department of Highways has started two business process improvement projects. They involved review and purchasing and accounts payable and a fleet management system. The new purchasing/payables system will reduce the

duplication that is needed at the department and reduce the dealings in regards to accounts by seven days, and it is estimated that we will save \$400,000 this year. The fleet management system will mean a more detailed scheduling of repairs and preventative maintenance and the expected savings is \$550,000 this year.

My department also relies on the employees to design and construct 20 new snowploughs. These snowploughs will not now be built out of the province but will be built within the province; 100 per cent Saskatchewan products, and the savings is estimated to be \$160,000.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — The equipment section of the department will tender the repair parts on a whole provincial basis rather than on the individual location basis, and the estimated savings there, Mr. Speaker, is \$90,000. We're going to use in-house duplication services at a savings of \$25,000. Saskatchewan maps will now be printed only every second year and the savings there is \$88,000.

And this one here, it's kind of sad, but actually the department is looking at the idea of replacing the minister's photo and signature from the highways map and replacing it with advertising. I guess this shows, Mr. Speaker, that nothing is sacred in these efforts to cut costs.

This might not seem great in the scheme of things, Mr. Speaker, but . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well especially the picture, I agree. But taking each and every department and the savings that are made, it will add up to a lot of dollars. And we have to remember that if we look after the pennies the dollars will start looking after themselves.

One of the other areas that people have told me, in Regina North West, in Kelsey-Tisdale, and across the province is that we must work together to protect the family farm. And I am very proud of this government's commitment to agriculture and the farm families of Saskatchewan.

Farmers have been out ahead of government when it comes to the world of agriculture markets. The seeded acreage and specialty crops has increased sevenfold. There are 12 per cent less cereal crops seeded this year than there were last. Cattle and hog production are going to bring revenues to our economy of over a billion dollars — that's the highest ever.

As the throne speech indicated, Saskatchewan is the world's largest producer now of green lentils, mustard and canary seed. And I know for a fact that in the

north-east the farmers in my area have diversified into alfalfa, canola, peas, leaf-cutter bees, honey production, and many other areas of diversification.

It's been tough out there. Last year, for instance, we had the early snow in September. But farmers are taking responsibility for their destiny and they're working to achieve. They realize that just relying on government is not enough, that there are things that they can do.

Last year the government budgeted \$320 million to support Saskatchewan agriculture; 231 million had to be directed to income support programs like GRIP (gross revenue insurance program), NISA (net income stabilization account), and tripartite stabilization premiums.

Is this the best way? I guess I ask, and the farmers ask me. Farmers and government are realizing that farm support must be improved. The Farm Support Review Committee, the Minister of Agriculture, have been consulting with farmers across the province about new farm programs that would support the family farm and farmers' efforts and changes, changes that see benefit to their industry.

Their main concern is the stability of the family farm. They also want a program that is more market sensitive. They don't want to rely just on the taxpayer. They also want a program that will look at the costs of production or consider the cost of production. And they want a program like I mentioned earlier, that is more tax friendly.

The policy document Ag 2000 — and I hope most of you read it — was written after a lot of consultation with the farming industry and it serves to lay out the guidelines of provincial efforts to facilitate, to promote commercially viable, self-sufficient and sustainable agriculture for the future, always stressing the importance of the family farm and reaffirming that agriculture is still our number one industry.

As Minister for Sask Water, I would like to point out the involvement of that Crown corporation in assisting the growth of agricultural processing and economic development. The PAWBED (Partnership Agreement on Water Based Economic Development) agreement, which is a federal-provincial cost-sharing program, provides assistance or provided assistance just recently to Infra-Ready Products, a subsidiary of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. And what this company does is micronizing. It's a micronizing processing facility that uses the technology to process wild rice, whole grains, lentil products, to reduce cooking time for consumers and open new markets for high value processed farm products like cattle feed.

PAWBED is also assisting in development of the New Dawn Foods which will process Saskatchewan fruits and vegetables for export. PAWBED agreement is also supporting the development of fish farming in Lake Diefenbaker by Agpro. The fish raised here will find a market in places as far away as Montreal and will create new jobs for local people.

Sask Water is also participating in experimental use of hog effluent in irrigation at the Elite Stock Farms, which will use new processes to handle this waste product and return nutrients to the irrigated soils. So we're not only looking at economic

development but at soil protection at the same time.

These are not the megaprojects that the former administration looked at. These are smaller scale but very relevant Saskatchewan type of . . . I guess Saskatchewan's way of getting out of our situation. Partnership with Saskatchewan people with communities on a small scale, not on a megaproject scale.

These achievements have been taking place at the very same time that we're working with our financial situation and reducing our deficit. We have to deal with the legacy of the huge debt, the burden of debt, but it proves that at the same time if we work together, the people of Saskatchewan and the government and the opposition parties, that we can create a climate of economic development and job creation.

The other aspect that I have been told by people in my area is that we have to make government more accountable to the people that elect us and that we serve. And we have done that and we will continue to do that.

We've opened up the Board of Internal Economy. Annual reports by Crown corporations are now presented to the Legislative Assembly. *Public Accounts* are available in Saskatchewan libraries. We have mid-term financial reviews; we have earlier budgets; we have third parties receiving their budget notifications and information a year in advance. We now no longer own our office furniture but it belongs to the Crown. And that's just to mention a few.

And people have been very supportive of those initiatives. I don't get a lot of credit from neither the Liberals nor the Tories, but I do get credit from my constituents.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2130)

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — The throne speech is a road map that the government intends to use to move ahead, with the support and the input of the people of Saskatchewan. We will move ahead and at the same time reduce the burden by the huge borrowing and the large debts created by the previous administration.

And I want to thank firstly, the people of Kelsey-Tisdale who have supported this process and are willing to continue to support it, and in fact all of the people of Saskatchewan. I want to thank the people for their ideas, their effort, and their understanding. And I will be supporting this journey of renewal. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter the debate on the Speech from the Throne this evening. I do so with pleasure but also with some trepidation, as those of my colleagues who have spoken before me have done so with eloquence and sincerity, not to say humour, and that seems to be particularly true this evening.

So it is with some nervousness that I stand here, but also with a great deal of pride, as I believe that to speak in this debate is not only an honour but an important part of my responsibilities as an MLA. I believe that the people in my constituency, indeed all the people in Saskatchewan have the right to hear the thoughts of their elected representative on the throne speech, which does after all set the government's plan for the legislative session.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I am pleased and honoured to share some of my thoughts on this journey of renewal, which is the focus of the Speech from the Throne. First I would like to commend my good friends and colleagues, the members from Regina Lake Centre and Biggar, and congratulate them on their fine words when moving and seconding the Speech from the Throne. It is a privilege to be asked to do this, and they have shown by their remarks that the Premier made a wise choice.

Over two years ago, Mr. Speaker, when I first spoke in this House, I congratulated you on your election as Speaker and wished you well. May I say, as I said then, that yours is a very demanding position, and I believe that you have well earned the full support and confidence of all members of this House. I am sure that with your guidance, the business of this House will continue to be handled effectively, fairly, and with the decorum the people of Saskatchewan expect and deserve.

I would also like to congratulate and welcome the new member from Regina North West. Life as a member of this Assembly brings many challenges and a great deal of work, but it is fascinating to discover the variety of interests and concerns of one's constituents and to represent them as best as one can here in this House. I hope that you will find this work as rewarding and satisfying as I have done.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government that honours its commitments — in this case holding a by-election within the six-month time frame requirement.

Mr. Speaker, I could not rise to reply to the throne speech without saying a few words about my constituency of Qu'Appelle-Lumsden and the people who live there. Many of those people are truly exceptional. For instance, I do not know when, if ever, someone from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden has represented Canada in the winter Olympic games. But in Lillehammer right now is Michael Hall, a speed skater from Regina Beach.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — Michael competed in the 5,000-metre speed skating competition yesterday. The winner broke the world record, and Michael placed 22nd overall, and we're all very, very proud of him.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — There are extraordinarily gifted people living in my constituency, men and women, young and old, involved in a wide variety of activities and careers, and I thank them again for giving me the privilege of representing them.

Physically, Mr. Speaker, Qu'Appelle-Lumsden is a beautiful constituency encompassing as it does the chain of the calling lakes, rivers, rolling hills, and vast prairies. One of the best ways to appreciate the extent of its beauty is to go trail riding though the Qu'Appelle valley, and this is something I try to do whenever I have the chance. People come from many parts of the world to do this, thus making a significant contribution to Saskatchewan tourism.

Qu'Appelle-Lumsden also has a rich history. The rural municipality of South Qu'Appelle is the oldest in the province. The town of Qu'Appelle will be celebrating its 90th anniversary this summer, and I imagine that will be quite a party.

Fort Qu'Appelle was the scene of the historic signing of treaty 4. This happened over a hundred years ago in 1874, and it was one of the treaties signed by first nations people and Canada, and this event continues to be celebrated every year.

Fort Qu'Appelle has also recently been the site of another milestone in the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people. The people of the Star Blanket Band and the town of Fort Qu'Appelle have reached an agreement to establish an urban reserve in that community. Reaching this agreement took extraordinary patience, compromise, and sensitivity on the part of many, many people.

I would especially like to acknowledge the fine work of Mayor Fran Hahn, Noel StarBlanket of the Star Blanket reserve, and Vic Taylor from the Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat. This is not only significant in Saskatchewan but in other jurisdictions across Canada as well and will help to establish better and better relationships between first nations people and their neighbours.

Mr. Speaker, I hope to have the opportunity to speak at greater length about aboriginal issues sometime during this session. But to all first nations people in Saskatchewan, and particularly to the people of Piapot, Muscowpetung, and Pasqua in Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, I would like to say that this government is committed to involving Indian and Metis people in all parts of Saskatchewan's society.

I ask you to listen to the words of my colleague, the Minister responsible for Indian and Metis Affairs. He has said, our mission is to chart the direction which

will see Indian and Metis people as full and equal participants in our society on their own terms, based upon their culture, traditions, and community values — full and equal participants in our society, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to working towards that goal.

There are many elements of the throne speech which are important and which merit further discussion. Many have been mentioned by previous speakers and will, I am sure, be addressed by speakers to come.

However rather than expressing, for example, my total commitment to restoring the financial integrity of the province, for which this government has already done so much, or speaking on *Agriculture 2000* — our Strategic Direction for the Future of Saskatchewan's Agriculture and the Food Industry, or my particular interest as an educator, the welfare of children and the establishment of a children's advocate in the Ombudsman's office or any of several other vital initiatives outlined in this speech, I would just like to take a moment to talk about a subject very close to my heart. Wellness and its application to the lives of us all.

Health reform for me, quite apart from delivering health services more effectively while using our available resources, health reform for me means helping individual people to be open to change. And this change can be truly profound. Part of this change means accepting and supporting what has already been done by this government. For instance, the replacing of over 400 former health boards by 30 new health districts with local residents serving on the boards of these new districts and making the health care choices appropriate for their area.

This change also involves people being open to the new ways health services will be delivered. The vision for our health reform involves healthier individuals in healthier communities. The big change that I see and welcome and encourage in people, is their change to healthier lifestyles. I realize that to a certain extent our health is predetermined genetically, but we all still have choices. And it is in our lifestyles that we make perhaps the most important choices. Healthier eating, regular exercise, and wise lifestyle decisions can do much in disease and accident prevention. We can all become involved in Saskatchewan's health reform by taking more responsibility for our own health and that of our children.

Mr. Speaker, we also recognize that our population is ageing. The average age in many communities is a good deal higher than it was 10 years ago. And while we all know that age is a state of mind and that being young at heart is vital to a long, happy, and healthy life, none the less as people age they do require more extensive health services.

Seniors generally want to lead independent lives and thus want to remain in their own homes as long as possible. Seniors use and value community based services more than any other group. As we work towards wellness the government has supported and enhanced community based services such as home care. Clearly it is better for seniors to stay at home whenever possible as an alternative to moving to an institution.

Home care can be cost-effective. It can respond to the individual and the community's changing needs. Home care is

people centred and promotes their control and independence. Many health centres are now providing services that were never available before, and seniors are some of the main beneficiaries of these. For example, foot care clinics, nutrition counselling, and blood pressure clinics are some of the health options now offered.

Our government has also introduced wellness grants which have helped many communities establish initiatives related to health promotion and disease and injury prevention. Seniors in particular have benefited from these community based programs.

Our concern for the health and well-being of our seniors is but one of many ways that this government is seeking to make things better for the people of Saskatchewan. Since the days of Tommy Douglas and the first CCF government 50 years ago now, we have shown in this province that we are one of the most progressive jurisdictions not only in North America but in the world.

The Pan American Health Organization says our health reforms could serve as an inspiration and impetus for change. A health professional in Australia says Saskatchewan is about a generation ahead in relation to commitment, knowledge, and support for reorienting the health system to a more balanced response. A generation ahead, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be a member of a government that is once again showing leadership in health reform. I'm proud to be a member of a government that has made difficult decisions involving everyone making sacrifices on the management of our financial resources and yet can still show fiscal integrity in working to eliminate the original \$1.3 billion deficit. I'm proud to be part of an open, honest, and accountable government, and I'm proud to support the government's plan as it's outlined in the Speech from the Throne. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:45 p.m.