

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce 21 grade 2 and grade 3 students from St. Pius X School in Regina. They are in your gallery and they are being accompanied by their teacher Madame Bzdel and by Ms. Perron. I'd like to ask the members to join me in greeting them, but before we do that there is one particular person in that group that I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, and that's a very special girl, my daughter Marin. Would the members please join me in greeting these students.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Bergman: — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and all the members of this Assembly, four young people from different parts of the province: Dan Little, Nikki Hipkin, Richard Lamontagne, and Kim Emerson. Please join me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in the west gallery are some good friends of mine, the Kovach family from just north of Mistatim. The Kovach family run and operate the Circle Lake Angus Vacation Farm and they are very successful in helping the tourism industry of this province. And I would like all members to join with me in welcoming them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in the Speaker's gallery, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Legislative Assembly, Pastor and Mrs. Peter Enns and family of Kindersley. Mr. Speaker, they are here in Regina on business, and I think they'll take a great interest in the proceedings this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Elimination of Provincial Sales Tax

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to take another important step in the reform package the opposition is introducing to the session, this session of the legislature.

Today members of the opposition will be asking a number of questions we received directly from Saskatchewan residents. And we'll be sending the written transcripts of the question and the government's answer to the person who sent the questions. We feel this is a good way to reform the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and make it more meaningful to people.

So with that in mind, I would like to ask two questions received from Pastor Peter Enns of Kindersley. I should note, although we are asking Mr. Enns's questions, we received similar questions from a number of other people. So on behalf of Mr. Enns who is with us here this afternoon, and all others who asked about this issue, Mr. Premier, I want to know why I should trust your government. In 1991 you said you would eliminate the PST (provincial sales tax), among other provinces, upon being elected. Mr. Premier, why are we still waiting for you to come through on your promises?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to answer that question. When we became government and we established the Gass Commission to open the books of the province, what the Gass Commission told us was that we had a significant problem with our deficit and our debt.

Now we thought long and hard about how to deal with that problem and there are two different routes that you can see in Canada today. One is the Alberta route, which is to take deep, painful — in some cases perhaps brutal — cuts. Or there's another approach which is a balanced approach, which is to balance cuts and reductions with some tax increases.

After long, hard thought we decided on the balanced approach because we thought this was more consistent with Saskatchewan's traditions and was more compassionate for some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Abortion Plebiscite

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again I direct my questions to the Premier of the province. Mr. Premier, a second question from Peter Enns which again I believe reflects a concern which is raised by a number of the letters we received.

Mr. Enns asks: Mr. Premier, I want to know why your government decided to ignore the results of the plebiscite regarding the public funding of abortion, a matter in which you clearly ruled against the majority of Saskatchewan residents, many of whom placed you in office. Mr. Premier, I'd like to know when you chose to abandon democracy in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, the official opposition are following an interesting line with these questions. When we were in opposition, we were in touch daily with people who were telephoning our

office suggesting questions to us. And day after day we stood up in this legislature asking those questions without making such an obvious grandstand play of it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — The member knows perfectly well what the answer to the question is but I'll repeat it. With the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada touching upon the question of abortion, it is not possible for this province to enact the kind of legislation that is described in his question. It would be struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada. The members opposite know it, everyone knows it; and there's nothing that we can do about it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Brand Inspection Costs

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Premier, and it has to do . . . in relation to agriculture. The question is from Dale and Marsha Cannon of Rush Lake, Saskatchewan.

And they write: Mr. Premier, I want to know if an agreement can be reached with the packing plants in Alberta to acknowledge Saskatchewan brand inspection, to eliminate the current requirement forcing producers to pay for brand inspection both here and in Alberta. It is in the interest of all involved to resolve this, Mr. Premier.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thank you for the question, to the member opposite. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take notice of that question.

Proposed Gravelbourg Hospital

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a question that I'd like to direct to the Premier. This question is from Donna Fortnum from Landis, who I understand, Mr. Premier, used to live in the Gravelbourg district.

And she writes the question: Mr. Premier, I would want to know if it is true that you are going to build a new hospital in Gravelbourg. If so, why, when you just closed down one brand-new hospital in Lafleche only a few miles away? I thought the plan was to save money. I can't see where this is happening.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the hon. member for that question because there is a substantial misunderstanding out in that area with respect to whether or not there's going to be a hospital built in Gravelbourg. The government has not approved the construction of a new hospital in Gravelbourg.

What the government has done, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the long-term care needs of Gravelbourg, is we have approved

the planning and the proceeding with the replacement of their long-term care facility. As you know, there has been a considerable amount of problems with the safety of that facility.

With respect to acute care needs, any acute care needs in that particular district will be dealt with through the district health board when they do their needs assessment and determine what the acute care needs are.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Support for Farmers

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government appears unwilling to protect rural Saskatchewan from decimation. They've closed hospitals and schools. STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) bus service has been cancelled in the rural areas.

At a recent meeting of federal and provincial Agriculture ministers in Winnipeg, this government was the only government, was the only province, that didn't support GRIP (gross revenue insurance program).

To the Minister of Agriculture, or Acting Minister of Agriculture: will the NDP (New Democratic Party) government admit that it has failed to support rural Saskatchewan? Will you finally see the light and reconsider help for our families, the way in which other provinces have chosen to stand behind their farm families? Will you do that, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the member opposite, the Minister of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture in Saskatchewan has been around the province consulting with farmers in many, many communities, and certainly support the concept as mentioned in Ag 2000. And I wish the member opposite would read that document.

The document suggests that the family farm is the . . . has to be protected in this province. And it also recognizes that agriculture is our number one industry in this province. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Mr. Speaker, I note that we didn't get an answer to the GRIP question.

Mr. Speaker, at the meeting of federal and provincial Agriculture ministers in Winnipeg, it was revealed that the province of Saskatchewan is projecting a \$320 million surplus in its GRIP fund. To the minister: what plans do you have for this money; and will you commit to returning this money to our farm families immediately?

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thanks for the question, to the member opposite. And of course I'm sure that the member opposite read the report of the Farm Support Review Committee on safety net designs. It's a very

good document. It gives government the ideas of farmers and what farmers want. And I would hope that he would read that paper so he could better understand the farm situation.

The farmers want more a market-sensitive program, they want protection of the family farm, and they want people to understand that agriculture is the number one industry in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Mr. Speaker, my question had to do with what they intend to do with the \$320 million surplus, not about what's in *Agriculture 2000*.

Mr. Speaker, in the news today we heard that the Provincial Auditor is looking at the operation of the Lloydminster heavy oil upgrader. He's investigating writing off the upgrader's debt. The minister in charge of Crown Investments says the cost of writing off that debt would be a hundred million dollars.

To the Agriculture minister: the government has choices to make. Are you going to return the GRIP money to farm families, and will you write down Crop Insurance debt the same as you do for the megaprojects like the upgrader? What are your priorities?

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, again I say the priorities of this government is to recognize that agriculture is the number one industry in the province of Saskatchewan. The safety net people, the Support Review Committee, had a very definite guiding principle when they went to the different communities in this province. The purpose of farm support, it was decided, is to maintain the number of viable farmers in order to strengthen rural communities by encouraging agriculture which is economically and environmentally sustainable.

I don't know what more I can say to the member opposite but that agriculture is very, very important to this government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Mr. Speaker, last month a judge ruled in favour of a farmer who challenged the Manitoba government's decision to reduce his 1992 coverage under GRIP. In effect, the judge said the government breached its contract with the farmer.

To the minister: in view of this development, will the NDP government repeal its legislation preventing farmers from taking the government to court?

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to mention the Farm Support Review Committee who believes that the broad program concepts described in this very important report is what the farm people of this province want; it is what they need. The concepts are satisfactory to the agricultural industry.

And again I want to stress that I'm from a farm, agriculture is important to me; agriculture is very, very important to the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Mr. Speaker, these answers to the questions are going to be more than interesting to read later in *Hansard*.

Mr. Speaker, the government has admitted it breached its GRIP contract with Saskatchewan farmers and immediately moved on the ramrodded legislation preventing individuals from suing the government. If the government breaches the GRIP contract again, farmers still can't sue.

Mr. Minister, the government in Manitoba was respectful of its farmers and allowed court action. In the latest case, the farmer won. Are you afraid Saskatchewan farmers would win if they were allowed to take court action against your government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Renaud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am wondering what the member opposite has in mind for a new ag policy. Is it the old GRIP policy? Or is it a policy that is very similar to the old GRIP policy? Or is it a good, solid policy, one that is taxpayer friendly, sustainable to the agricultural community long term?

I'm wondering what his policy is, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Selection of Provincial Ombudsman

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Justice. My question today deals with the current process underway to select the provincial Ombudsman.

Mr. Minister, on December 1, 1993 your news release on this matter indicated that the opposition would be consulted and our input would be considered. We're still anxiously awaiting that opportunity; however the invitation has not yet been extended and we have a number of concerns.

Mr. Minister, number one, it seems that a member of the selection committee is the Deputy Premier's former constituency secretary, which I believe taints the process.

Mr. Minister, how do you justify the fact that a member of the committee struck to select an Ombudsman for Saskatchewan is clearly an NDP partisan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — I'm a bit mystified as to who the hon. member is referring to, Mr. Speaker.

I don't have the documents with me but some time

ago I wrote to the Leader of the Opposition suggesting a process and naming the individuals that we proposed would look at the applications. The applications came to us pursuant to advertising in the newspapers. And they would look over the applications and begin the process of selection and try and boil it down to a number of names. I think it was five. But in any event, a small number of names. And at that point the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Third Party, and I would get together and make the final choice.

Now I'm not aware of the individual, who it is that the member is objecting to. I know that one of the people who I had asked to serve on that three-person committee has resigned because a relative of hers has applied. And she stepped off the committee and somebody else went on; I've forgotten who it was. But I think that I just have to ask the member to identify who it is he's complaining about.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, and to the minister, the important thing that we're raising today, Mr. Minister, is the fact of the establishment of an all-party committee. And I refer you back to *Democratic Reform for the 1990's*, a policy put out by your party prior to the 1991 provincial election, which said that:

... an all-party standing committee of the Legislature be established to select and appoint the Ombudsman. Only appointment by such a committee can provide this officer with the legislative mandate that he or she requires.

It would seem, Mr. Minister . . . Now you've just indicated that you were going to cut . . . go through the process and eliminate down to five members and then maybe consult the Leader of the Opposition and the third party leader. I would think that if we're going to see the process work properly, if we're going to indeed follow the guidelines that your party has set up, that you would have an all-party committee review and screen all the applications so that at the end of the day the person that is chosen would meet the criteria of being favourable to everyone in this House.

And I'm asking you, Mr. Minister, if indeed you would do that. Before you screen any applications, ask the Leader of the Opposition and the third party leader for involvement in this committee to screen all applications. Will you do that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Well this line of questioning, Mr. Speaker, surprises me for a couple of reasons. First of all, it is the official opposition who when they were in government appointed the last Ombudsman without consulting a single soul, without consulting the opposition at all. But merely came into this House and tabled a motion that a certain person be selected as the Ombudsman. So it lies ill in their mouth that this process is not a proper process.

Secondly, and even more surprisingly, is I wrote to the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party several weeks ago and outlined a proposed procedure for arriving at the appointment of an Ombudsman which I thought took fully into account the principles that lie behind the member's question

and the appointment of an Ombudsman. And I thought it was a fair process.

And I must tell the House that so far as I am aware, the Leader of the Opposition did not object, either in writing or in any conversation with me, to the proposal that I put forward. If they had objections to it, Mr. Speaker, I would have thought I would have heard about it; then I could reconsider the process.

It's important to us that we appoint, from this legislature, an Ombudsman that enjoys the confidence of the whole House. That is the purpose for consultation. That was the reason why we objected so strenuously back in 1987, I think it was, to the process that was used then.

And so if the present process is not satisfactory I thought I would have heard about it before now. And to hear about it in question period is really a surprise.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the minister would continually revert back to the 1980s and suggesting that what may have happened then may be responsible for what's transpiring today.

Mr. Minister, you have the opportunity. This party has already put out . . . forward a number of ideas — the current members sitting here — of reform of this House. And it would seem to me that a committee, an all-party committee, to look into the appointment of the Ombudsman would give you the real opportunity to show that this Legislative Assembly is open to total reform.

And what we're asking you, Mr. Minister, is not to go back against agreements like you did on the electoral boundaries and how many other agreements, like you've just done with farmers, but make a commitment, a real commitment, that you were talking of when you were on this side of the House, to reform and allow a process that allows everyone to be involved in the democratic process.

Will you do that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, the member scores a perfect 10 on the sanctimony scale. The reason why we keep referring to the 1980s is that it is the benchmark, Mr. Speaker, the low benchmark, the low watermark, the low watermark on the functioning of this House. And when the members opposite stand up and lecture us upon the niceties of democratic reform we just can't help but remind them from

whence they come on this issue and ask them on what road to Damascus they were when the brilliant light shone in their eyes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — I repeat, Mr. Speaker, we have tried and proposed to both opposition parties a process for the naming of an Ombudsman that will enjoy the confidence of all corners of this House. If they object to that process, I thought I would have heard about it before now and in a different forum than question period.

And if they have objections to it, then I would be glad to sit down with the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party, if she wishes, to review the process that I proposed, that they did not object to, and see whether we can proceed on that process or whether they want another one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, apparently the Minister of Justice is looking for a benchmark, and possibly he shouldn't be looking at the 1980s for his benchmark. Maybe it's time the minister set the benchmark. The benchmark was set by your caucus or your party when you suggested an all-party committee.

Will you make a commitment today, Mr. Minister, that you will renew and look at a different benchmark, a renewal of this Legislative Assembly, and allow for an all-party committee to be involved in the appointment of a new Ombudsman for the province? Will you do that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm really going to insist that if my friend, the member from Moosomin, insists on asking me questions, that he at least listen to my answers.

I have said I am prepared to meet with the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party to discuss the process. And if they have objections to the process that I outline to them, I'm prepared to consider other processes or amendments to the process.

I am not prepared to stand here in question period and dramatically change the whole rules on the basis of a question from the minister without the kind of consultation that his question invites, namely, he's saying that process is not satisfactory to us; we want you to consider another.

I said in my previous answer, I repeat now, I'm pleased to meet with the opposition leaders to consider how the process can be improved so that it meets their satisfaction. What more can I say, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Cabinet Press Office Closure

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, it has come to my attention that you have disbanded the cabinet press office, the

office which has been charged with assisting the Premier and cabinet ministers and putting political spin to the members of the media.

Now we congratulate you, Mr. Premier, if this appears to be a downsizing of Executive Council. Mr. Premier, could you tell this Assembly where the people who had formerly worked in the cabinet press office, where are they now working? And I would specifically ask you, sir, for where does John Millar, Carol Bentley, Darcy McKenzie, Lisa Thomson, Lisa Simpson, Wendy Ward, and Virginia Wilkinson, and Chris Scherle . . . are now working.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the words of commendation from the member from Wilkie about our attempts to control the size of government. And I think we've done a very admirable job in doing so.

And I would say also in furtherance to the hon. member's question, when one compares the record of this government to what they're trying to do in Alberta to downsize, downsize is rather a euphemistic word to describe the Alberta situation. The Alberta situation is rather brutal, to put it bluntly. I think that we have in fact found the proper combination of achieving fiscal responsibility.

Now with respect to the Executive Council question, the member asks a number of detailed points about individual people. I can provide this information at the time of estimates. I'd be more than pleased to do so. We always have done so and we'll be prepared to do so again at the appropriate time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 6 — An Act to amend The Community Bonds Act

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Community Bonds Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

(1430)

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I would like to table, pursuant to subsection 22(4) of The Constituency Boundaries Act (1993), the report of the Constituency Boundaries Commission, 1993, signed by the Hon. E.C. Malone.

Mr. Koenker: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with leave to make a private member's statement.

Leave granted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

John Howard Society Week

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in recognition of John Howard Week in Saskatchewan, which is February 13 to 19. In 18th century England and Wales, John Howard devoted his life and his fortune to making prison conditions more humane. And today the John Howard Society brings together community volunteers who accept responsibility for understanding and dealing with the problems of crime.

The John Howard Society believes the community must be involved in ensuring that the criminal justice system works in a creative, humane and progressive fashion. Through reform advocacy, direct services, and public education, the society works to reduce the consequences of criminal experience for all those who are affected by it.

The problem of crime in our society can be addressed from many angles, but we certainly must attack its root causes, including poverty and ignorance. Simply put, it's not feasible economically or socially to lock all offenders behind bars and simply throw away the keys. Most offenders in our criminal justice system are non-violent and do return to society to make positive contributions. And the John Howard Society helps in this process. For many of these men and women, contact with organizations like John Howard Society is an important step in building a positive relationship with the larger community.

And so today, with members of this Assembly, we extend our appreciation to all those who devote their time and personal energy and resources to the work of the John Howard Society. They demonstrate that every one of us in society can play a positive part in making society healthy, cooperative, and a safe place to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I also ask leave to respond to the member in recognizing the John Howard Society.

Leave granted.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as well I would like to join with the member and extend our sincere congratulations to each and every one who have been involved over the years in working with the John Howard Society, reaching out to individuals who are looking at trying to reform and change their lives and get back into the mainstream of life.

There's no doubt that individuals who have maybe been sentenced for a crime — whether it's minor or major or how significant it is — when they have the opportunity to get back on the street, find it very difficult. And so it's very important and we want to commend each and every one involved, the volunteers who have given their time so ably to reach out to these men and women and teenagers and working with them to

help them get back into the mainstream. And I think it's appropriate that we recognize the John Howard Society and the work they do in our society. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it relates to question no. 24 put by the member from Moosomin, I would request it be converted to motions for returns (debatable).

The Speaker: — Motions for returns (debatable), question no. 24.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak to the address in reply with a feeling of considerable anticipation and I admit with some trepidation.

These are my first remarks as a member of the Liberal Party and of the opposition. I'm very happy to be here, but I did not arrive here easily, nor have I taken the journey lightly. On the contrary, the decision was very, very difficult. It was made with both the head and the heart and it stands as one of the great watersheds of my life.

Not everyone appreciates my decision, and I understand their feelings. It is probably as hard for some of them to accept the choice as it was for me to make them. To them I offer two comments. First of all, we should keep in mind that there is a difference between sticking to a political party and sticking to what you believe. Beliefs should stand the test of time; political parties come and go. And I say it is more important to hold onto your beliefs than let the party machinery hold onto you.

Second, I suggest you keep in mind how the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) was started. Mr. Speaker, every member of the CCF was once a member or a supporter of another party. Every one of the original members made a conscious decision to change. They made their decisions for

what they thought were good reasons. None of the members opposite would be opposite except for the people who went before them and one by one decided to make a change because they wanted to make a difference.

I have made my decision for good reasons and I want to deal with some of them and how they relate to this government and its Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, when many of the original CCF members made their decision to join the party opposite, they believed they were joining a party at the leading edge, a party of new thinking, a party of the people. How ironic today we see this supposed vanguard party, this leader of the people, left in the dust of its own meaningless rhetoric.

The old vision is gone. The NDP has been bypassed by history. All that is left now are the power ambitions of its leadership clique. They play the old tunes but no one is left to dance with them.

The Premier likes to say that he has hard things to do — unpopular things — because he has no money. Mr. Speaker, the government opposite is not suffering because it is financially bankrupt; it is suffering because it is intellectually bankrupt — out of touch and out of ideas. Its roots have withered and dried up. It is unable to inspire, unable to call forth the best in people because it has no concept of what that means in the 1990s.

People in Saskatchewan are more willing to sacrifice for their goals. They have always been. It is one of the great characteristics of this province. What they represent is being made to suffer needlessly by a government that makes it up as it goes, has no plan, has no vision, led by people who do only what they are forced to and not what they ought to.

Mr. Speaker, the Douglas government had no money either, but its outstanding feature still was its vision, its leadership and inspiration. The outstanding feature of this NDP government is its self-centredness, its egomania, and its ambition of its ministers and the absence of new ideas. This government does a good imitation of leadership when the TV cameras are on, but it is still all an act. There is no beef in the bun.

The government has managed a great feat, Mr. Speaker. By its lack of inspiration, by its play-acting at leadership, it has managed to coop up this province in a dungeon of despair and despondency — something no one has ever done, not even in the depths of the thirties.

Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot in the throne speech about cooperation, about partnership, about working together. The Premier hopes we will rally and stand behind these ideals from the past. I say they have it backwards. The government opposite is suffering not from a lack of loyalty, but because it knows nothing about loyalty. The government used its supporters, took their votes, took their commitment, and started walking away from them the day after the election. It broke its contract with the people. Is it any surprise that these people, betrayed and snubbed by the power brokers, are now walking away from this government?

Mr. Speaker, the major reason I made my choice is that the

government of the Premier opposite no longer stands for what it was elected on. Today it stands for nothing more than what will please the media on a given day. It is opportunistic, cynical, and grossly disloyal to its own platform and to the hopes of the people. What a sad commentary on the party once led by Tommy Douglas. What a sad result for this great province.

A prime example of this government's loss of trust is in its record on health care. I'll be the first to admit the government opposite did not inherit a pretty situation in health care. The Conservative government it replaced was financially incompetent. Maybe the worst in Canada. For 10 years they bled money, threw it away, wasted every asset we had, and piled up a stupendous debt.

Our health services needed reform, but this government hasn't reformed a thing. It has simply thrown the former government's policy into reverse. Where the Tories wasted by opening, the NDP is wasting by closing.

Mr. Speaker, health reform presented a golden opportunity. The public was ready for change. This government, as I quickly learned, was not only not ready to step into the breach, it was scared witless at having to make a decision. For eight months they purported to talk, pretended to consult, and held endless, shallow meetings until everyone was sick to death of it, and then decided to offload the problem onto the communities under the guise of local control.

I am a strong advocate of local control. I believe local people, regional people, can make the best decisions, and I believe they must be given the authority to make them and the responsibility to live with the results.

However, local control means a shift of power out of the central bureaucracy.

Because the government opposite is a captive of its bureaucrats, it failed totally. Its health reform is a wasteland of lost hope, indecision, bungled opportunity, that has sapped the will of even the strongest supporters.

How could this government announce a program of health districts under local control, then only weeks later announce that it was closing down 52 hospitals before the districts were even organized? How can these people promise local decision making and then shut down 52 community hospitals in one fell swoop? How can they talk about district boards having control when they still have no formula in place to pay out money two years after starting out?

Does the Minister of Health not talk to the Minister of Finance, or the deputy of Finance not talk to the deputy of Health? Do these people have any idea of

what they are doing and what it means to their fellow citizens?

The answer is simple. They do talk. But it is not about helping the local community. It is about how to retain power.

They shut down hospitals out of fear the boards might choose to keep some open. They have no formula because they needed a closed system with rules and conditions that they dictate — rules that will prevent local volunteer boards from having any real chance of controlling their own services. Saskatchewan health care reform has become little more than a life-support system for bureaucrats.

I would like to suggest to the Minister of Health that she have a chat with her husband, the Minister of Economic Development. If the government can write a throne speech promising to hand over tourism to an authority with regional control and to set up trade corporations, why could it not offer some measure of genuine control to people over their health care services?

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party believes many government services could be managed best by local people. We advocate a community health system in which the province raises funds beyond local funding abilities and parcels them out in lump sums to local authorities who make the decisions on what services they want to offer. If the lump sum amounts must be reduced to tackle the deficit, so be it. But let the local people make their choices on how it is used. This is not to be interpreted to mean that the provincial government should not have a responsibility to ensure proper standards are met.

Saskatchewan's genius is its ability to get things done, its ability to write the answer and make it work. We need to free the Saskatchewan spirit, move the bureaucracy aside, let those with the ideas move ahead. We believe the Swift Current model with its roots in the municipal doctor service could show the way for health reform. We want no more arbitrary hospital shut-downs on orders from Regina. We look forward to a genuine autonomy that will allow local people to get back in charge of important parts of their lives.

(1445)

The record of the government reveals no pattern or logic to how it approaches major issues. The throne speech is striking in its lack of content on agriculture. Here is a prime industry that is being left alone to starve in the dark. While the government cannot keep itself from tourism authorities and regional economic development boards, it has nothing for the farm industry but platitudes of its *Agriculture 2000* paper. We have to wonder if the 2000 refers to the number of farm families who will be left by the time this administration wakes up to the fact of the farm crisis.

The throne speech notes that farm families are adapting more quickly to the crisis than government is adapting its policy. I congratulate the writer for his candour but I ask what this statement tells us about the government. The government's smug and disdainful attitude is depressing to farm people. All rural residents who struggle daily amid the ruins of their hospitals, schools, boarded-up stores, and pock-marked highways to find a bit of cheer would appreciate some sign of government interest.

The Liberal Party would advocate more attention to the on-farm component of agriculture. Processing is fine but it does not add directly to the stability of farm families. We need programs to help individual farmers improve their marketing skills, gain access to information, to make links with the specialty crop markets.

Saskatchewan should aim to develop the trading and marketing skills in agriculture that we find in other industries. We have excellent facilities for exporting our minerals such as potash. Farmers however rely solely on established marketers or an underdeveloped sector of small marketers regardless of their ability to respond to those markets. Here is an area where the government action could be greatly beneficial with lasting impact and none of the side-effects of the money programs of the last administration.

Mr. Speaker, I have made but a few suggestions of what I believe the people of Saskatchewan needed and deserved in a throne speech. The people of Saskatchewan are waiting for the Premier to once and for all show leadership or move to the sidelines and let those that can do so take control.

I am unable to support the motion but I do thank you for this opportunity to speak today, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to start off my remarks by congratulating you for the excellent job you've been doing in the House lately. I still will do that, notwithstanding the fact that you had a momentary lapse of remembrance in terms of what the name of my constituency is.

I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker. I've watched over the last couple of years; you are definitely becoming much more seasoned. Indeed some would say you are maturing and ageing in this job. You're becoming much smoother and certainly much more sure of yourself and the rules of this House. So I would like to congratulate you for the job you're doing.

I'm very happy to take part in the throne speech debate. Unlike some members opposite, I very much believe in the parliamentary tradition in this country. I believe in the value of debate, in nailing one's colours to the masthead, so to speak, for all people to see.

It is somewhat obvious, Mr. Speaker, why some members opposite refuse to fly their colours and why they complain about the throne speech process. They have precious little to be proud of in their political

history, as the Premier so eloquently reminded us yesterday. No wonder they don't want to speak to the throne speech debate.

I also, Mr. Speaker, found it to be an amusing coincidence that the Leader of the Third Party called the proceedings, of which she is a part, she called those proceedings drivet, Mr. Speaker. She said this after the camera broke down just before her speech and miraculously corrected itself when she sat down. And they say machines have no mind of their own.

I want to join with the other members of this legislature in welcoming the new member from Regina North West. During her tenure in the House, which I am sure she will understand when I say I hope it's a good time but not a long time, I hope that she offers genuine choice to her constituents — choice in all areas, including the area of women's reproductive rights.

Mr. Speaker, now that we have three members of the Liberal Party, it seems to me we can look forward to not getting three new ideas a week on the economy instead of just not getting one new idea a week as before.

I note that there's a rather unusual and interesting seating arrangement on the other side of the House now that there are three members of the third party. They're all lined up in a row, like kids from a day care hanging onto a rope on an outing in the big city. I would have expected, given all the talk I hear about process and so-called democratic reform from the Leader of the Third Party, that she would have wanted them all to be sitting together, all on the same level. That would have been much more egalitarian and much less regal. And indeed, Mr. Speaker, it's a wonder to me that the Liberal leader trusts having both her colleagues sitting behind her back.

I note in the campaign literature from the new member for Regina North West that she's a psychologist, just like her leader. I wonder how the member from Shaunavon feels about that. It must often seem to him that he's like a patient stuck between two psychologists, or the boloney in a particularly wholesome sandwich.

Mr. Speaker, I have been very interested in the way this throne speech has developed, not just because some of the opposition says that they do not want to participate. I want to begin my remarks by offering my congratulations to the mover and the seconder of the speech. They did us all a favour by pushing the debate beyond just the contents of the throne speech into contemplation of the nature of government and the relations between government and society. I congratulate them for their very thoughtful and thought-provoking speeches.

There is much to praise in the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, as members who have preceded me have done. There's much to speculate about, as also many members have done. I have a few comments of my own, a sort of member's thoughts in progress about some of the things I would like to see happen — some dreams I have for this province and this legislative session. I want to focus my remarks today on those thoughts.

Much has been made in this session of the Saskatchewan tradition of radical reform — justifiably so. We're meeting in 1994 on the eve of the 50th anniversary of Tommy Douglas's first term. There are many phrases which the old-line parties

are tired of hearing but they do apply to our province. For example, we are indeed, as has oft been quoted, Canada's social laboratory.

We're seeing the laboratory at work again in the wellness model, the *Partnership for Renewal*, the creation of the position of children's advocate, and so on. The tradition of radical reform is a key part of our history. Even before Tommy Douglas we saw it with the Pools and the co-ops. I'm very proud to be part of this tradition and the history of our province.

We've always had a progressive, people-based social movement here in Saskatchewan, a progressive movement to counter the excesses and the gluttony and the greed of the elitist approach taken by the Conservative and the Liberal parties, the black cats and the white cats.

Many people have referred in their speeches to Tommy Douglas. I too want to take a look at our history, though not back quite as far. I want to refer to the wisdom and counsel of another fine social democrat — Allan Blakeney.

Allan Blakeney used to talk about the three phases of development in post-war Saskatchewan, of course starting with the Douglas government. First of all he talked about the era of the creation of the major social programs, beginning with hospitalization, carrying on through medicare, the phase that took at least 20 years and is still being modified and honed and adapted to our present-day needs.

Indeed as the Associate Minister of Health points out, our wellness model is the natural extension of the work conceived earlier by Douglas and implemented when Blakeney was Health minister. Right from the start it was recognized that medicare was only the first step.

To truly bring about the necessary reform and empowerment of the health care system that the health care system requires, we need, as both Douglas and Blakeney always said, we need to reform the administration of the system to involve communities and individuals in a meaningful way; to put the power for decisions about health, not just illness, in the hands of the beneficiaries of the system. To turn the system, so to speak, on its ears and to develop a community-based system, not an institutional-based one.

So as Blakeney said, we first started as progressive social democrats in this province in the late '40s with the first era, the creation of major universal social

programs, of which health care is but one example. Then we had the second era, which occurred mostly during the 1970s, during which we began to wrestle control of our economic destiny out of the hands of outsiders, the multinationals, the eastern Canadian interests.

This is the era the opposition loves to ridicule because one of the main instruments of economic maturity in this province was the Crown corporation. Another was government partnership in exploration. When people ridicule Crown corporations — and I should add, it is only the fiercely partisan who think they might gain some stock or some ownership advantage by doing so — I point out to them that the broad base of the people of Saskatchewan do not think Crown corporations are frivolous or ridiculous or a drag on the public purse. They recognize the value of the resource development, control, and ownership inherent in Crown corporations.

As proof, I point to the massive rallies and public outpouring of sentiment when the former Tory government tried to privatize SaskPower in 1989. There was widespread, legitimate and justified public indignation that their public utility should be put on the sales block, like a trophy, for the privileged few.

Regardless of one's opinion of the days of the '70s, during this time, the time that Blakeney calls the second phase, or the second era, the universal social programs were expanded because the government very carefully managed the resources of the province.

For the first time in our history the government took us out of the group of have-not provinces. We were paying our own way and managing our own house. As a collective group of people, we had control of some of the major economic levers of this province. We were able to redistribute the wealth created through the Crown corporations. This was not taxation, it was not even indirect taxation; it was resource development by the people, for the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — And the Blakeney government did all that, Mr. Speaker, so that we could begin to move into phase 3, what premier Blakeney called, beyond universality. It was time to begin finessing some of the big programs, to target special groups, to direct funds and energy at those for whom universal programs were simply a means of maintaining the status quo. It was time to look at the problems of a universal system that at best simply created a system of state-endorsed and supported, genteel poverty. Or as Blakeney put it, we have resolved many of the problems of adversity; now is the time to tackle the problems created by affluence.

(1500)

That era was to be the trickiest, the most challenging, the most modern, because it was to attempt to deal with areas in which there's not always general agreement on what needs to be done. There's not even agreement on whether anything needs to be done at all.

We're talking here, Mr. Speaker, of programs like child care, like pay equity, like, perish the thought, quotas in the

workplace for disadvantaged groups, preferential hiring.

Of course this phase, beyond universality, was put on hold and the province was kicked back a hundred years or so by the combined forces of Reaganism, Thatcherism, Mulroneyism, and even Devine-ism, and all the greedy, self-centred notions of individualism that those movements implied.

No, this third phase, after the creation of universal programs, after the creation of the solid, state-supported means of funding them, this phase that would have moved us beyond universality was put on hold while the province was treated to nine profligate years of Devine government.

The Speaker: — Order. I think the member knows that she may not use the name of an individual but must refer to their constituency.

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was checking to make sure you were listening. I apologize, Mr. Speaker. That was just an attempt to gain a little bit of time while somebody told me what the constituency is actually for the member.

In any case, back to my remarks, Mr. Speaker. Here we are again with a \$15 billion IOU on our back, but we're just about ready to have another go at phase 3, as the former Premier Blakeney called it. It'll be a little less grandiose than before perhaps, because of our situation, a little more modest certainly, because our resources are limited. And more importantly, because the taxpayers have told us, have told all governments loudly and clearly that they have reached their limits of tolerance, we have to make do with what we have.

But we also have to do more than we are doing, and to do that we have to start to ask ourselves some questions that we haven't asked before. We have to, for openers, question some of the assumptions that have not heretofore been questioned. As the member from Regina Lake Centre said in her opening speech, we have to name the issues if we are going to tame the problems.

For example, let's start by junking the terms, right-wing and left-wing, and the quote, easy solutions, that supposedly go with each part of that bird — those solutions that one side or the other side automatically dismisses out of hand.

As we're looking for new thinking, the nature of society and poverty is a good place to start examining some of the assumptions that have been built up over time. Traditionally, the right blames poverty on the individual's lack of gumption and will. The system is not at fault, the person is. If only people would get up and work, poverty would get up and go.

The Leader of the Liberal Party and her constant call to put more regulations and guidelines on individuals because human nature is not to be trusted is a good example of this attitude. Those of us on this side of the House reject that elitist, non-trusting attitude towards human beings.

On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, historically, the left has tended to blame the system. Society is at fault for poverty — the Jean Jacques Rousseau approach to social issues. The individual in poverty is a victim, blameless. Everyone blames someone else. No one takes any responsibility, especially the bureaucracy. So often, therefore, good ideas become captive to an illogical, self-serving, flabby bureaucratic system.

What happens, of course, under both views is that not a whole lot gets changed at the basic level. Poverty remains and the big question is only how much we will do to alleviate the worst consequences of poverty. The right, supposedly, does as little as possible, such as Ronald Reagan's declaration that ketchup should be classified as a vegetable so that he could feel good about balancing the meals of his nation's poor children. The left, in its turn, does as much as it can to soften the worst blows of poverty by increasing welfare payments and so on.

But the cycle still goes on. We've done what we think has been the best we can do and we have made progress in Saskatchewan. And particularly we've made progress by prodding the federal government and other provinces into generally more humane, tolerant, human, safety net programs.

We've done so well in fact that the language of the left, the social democrats, has been appropriated by the right. These days it seems every political party talks about caring and sharing, compassion and justice. Of course, as the saying goes, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. And it's been an especially bitter and meagre pudding for most people when governments of the right have been in power.

The same goes for labour legislation, Mr. Speaker. We've operated on a pendulum for the past 50 years. One government with legislation favourable to working people, the next removing what it sees to be anti-management restrictions.

We on this side of the House are justifiably proud of occupational health and safety amendments and workers' compensation changes. But I have no doubt that if the other side got in tomorrow, the first thing they would do is give those changes back to the owners, as they have said they would do. I shudder to think what they would do with our proposals for Trade Union Act amendments and Labour Standards Act.

Our goal now, Mr. Speaker, as we approach the 21st century, has to be to stop that pendulum-swing effect, to move beyond the traditional schisms of the left and right. We need to conceive of government's role in labour-management legislation, not as a pendulum; rather, it needs to be a circle growing larger and more empowering, encompassing and legitimizing the needs, aspirations, and concerns of both labour and business. Recognizing that at the end of the day, both labour and management have the same goals — the expectations of a safe and stable work environment where they can both maximize their returns. The one in the form of wages and working condition benefits, the other in the form of profits

and improved competitiveness.

If we can do this, Mr. Speaker, if we can truly bring Saskatchewan into the 21st century, able to cope successfully with the growing trends towards globalization, able to compete internationally, we will be able to build on the stable, strong, energetic, and efficient workforce we have here and Saskatchewan will take its place in the sun in the 21st century.

But first we have to stop the pendulum swings. We have to stop the incomplete analyses based on rigid, doctrinaire positions, either from the perspective of the right or the left, that have kept us from moving into what Allan Blakeney called the third era of social democratic development in Saskatchewan.

In other words, poverty is still with us 50 years after Douglas, 60 years after J.S. Woodsworth, 2,000 years after the person who said: suffer the little children to come unto me. We're still on the pendulum. We still think in ideological extremes. We still haven't solved anything really. We've just kissed the wounds here and there.

I'd like to tell you now a fable by the American humorist, James Thurber, called *The Lion and the Lizard*. He writes:

A lion and a lizard kept the halls where once a prince had slept. The prince had died, as even princes do, and his palace had fallen to rats and ruin. The lion destroyed the rats, but he could never find the lizard, who lived in a crevice in the wall. There was royal food in the ruined kitchen, and royal wine in the ruined cellar, but the lion got it all, for the lizard was afraid to emerge from his hiding place. So the lion got fatter and fatter, and drunker and drunker, and the lizard grew thinner and thinner, and soberer and soberer. Weeks went by, and the weeds grew and the walls crumbled, as the lion ate six meals a day, washing them down with a total of eighteen different wines. One (day) . . . as the tawny master of the palace was topping off his sixth meal of the day with a tankard of brandy, he fell asleep on his golden chair at the head of the ornate table. The lizard, with his remaining strength, which wasn't much, crawled up on the table and tried to nibble a crumb, but he was too weak to eat. The lion, awakened by a tiny tinkle of spoons, tried to crush the unwelcome guest with one blow of his mighty paw, but he was sated and obese, and his paw was no longer mighty. He passed away in his golden chair, spilling the last of the brandy, as the lizard gave up the ghost among the crumbs and silver.

And the moral, Mr. Speaker, writes Mr. Thurber, is "he who dies (stuffed) . . . is as dead as he who starves." So we stuff ourselves or we starve. We don't look for the solutions that would truly change the kingdom so there's sufficient for both the lion and the lizard.

To do this, we must finally start to think about stopping poverty, not just ministering to it. We need to stop trivializing its causes and stop minimizing its effects. And as the member from Regina Lake Centre said, this is everyone's job, not just the politicians and the opposition and the bureaucrats.

We're not, for instance, getting very much help from the media who seem to think that a hot lunch and a warm third-page story about a dedicated child worker is their contribution. I would remind them that the words media and mediocrity have the same root, and they don't seem to be doing too much to separate the two.

Okay, so what are some of the questions that we haven't been asking, or some of the realities that we haven't been facing? How about these. First, we make it too easy for people to be sentenced, willingly or not, to a lifetime of poverty subsistence, and we probably even perpetuate it by making welfare a barely acceptable lifestyle if one sets her sights low enough. We do after all, we have to acknowledge, have third-generation welfare cases in this province and elsewhere. Until we acknowledge that the system might be part of the problem, the problem will stay.

Secondly, poverty is primarily a women's issue. Therefore it is a volatile political issue. More women than men are poor, for all the reasons that we know about having to do with the responsibility for childbearing and raising, and with unequal education and work opportunities.

For instance, of the scandalously high number of 80,000 people in this province on social assistance, 32,200, or 41 per cent, are from single-parent families. That's women and children we're talking about, not beer-guzzling welfare cheats. This isn't ideology, Mr. Speaker, this is fact. And until we address this real issue, the feminization of poverty, the cycle will continue. Poverty destroys the body, the mind, the spirit. It gnaws away like a cancer. It is no accident that most victims of brutality, alcohol abuse, and gambling are poor and hopeless.

And to return to my earlier point about old, worn-out phrases, this isn't bleeding-heart liberalism, this is simple reality. Those of us, which unfortunately as most of us, who watch far too much Detroit television, see nightly the despair, the violence, the depravity that comes from being poor. And those spasms of violence spill out of the ghettos and touch the lives of those whose income and position supposedly protects them.

(1515)

For it is unfortunately true, Mr. Speaker, that if people don't have a legitimate way to earn a living they'll find an illegitimate way, often at great human cost to the very people they love, their children.

Mr. Speaker, we have a poverty industry in this country — charities, bureaucracies, departments, academics, consultants,

churches, food banks, and so on. And don't get me wrong. All of these people do the best they can to help a seemingly insoluble problem. But we keep applying the band-aid, debating only the size of the band-aid, not the cause of the wound. We are in a sense handcuffed by universality in some areas. And I hope that no old CCFer is going to hear me say that out of context.

As Mr. Blakeney said, we have to do some targeting to help specific people up and maybe even to help some people off the welfare rolls. New thinking might have to be hard thinking. We have to confront some unpleasant truths. We need to move the debate beyond the tyranny of the restrictions of politically correct thinking, beyond victimization, beyond special interest groups.

We need to emphasize the duties, the responsibilities, that all citizens have, everyone from the grandiose corporate welfare beneficiaries like the Peter Pocklingtons of the world, to the hard-pressed, middle class taxpayer who conveniently forgets to acknowledge all the program entitlements he or she has when complaining about government spending, to the high school drop-out UI (unemployment insurance) ski team champion, to the welfare mom in the bingo hall trying desperately to grab the brass ring of hope.

All of us have duties as well as rights in this quest to reform and rehumanize our social safety nets. We need to do this for our children. It will be hard, but it will be necessary. And I think that we should start doing it. And I know that this government has the gumption and the ability to do it.

Of course, we have to be careful not to distance ourselves from our roots. As many speakers have said, the same principles that have motivated us for generations still apply, the principles that some people would call biblical — the principles of love, sharing, compassion, and so on. These principles still apply.

The principles, the basic principles of social democracy, are even more relevant today as we embark on the third phase of renewal — the principles of community, cooperation, economic and social justice.

Other political parties give lip-service to these lofty notions. The NDP, this government, this throne speech, will move to make those notions a reality in this province.

And we have much to build on. We don't need to start all over. We just need to switch lanes a little.

We might, for a start, move beyond privilege. We

might, for example, review middle class entitlements and business grants. The middle class, yes, is besieged and beleaguered. That's unfortunately the definition of middle class. But in the main, it does okay for itself. And business, quite frankly, has always claimed that it can stand up for itself. And I for one believe business people when they say that.

Marcel Proust, a French writer, once said: the real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes. On this voyage, Mr. Speaker, we will, we must, see things with new eyes. Poverty gnaws at the body and the spirit, both of individuals and of nations. Poverty is the key issue that we must deal with as we look to the next century.

All over the world we're seeing the anarchy, the tribalism, the warfare, the despair of urban ghettos as the forces of globalization and de-skilling of workers and trashing of women and children take hold. This cannot, this must not happen in Saskatchewan; it must not happen in Canada. We need to come to grips with the problem and radically change the poverty industry where we have social workers administering instead of ministering, where we have food banks instead of savings banks for poor people, where work-for-welfare schemes are proposed to bounce people from UI to welfare to training to minimum-wage jobs and then back to UI and to welfare and so on and so on.

There's a desperate need to redraw the political, social, and economic map of Canada for the 21st century. We've made a start here in Saskatchewan with initiatives like democratic reform measures, reshaping our economic development approach, proposals to modernize labour legislation and to improve both security and productivity. And in this throne speech we are seeing the start of a solid action plan for children that will finally deal with the real issues of poverty and welfare.

Welfare cannot be fixed simply by tinkering with it. The whole system has become the mutation of a polluted society all across this country. There are too many interests competing at the public trough in the name of poor people. This thwarts the self-determination, the effort, and the initiative of poor people.

I said at the start of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, that this speech was really a work in progress, something like *Finnegan's Wake*. I'm not here to pronounce on government policy, merely to suggest some directions that we may want to consider as we embark on the journey of discovery of new ways of effectively dealing with old problems.

I believe that we have implemented the building blocks to start this fundamental change. We have moved beyond rigid, doctrinaire thinking. We do not blindly blame the system or the individual for poverty. We do not look solely to the free market or to the controlled market, to government transfers, for solutions. We know that economic development occurs at many different levels.

Job creation is not solely the job of governments. We know we have to create stability and security in labour markets. We know we have to provide appropriate and adequate job training that reflects the realities of the labour market and the realities of the recipients.

We know that we can't insist that a mother take an upgrading course if she doesn't have adequate child care options. We know that we can't focus exclusively on the individuals or the system as we seek solutions. We need a multifaceted approach. We recognize that the basis for a strong society is a strong economy, characterized by fair distribution of work, wealth, and income.

Our *Partnership for Renewal*, started in the last legislative session and continued and strengthened here, is more than an economic strategy. It is the blending, the marriage, if you will, of social and economic policy.

We are moving in Saskatchewan to integrate economic development, labour market policies, income support programs, and individuals' initiatives. The result will be a comprehensive strategy to reduce and prevent poverty and decrease the dependency on income support programs.

Saskatchewan has inherited many problems — our massive public debt, the pernicious reliance on government to resolve everything, clashes of values and of ideologies. But we are also a very fortunate province. We have a forward-looking, futures orientation. After all, it's not for nothing that we joke about this being next-year country.

We have a history of bold social experimentation with safety net programs. We have general agreement on the principles of the worth and dignity of all people. And we have a collective sense of social responsibility. So we can be bold as we look at our social programs, as we grapple with the issues that Allan Blakeney called, beyond universality.

One option that I hope that we will consider very carefully in the months to come is the option of a guaranteed annual income coupled with our initiatives towards a full employment policy. A guaranteed annual income is a proposal to encourage effort through a progressive and sensible tax-back system; a proposal to move resources into the hands of people who really need them; a proposal that deals with all ages including children and seniors; a proposal that will encourage opportunities, duties, and responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me in closing that education, a secure home environment, and jobs are the key to what is needed to reverse the poverty cycle. We have announced initiatives that will begin the process of improvements in all these areas. I look forward to working for progressive programs that finally deal sensibly and sensitively with the key, underlying issue of poverty in our province.

I'm pleased to support this throne speech — this sensible and sensitive, visionary and holistic approach to resolving poverty. To paraphrase Tommy Douglas, we may not complete building the New Jerusalem today, but we can certainly move a lot closer to it. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure once again to see you in the chair in good health and in fine form as you preside over this Assembly.

And I'm proud to say that decorum has been restored. I have talked to high school principals who have visited this Assembly prior to '91 and have personally told me they were not bringing their class back because of the actions that were taking place in this Assembly. And I'm proud to say that, Mr. Speaker, you've restored decorum to a very sensible level.

And since talking to the same principals that did come back to this Assembly after '91, they are very pleased with that. And as well, Mr. Speaker, as you having something to do with this, I think this weighs heavily on the members behaving themselves in this Assembly.

I want to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the throne speech, the member from Regina Lake Centre and the member from Biggar. You did a fine job and your speeches were filled with many positive things. Congratulations once again.

I would also like to welcome the new member from Regina North West. Even though the weather was quite frigid, it was part of this government's commitment to democratic reform and having timely by-elections — that we did — to make sure that constituency could be represented in this Assembly during this session, Mr. Speaker. It's just a small part of our democratic reform.

And while talking about the Liberal members, last fall when I was swathing, my wife brought out a couple of press releases stating about the defection of the member from Shaunavon. And the first thought that came to my head was, the Liberal Party would have a new theme song that Ernest Tubb wrote, and it's called "I'm Walking the Floor Over You."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, did you ever wonder why in history other members have walked across the floor, but when Grits or Tories defect from their party they always sit as independents. It seems every time somebody is leaving the New Democratic Party or the CCF Party the opposition members always want them in their caucus.

(1530)

And it's something I haven't thought about too much till just lately and I guess it's because we certainly don't want to have Grits or Tories in our caucus, and I guess everybody wants us because they can trust us — because we tell the truth, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'd like to talk about my constituency of Kelvington-Wadena, the constituency I represent. There are many fine, hardworking people there, and once again I thank them for the opportunity to

represent them. And very few people do get this opportunity. It's something not to be taken lightly and one should never forget his or her responsibility not only to their constituency but to the province of Saskatchewan as well.

And talking about my constituency, some time ago, a couple of weeks ago, on February 3, 4, 5, and 6, the town of Wadena had the privilege of hosting the Scott Tournament of Hearts. They did a fine job of hosting that tournament and I would like to thank the town of Wadena and surrounding area for a job well done. I would like to also congratulate the winners, which is the Sherry Anderson rink.

On that Friday when the tournament was going on, there was a banquet held in Wadena. The guest speaker was Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor who was quite an avid curling fan and gave a fine address. We also had the pleasure of having Dave Ridgeway attend for the entire weekend. He was accompanying one of the rinks. He stayed in the El Kuroki and I'm sure the El Kuroki had a lot of excitement during that weekend.

One of the opposition members asked what the El Kuroki is, and I will tell you it's a hotel in Kuroki which is called the El Kuroki.

Attending that banquet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as well was the Sandra Peterson rink. And as all members will know, they are the reigning world champions. Just think about that for a second — the world ladies curling champions from Saskatchewan.

And this year at the Scott Tournament of Hearts in Kitchener-Waterloo, we will have two teams from Saskatchewan, one of course being Team Canada and the other the Sherry Anderson rink. We have two teams representing us.

And while I'm on personalities, I would like to just mention a few of the more prominent personalities that came from the constituency of Kelvington-Wadena. And there are a lot more that made the likes of the NHL (National Hockey League) but they are too numerous to mention, so I'm just going to name a few.

We have the point leader of the St. Louis Blues for almost a decade. It was Bernie Federko, who is from Foam Lake. We also have the present coach of the Los Angeles Kings which is Barry Melrose, who's from Kelvington. We also have the captain of the Toronto Maple Leafs which is Wendell Clarke, who's also from Kelvington. We have also one of the co-hosts of prime time news, Pamela Wallin, who's from Wadena. And we've also got country music artist, last year's CCMA (Canadian Country Music Association) male vocalist of the year, Gary Fjelgarde, who's from Rose Valley.

We have a very fine province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and a lot of positive attitudes, a lot of things you can be, but you have to think positive. I know that the weeklies in my riding all portray a positive attitude. You can pick up a weekly any time and it's filled with good news.

The dailies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm afraid to say, are a little more negative. And they control a lot of the attitude in this province. And the dailies, I have a message for you: bring a little more positive attitude, a little more good news; the whole province will benefit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the earliest session in over a decade. And on Thursday next when the budget will be brought down, it will also be the earliest budget in over a decade. That is quite a commitment from this government to the people of Saskatchewan to let them know what their government is doing. It's just a part of the open, accountable, and honest government.

In the debate on the throne speech, the Leader of the Opposition talked a bit about democratic reform. But if one thinks about it, it's more along the lines of Reform, some of the things he was talking about. One thing that comes to mind is the recall of members. I know it was Reform policy. And the last federal election in the debate in Kelvington there were five candidates seeking that riding. Sherwin Petersen was one.

And when the question came from the floor about the recall of members, he had the simple answer and I respect him for that. But what Sherwin had said about recall is that of all the five people sitting up here, I'm the only one that had total recall. And he went on to say that it wasn't very much of a pleasure, but the point, he said, is this is our system. That is what you call democracy. And if you don't like what we're doing, every four years there is an election and you can vote us out and vote in somebody else.

I find it a little bit ironic when he was in government they actually went five years, but it was a good point indeed. We do have a good system and it's called democracy.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's our system. It goes back to the first parliament, the days of Oliver Cromwell. And since that time . . . It was predominantly Tories and Grits representing the people. And the Tories believed that the people should live off bread and water, and the Grits felt they should live off bread and milk. And the people suffered in those times, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But 50 years ago there was a big event in history, and I'm sure every member knows what I'm talking about. And that's the election of the first social democratic government in North America. You can never, never underestimate this importance. It changed the continent.

And one major accomplishment was universal medicare. Universal medicare, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Very important. Quite a benefit and something that originated here in the province of Saskatchewan some 32 years ago. And now finally the United States of America is debating whether in fact they as well could have universal medicare.

And while I'm talking about Tommy Douglas, one of his last speeches he gave, he talked about the two phases of medicare. And he said the first phase was what they implemented, and it was removing the financial barrier between those that provide service and those that need the service. He said the second phase that would have to be done some day was remodelling the whole system. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he said that second phase was going to be the hard part.

This government has the political will and the political courage to make that change. And while doing that, we're letting the communities decide; we're empowering the communities to decide what they need in each of their own areas. And they're doing that according to their needs.

No doubt there is going to be many changes, and unfortunately there's going to be some jobs lost. And the people should be concerned about their jobs. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can't think of health care as job creation. And hopefully these people that work in the health care field can take some retraining and work in other areas of health care, something such as home care.

When we talk about health care, the first thing that comes to mind is our institutions, our special care homes, and our hospitals. We think about physical health, but there is more to health care than physical health. There's mental and there's spiritual health as well.

There is a community in Russia where some people have lived to the age of 140 years. Just think, when you reach 70 years of age, you're at mid-life. The biggest difference that people studying why this happened was more to exercise and diet. They found that society had treated their elders with great respect. Old age was looked upon as a good accomplishment and you had many wise things to tell those that followed you. You were looked upon as an outstanding person in that community. And it's somewhat different here in Canada. So mental health does play a lot in determining many factors of your longevity.

There was also a university in the United States who did a study in a special care home where the residents were bedridden; they couldn't feed themselves. Some counsellors came in and started counselling these residents, started doing some exercise programs. And within two or three months they found that these residents could once again feed themselves; they could start walking around. They could go to the washroom at night on their own, something they couldn't do before. The interesting thing about this is that the age of these residents was between 87 and 92.

years of age.

So wellness, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is much more than physical health. It's about feeling good about yourself. It's more than good eating habits and exercise, although those two are very important. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's also about mental and spiritual well-being.

Recently I spoke in Wynyard at the Shamrock teachers' convention, and the topic was called, managing stress in the '90s. There's nothing new about the '90s. The only difference is we're more open about this today.

Talk about stress at work. When someone goes to work and has a bad day or the boss doesn't totally agree with him, and he's going home and gets caught in traffic and is in a terrible mood, and walks in the door and instead of greeting his wife with the good news and how are you, he chews her out because he's in a bad mood. And then all of a sudden the wife takes it out on the children and then the children go and kick the dog. It's just stress in everyday life is very harmful. And although we see the situation every day, unfortunately for many children this situation is much, much worse.

(1545)

You see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, stress starts in your personal life. And you can do all the stress management you want but it is only a short term gain. It's more about your personal well-being. And never mind having stress, but a stressful life also leads to physical problems. And getting your life in order takes some time, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I don't know if many of you have seen the show *City Slickers* where Jack Palance is talking to Billy Crystal. And you remember Billy Crystal, what type of a mood he was in and why he went on this little venture. But, you know, Jack Palance told him it's about one thing, and it's for you to figure out and the rest is not important, although he was more descriptive than I am right here. But you can see if you watch the show, Billy Crystal will go from sadness to when he meets his wife again he says, you know, look what I found in Colorado. And he shows her a smile on his face.

But unfortunately in real life this process takes much longer. And I have seen people go through this transformation and it pays huge dividends, Mr. Deputy Speaker, huge dividends — not to the treasury of the province, but to society as a whole.

And I would like to share with this Assembly one person's story. And I don't think he should mind me telling the story. And this person didn't ever feel good. He was no fun to be around. He was always sick, he was always tired, he developed a severe weight problem, he had some stomach problems. Went to see the physician — was tested for ulcers, was tested for gallstones. It all came up negative. He was put on medication which didn't work and he ended up getting sicker, ended up in the Regina General Hospital. The doctors there thought he was having a heart attack.

This happened not once, but twice. He underwent five hours of tests. They couldn't find anything wrong. They sent him to a specialist. The specialist thought he had pleurisy, but put him

on medication and his stomach reacted. That's not what was wrong. But just think of all these tests that he went through, and the cost to society and to the taxpayers. And this person wasn't functioning well, but one day he discovered something. He discovered it was all stress related.

He went on a different diet, exercised, and a lot of mental exercise, and read a lot of books. He started to understand himself, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He lost weight; there was no more eating disorder. That knot in the stomach turned to a radiant glow in the chest. All these ailments were caused by stress.

Why do I discuss this, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Because it's just one aspect of wellness that most people don't understand — that mental stress leads to physical illness. And if you ask just who is this person — well, when I wake up every morning I see him in the mirror. And if you don't believe my story you can ask my wife and how this wellness program, how good it worked for our family. And I know there are many other people out there that would gain substantially from a program like this.

And while talking about my wife, a special thanks to my wife Carol, and my children, Tyler and Becky and Jordan, for putting up with me while I went through this transformation and for putting up with the hard tasks of today in doing this job, from being away from home all the time . . . is quite a strain on family life, especially for rural members. Mr. Deputy Speaker, again thanks to my family.

And while we have ventured on this new wellness concept, we've empowered the communities to make up their minds what they see fit. And many district boards through their needs assessments, for example, are going to be spending less money on acute care and more money on mental health and related programs. But of course, this is as the district board sees fit in their community because every community is somewhat different.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is what wellness is all about. One of the books I recently read about this in is called *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*. It talks about longevity. It talks about the mental awareness, you know, of why some people are 65 and they feel like they're 30 years old and why some are 30 and they feel like they're 65 and how to get around that and how to feel better. It also talks about exercise and eating habits, your lifestyle and wellness.

It talks about one thing, and it mentions it many times in that book. It's called smoking. Smoking — quite harmful to one's health. We'd have to wonder why Chrétien would cut that tobacco tax and what is the end result going to be.

The cancer society and the children are saying more people are going to be smoking and there's going to be more cancer — a direct contradiction to the wellness approach. I have no idea why Mr. Chrétien would do this, but I think most members know maybe it has something to do with the coming Liberal election in Quebec.

And while we're talking about Chrétien, we should remember the first federal deficit. When the Auditor General said the federal spending is out of control, it's time to get it under control. Who was the Finance minister? Well, none other than Mr. Chrétien.

You see, and now the people have brought him back to fix up the problem he created. It's a little ironic but none the less it's something like getting a kid to fix the window they broke when they were playing softball. I guess they can do it and I guess it'll teach them a lesson, but just what kind of a job are they going to do? Just what kind of a job are they going to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

And since discussing other governments, I'd like to talk about Alberta's right-wing government for a minute. The cuts they're making to society have no rhyme, no reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have a cousin that resided in Saskatoon between the years of '90 and '93 and then moved to Edmonton later in '93 and is living there to the present. And he tells me that Alberta just is making no sense of their cuts. The people are in turmoil. He has shared with me many examples, and what he is saying is that these cuts . . . a lot of them took place in Saskatchewan but at least Saskatchewan showed compassion. There's just no comparison to what happened between Alberta and Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I guess it's . . . the bottom line is all about balancing the budget. But balancing the budget means nothing. It means nothing. What one has to be concerned about is how does a government balance that budget and what they do after they balance that budget. It's about compassion and social justice.

One has to wonder why was this debt created in the first place, both federally and provincially. Was it, Mr. Speaker, so that the governments would then have an out to say we can't afford these social programs any more like universal medicare and we can cut them out? That's what it seems like to me, Mr. Speaker — that the debt was intentional so the governments of the day could get rid of the social programs, medicare being one of them. Very shameful.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about agriculture for some short time. As a youngster growing up on a family farm, we used to grow three crops. They were wheat, wheat, and wheat. And I used to visit my neighbours and I wondered what they grew. And they would say the same thing. They used to grow wheat, wheat, and some more wheat.

Times have changed. If you look upon the landscape in the summer months or visit an elevator any time of the year, you will find that there are a variety of crops grown in Saskatchewan. There are peas and lentils, canaryseed, sunola,

flax, canola, linola, and many more just too numerous to mention. And I can remember when some of my neighbours for the first time were going to grow lentils or peas. All the sceptics out there were saying it would never work; they're going to go broke; they've got to grow wheat. Wheat is king out here. There were many sceptics. I remember the first time I grew canola. My neighbours thought I was crazy.

But, Mr. Speaker, times are changing. Now so are the farmers. And today Sask farmers and Saskatchewan manufacturers are leading in technology. I take my neighbour, for example, who was just grain farming till this winter, has set up a shop in his yard and they're producing zero-till knives and packing units for air seeders. And they have to produce 500 units; they had up to 500 units two months ago. They have more orders but they can't fulfil them. And that's Gunnar Nordal and sons from Foam Lake are in this venture.

It's just a part of our ongoing soil conservation where our paper Ag 2000 is going to help facilitate these changes, and this policy is going to increase value-added products. It's going to increase on-farm productivity and it's going to end in better income for farm families.

I will admit it's been tough out there on the farm. But, Mr. Speaker, it is still the best place to live and it is still the best place to raise a family.

And I ought to know because I was one of those Saskatchewan boys that went to the oil patch of Alberta and came back. And I worked in the city, but returned back to Saskatchewan and back to farm life, and something I am quite proud of and happy I have done.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: — Mr. Speaker, times are changing. And sometimes it's hard to accept change. Take when I was reeve of the RM (rural municipality) of Emerald, was going through some old council resolutions. There was a motion in the 1920s which was to lobby both levels of senior government to get more settlers on the land, on all the vacant land.

And about the 1950s they accomplished that. There was 3,800 people living in the RM of Emerald, which is a standard RM, a nine-township RM — 3,800 people living there. Unfortunately today, Mr. Speaker, there's only 720. There's 305 vacant yard sites.

I suppose, Mr. Speaker, it's part of the evolution of agriculture. We all want to see more farmers, and I'm hopeful that with a book like Ag 2000 and more value-added, more special crops, hopefully we will have more farmers out there.

(1600)

And when you talk about less farmers, it had nothing

to do with which government was in power because all governments were in power and farm population declined. Economic times went up and down; farmers declined. But it's just a part of the evolution of agriculture.

But times change. Recently I was reading a book, an article, and in 1943 the chairman of IBM corporation was talking about computers and he said possibly there would be a market for five computers worldwide. Could you imagine if IBM corporation would have stayed with that philosophy, like five computers worldwide?

Times change, Mr. Speaker. Just like in agriculture, the changes between tillage and direct seeding, the changes between wheat and alternate crops, the changes between tractors versus horses, they all had resistance. It's something like our changes in health care, like the changes from institutional care to wellness.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, times are changing, but everybody's going to be better off at the end of the day.

As I start to wrap up my comments, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the opposition for a while. And it's always easier to be in opposition. And as a farmer I know the saying, the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. And if any member is looking across from that fence, I tell you, watch out because you might step in something you didn't know was there.

When you talk about the opposition members, you know, what would they do? They talk about higher services, lower taxes, and we're going to balance the budget while we do that. And just how are they going to accomplish that? You know, even the Reformers in Ottawa have come out with a package stating \$20 million in cuts.

An Hon. Member: — Billion.

Mr. Kluz: — Twenty billion. Pardon me, Mr. Speaker — \$20 billion in cuts. Like those cuts are not . . . At least they had the political courage to say here is what we would do. Now why can't the opposition members in their statements come out with some sound proposals, even some of the changes that they would have made?

Mr. Speaker, as we seek our budget balance projection, which is going to happen . . . We will balance the budget. We have a real plan, Mr. Speaker. And I know at times it has been tough, but I would like to thank the constituents of Kelvington-Wadena and all the people of Saskatchewan for making the sacrifice so that we can balance the budget. And we can do this, not for today but for tomorrow — for our children, Mr. Speaker.

And saying that, Mr. Speaker, when it comes down to the vote on the throne speech, I am proud to say I will stand in my place and I will support the throne speech, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my

pleasure to enter the debate this afternoon. It has been very wide-ranging, as you know, but the Premier last night barely even touching on the subject. And that's fine, because I don't intend to touch a whole lot on the subject either, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to be wide-ranging as well.

First of all, however, I'd like to welcome the new member, the member for Regina North West, to the legislature. I understand it was a very well run campaign that she organized. And as she has taken her place here, we welcome her.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to talk a little bit about what I think the view of the government opposite is compared to the view of ours in Saskatchewan. Our province is steeped in tradition, Mr. Speaker, and Tommy Douglas folklore.

Mr. Speaker, it might surprise you to know that some of us in the legislature are young enough that we didn't even know Tommy Douglas. It might surprise you to know that, Mr. Speaker, I didn't even know the man, Mr. Speaker, and he's the one that the government is so fond of telling us about. They hark back to the '40s to bring up the views of Tommy Douglas.

And that's fine, Mr. Speaker. It makes for interesting discussion and it makes for an interesting time here in the legislature for those of us that didn't know Tommy Douglas from the next guy on the street. To me he holds no special meaning, Mr. Speaker, other than the fact that he is a past premier of this province; a man who brought in many policies, many initiatives — some, in my view, good, and some, in my view, bad.

One thing that is constant, Mr. Speaker, and that is history has generally been kind to past premiers, most notably, Tommy Douglas. I however have sharp differences in our philosophical view of the world, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to talk about those differences here this afternoon — the differences between the free enterprise capitalist view of the world and the socialist view of the world.

I believe that the socialist view of the world is based on envy, jealousy, and fear, Mr. Speaker. For some unexplainable reason a philosophy that believes that we in Saskatchewan are disadvantaged, that we are not as good as the rest of the world, that we don't somehow measure up, that we are inferior — that is the socialist view, Mr. Speaker.

And I think back, Mr. Speaker, to a childhood acquaintance and friend. We've known each other our entire life long. We debated politics all through our formative and teenage years. This man will remain unnamed, but suffice it to say he has had a lifelong socialist upbringing, coming from a family that I understand were part of the earliest socialist roots in this province. For simplicity, I will call him Jimmy

Socialist.

Jimmy Socialist, Mr. Speaker, is a fine debater, a man who understands the socialist philosophy well, a man to this day I still believe will enter politics in Saskatchewan. Jimmy Socialist is right up there with the best when recalling the Tommy Douglas folklore. A man who can hold his own with anyone when it comes to political debate. A man who the socialists opposite would be proud of, extremely proud of. He is good at promoting the socialist dream, Mr. Speaker — he is very good at it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Jimmy Socialist and myself have debated for years. He holds a firm belief that only socialism can bring about fairness and justice. Up until a few years ago, Mr. Speaker, I never thought I would see him make a mistake in debate. He debated tirelessly on behalf of his principles.

Then an interesting thing happened one time in a particularly heated debate that we were having. He finally said he had had enough and he broke down. He broke down and told us in the room there that evening why he firmly held his socialist view of life so dear. At that particular point I think it was the most stressful time of his life, Mr. Speaker, and maybe that would explain why he broke down the way he did.

He betrayed the socialists that night, Mr. Speaker, because he told us in heated debate what made him the socialist that he was and is today. He explained from start to finish the socialist philosophy to us. It is the firm belief, he said, that I am disadvantaged. Other people have had a head start, other people have money, other people have an education, other people are lucky, other people have inherited money, other people always seem to be in the right place at the right time. Other people have more advantages in life than I do, he said.

Mr. Speaker, this man is poor, he is uneducated. We should have pity on him. He did not enjoy the benefits others have had, therefore somehow someone has to level the playing-field for him, not allow everyone else out there to have what he cannot have.

Mr. Speaker, I truly do have pity for him — pity because Jimmy Socialist is so mired in his beliefs and fears and envy and jealousy that he cannot cope well with the world or the people who disagree with him, Mr. Speaker.

Jimmy Socialist was raised, Mr. Speaker, in a fine home with loving parents. He's had the benefit of a fine inheritance. This is not a man who is poor. In fact, Mr. Speaker, most people would believe him to be rich. Rich in family life, rich in material possessions, rich with the benefit of a university education. Rich, Mr. Speaker, in ability. Rich in every way.

But, Mr. Speaker, this is a man who is embittered with envy; embittered with jealousy. The cup is always half empty not half full. Someone out there is trying to get him. They want to steal from him. They have more than he has. Government has to stop this before he has nothing left, and must also take from those who he believes have and give to those who he believes does not have.

Jimmy Socialist is so handicapped by a failed philosophy that

his every waking moment in his whole life can be defined in one short sentence: help me, I'm disadvantaged. And that's exactly what he said there that evening: help me, I'm disadvantaged.

The very spirit, Mr. Speaker, of Jimmy Socialist has been sucked out of him by the philosophy of jealousy and fear. Mr. Speaker, we saw that very same thing last night. The envy, the jealousy exhibited by the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan. He went into a lengthy defence of his throne speech, his philosophy, and why the rest of the world must have pity on him and his government.

It was pathetic to watch a man so consumed with fear that I believe, Mr. Speaker, it's impairing his judgement. Mr. Speaker, Jimmy Socialist sits in the chair opposite us, in the Premier's chair in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this philosophy I believe is the one . . . Our philosophy, Mr. Speaker, I believe is opposite of that. Our philosophy is one of hope; one of challenge; one of providing a climate for the individual to succeed at whatever challenge that they wish to pursue; one where less government is better, to allow maximum freedom to create and achieve; that we should strive for a society that restrains government and not the individual; that the people of Saskatchewan can solve their own problems and do not need big government to do it for them; that government is in place to promote law and order; that the best we can hope for, Mr. Speaker, in an imperfect world, will not be achieved by . . . will be achieved by maximizing individual freedoms, both economically and politically.

That comparison is not how the government opposite views things, Mr. Speaker. They believe that government programs like social assistance are the way to treat the people of Saskatchewan.

Well we don't believe that, Mr. Speaker. We believe that programs like social assistance are not the measure of how compassionate a government is, that society does not owe anything to anyone, Mr. Speaker. We believe that people owe it to themselves; that society owes its citizens the equality of opportunity but cannot guarantee them the equality of outcome.

Mr. Speaker, my philosophy and the philosophy of the free enterprise, capitalist people of the world, I believe, can also be defined in one short sentence: yes, I can. Yes, I can. Yes, I can build a strong business. Yes, I can build a strong family. Yes, I can build a strong farm. Yes, I can be good at my job. Yes, I can build a future for myself and my family in Saskatchewan. Yes, I can. That's our defining moment, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1615)

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, I believe that is the difference between the socialist's view of the world and the capitalist's free enterprise view of the world. Ours is based in hope; theirs in despair. Ours in competition; theirs in control. Ours in giving people opportunity; theirs in holding people back. Ours in individual freedom; theirs in government restriction. Ours in less government; theirs in more government. Ours that life can be rich and rewarding; theirs that someone out there is trying to get them.

It must be terrible, Mr. Speaker, it must be terrible to wake up each and every day with nothing but a hopeless feeling of inadequacy that the members opposite display in this House each and every day. It is the socialist's view that has held this province back, Mr. Speaker, I believe, for 30 or 40 years of socialism compared to provinces like our sister province of Alberta where the people out there believe that they have the answer to society's problems and not big government.

Mr. Speaker, the government of Saskatchewan continues on that same path and will continue to hold Saskatchewan under their thumb as is evidenced in the throne speech that we saw last night . . . or earlier last week, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the throne speech was very inadequate. It didn't talk about a lot of things in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I think that need to be talked about. It didn't talk about government reform. It didn't talk about the initiatives such as the one that was introduced this afternoon where people — ordinary folks — that sat in the gallery this afternoon, asked questions of the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan and he won't even rise in his place and respond to them. It was a shame to witness.

And the people in the gallery unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, did witness it and I understand they talked to the media this afternoon after question period and that's exactly what they told them. They were ashamed of the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan — wouldn't even stand in his place and respond to the question that was asked of him directly from them, by myself. Mr. Speaker, it's shameful that a government should find itself in a position where they can't answer questions from ordinary taxpayers in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech is totally lacking and therefore we feel . . . the opposition, the official opposition, feels that there are things far more pressing that we should be discussing in this legislature, Mr. Speaker. And therefore I move the motion:

That this House do now proceed to Bill No. 3, An Act to Create, Encourage and Facilitate Business Opportunities in Saskatchewan through the Establishment of the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation.

So moved, Mr. Speaker.

The division bells rang from 4:19 p.m. until 4:20 p.m.

Motion negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas

Swenson	Toth
Neudorf	Britton
Martens	D'Autremont
Boyd	Goohsen

Nays

Thompson	Whitmore
Teichrob	Sonntag
Johnson	Flavel
Kowalsky	Roy
Carson	Cline
Upshall	Crofford
Bradley	Kujawa
Lyons	Stanger
Pringle	Kluz
Murray	Knezacek
Hamilton	Harper
Trew	Langford
Serby	t

Mr. Knezacek: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the support from my colleagues as they come to listen to my address.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, it's with utmost pleasure and honour that I stand in my place as the representative from the Saltcoats constituency and enter debate on behalf of my constituents in support of the Speech from the Throne.

Before I begin my debate, I want to take a few moments to congratulate the member from Regina Lake Centre, the mover of the Speech from the Throne, for her thought-provoking and analytical presentation. And also to the member from Biggar, the seconder of the motion, for his positive vision and optimistic comments about Saskatchewan's future. Both these members are very hard-working individuals and dedicated to serving their constituents and the people of the province — colleagues whom I'm proud to call my friends.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to join my colleagues in welcoming to the legislature the member from Regina North West. I'm sure she will find the experience of serving the public as an MLA rewarding but quite different than the campaign through which she just recently came. No doubt she will find her new role as someone on the inside looking out in sharp contrast to someone on the outside looking in. I wish her the best in meeting the needs and desires of her constituents.

And now I turn to you, Mr. Speaker, to recognize your work, your contributions, and your accomplishments as Speaker of the House. You are certainly in an

enviable position, being able to preside over an Assembly that presents no problems, always displays perfect decorum, and never causes you to pull your hair. You need to be congratulated on maintaining the excellent tradition of fine Speakers in this Assembly, or if you wish to turn that around, maintain the fine tradition of excellent Speakers in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I want to renew my commitment to you to work with you within the framework of the rules which bind this Assembly. I will support you and I will endeavour to cooperate with you while serving the needs and wishes of the constituents I represent.

My final opening remarks are directed to the Premier. Mr. Premier, you and your cabinet have served the legislature and the province honourably and with distinction since taking office in late October of 1991.

Under your leadership, this government established a new direction early in its mandate, a direction which is characterized by openness, honesty, and integrity, a sharp contrast to what Saskatchewan people experienced under the previous administration. This government, under your guidance, is participatory, consultative, cooperative, and above all, community minded. You are to be commended for your guiding principle of government by consensus as opposed to government by confrontation.

It is with this principle as the basis for our government, Mr. Speaker, that we have been able to accomplish so much in just over two years. Much has been accomplished but much more has to be done as we continue on our journey of renewal in 1994.

Mr. Speaker, let's make no mistake about it, the number one reason for the successes and accomplishments that we have experienced within the last two years is directly the result of the sacrifice, perseverance, and cooperative spirit of the people of this province.

This then leads me to my first topic of debate which I've entitled: people. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize a special group of people in our province, a group that often gets overlooked but yet to whom we owe so much. Of course the people I refer to are the thousands of volunteers in our communities across the province that in many ways enable our towns, villages, and communities to survive.

We often look to people to seek out the individuals who would best serve as community leaders because of their leadership abilities, and when we find them we pour out our accolades on them when in actuality their accomplishments are only achievable because of the strong support provided by the volunteers in those various communities. In a time of stress and economic difficulty, it is important for us to remember the good and the positive in our province.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is a province blessed with incredible talent and a diversity of experience among its people, thus making it a unique home for us all. I believe that one of the main goals for all of us should be a caring, sharing community, a place where individuals can develop their talents

and be fulfilled in their personal lives. Volunteers play a key role in making this happen.

I probably don't need to remind you, Mr. Speaker, that volunteers are the ones who visit the shut-ins, deliver Meals on Wheels, sponsor youth activities and sports events. A prime example of this is the Saskatchewan Winter Games currently taking place in Kindersley, as the member from Kindersley alluded to in his address. And not too long ago, as my bench mate and the member from Kelvington-Wadena described, the Scott Tournament of Hearts being held in Wadena, also involving a lot of volunteers to make that project do well.

Volunteers help seniors lead independent lives. They animate cultural groups, write local histories, raise funds for worthy causes, and carry on the work of churches. They are active in hospitals, the Red Cross, St. John Ambulance, and the veterans' organizations and in women's groups.

They work tirelessly on school and library boards and municipal government, in aboriginal and multicultural activities. And yes, Mr. Speaker, they even work for political parties and in election campaigns. Dedicated volunteers bring adult education to our individual communities to provide an opportunity for us to benefit from their availability.

(1630)

They are a dedicated, diligent group of people who appear in large numbers across this province and in every community, large and small. They are the backbone and the spirit of our prairie society.

Mr. Speaker, someone once said, we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. And our volunteers give a lot. We can take pride in the fact that Saskatchewan has the highest rate of volunteerism in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate each and every volunteer in my constituency and indeed every volunteer across this province for all their hard work, dedication, and personal sacrifice.

Volunteers, I want to thank you for your contribution in making this province a better place for all of us to live and work and to raise our families. I can't think of any place I'd rather be than here in Saskatchewan.

I want to focus my next remarks to my constituency, Mr. Speaker. The constituency of Saltcoats is an important area of the province. And it's a vital piston in the engine of our provincial economy. The 17 communities within the riding are separated by fertile farm land and several creeks and valleys, making it an ideal mixed farming area, including beef, hog, dairy, and poultry production, as well as the production of grain and oilseeds.

It is also a scenic tourist area, Mr. Speaker.

The strength and determination of the people of Saltcoats have resulted in the development of many attractions and facilities such as Gopherville, the Kaposvar historic site, and several regional parks.

The people I'm talking about are farmers, labourers, professionals, small-business people, men and women, seniors and youth, all rallying around a cause in their own community. As a result we see many recreational and cultural facilities, health care facilities, churches, and educational facilities.

Mr. Speaker, many of these facilities were nurtured by the volunteers of the many organizations that thrive in these communities. You can readily see, Mr. Speaker, that Saltcoats is a busy community where lots is happening.

The economy of this area is not only reliant on agriculture but also on industry based on potash development by IMC Canada (International Minerals and Chemical Corporation (Canada) Ltd.).

Saltcoats is the melting pot of ethnic culture and traditions. This is reflected in the many museums and historic points of interest that are established across the constituency.

Truly, Mr. Speaker, Saltcoats is a vibrant community that looks to us for leadership. Speaking on behalf of my constituents, I know that Saltcoats will be there to do its share to get Saskatchewan back on its feet again as we embark on this journey of renewal together.

Mr. Speaker, I quickly want to touch on three areas as they pertain to the Saltcoats constituency. First, agriculture. I commend the RM of Langenburg for taking the initiative to bring forth a new format to its annual meeting, keeping the realities of agriculture in mind. The RM took a slightly different slant to the traditional spring ratepayers' banquet. What they sponsored and held on February 7 was a rural entrepreneur day which replaced their annual meeting. Farm families, which are currently operating alternate businesses from their farms, were asked to set up displays outlining their operations. As well, guest speakers talked about rural businesses and opportunities during the noon luncheon.

Secondly, in health, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that both the East Central and North Valley district health boards are very busy beginning to conduct needs assessments in communities across the constituency in order to carry out the second phase of health care reform. Members of both boards need to be congratulated on their commitment to reform and on their quality of work.

Apart from the work of the district boards but in keeping with the wellness model, Esterhazy, under the leadership of personnel from IMC in partnership with representation from the district health board and educators in the area, are planning to sponsor a hands-on, health, wellness, fitness, awareness fair on April 15 and 16. More details on this initiative will be forthcoming at a later date.

And thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I want to again draw your attention to the fine work volunteers undertook in the Esterhazy area, as witnessed by a benefit dance which I attended last weekend for

Brian Bass, a 26-year-old resident of Esterhazy who became a quadriplegic as a result of a trampoline accident he suffered last May.

Brian had his spinal cord stretched but not severed in the accident. Brian spent six weeks at the Plains hospital and in June moved to the Wascana institute. There he received therapy in preparation for his move home.

The friends of Brian Bass along with the local Lions Club sponsored the benefit to help Brian meet some of the major expenses he will incur settling back into his home. Again, Mr. Speaker, an excellent example of people helping people.

For the next few moments I want to focus on the theme of families and youth. Mr. Speaker, this year is being marked by the United Nations as the International Year of the Family. It is therefore very fitting that our government has taken the initiative to show leadership and focus on the needs of children and families with the introduction of the action plan for children. We have a number of projects in place which address problems with respect to child hunger, family violence, and illiteracy. These projects are a direct result of the involvement of community agencies and schools as they attempt to meet the challenging needs of children and families in today's society.

Last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services, the member from Saskatoon Eastview-Haultain, announced that grants totalling \$1 million are being provided to communities around the province for the 1993-94 child nutrition and development program.

Mr. Speaker, these grants support the efforts of schools, community agencies, and churches in responding to the needs of hungry children. They are used to provide food, education, and support services to lessen the impact of poverty. They are also used to support the development of community-minded approaches to meeting the needs of these children and their families.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of these nutrition projects, children will be more settled in their schools and communities, thus making it easier for them to concentrate on their learning and are more likely to stay in school and develop their skills and education which they need for the future.

In these difficult economic times, Mr. Speaker, it is important that we protect the most vulnerable members of our communities. We realize the causes of poverty are complex. It is therefore imperative that all levels of government and communities work together in partnership to find effective long-term solutions.

In the mean time, Mr. Speaker, our government needs to target support to meet the immediate need of our province's children. This indicates that we are a caring, sharing government in pursuit of our goal to eventually eliminate food banks, hunger, and poverty. But we can't move any faster because of the hand that we've been dealt by the former administration which opted to pour money into unsuccessful megaprojects rather than to invest it in people's basic needs.

Other initiatives that we will be undertaking in this session, Mr. Speaker, include amendments to The Ombudsman's Act to establish a children's advocate within the Ombudsman's office. Legislation will be introduced to accommodate the expansion of the Unified Family Court on a province-wide basis. The victims of domestic violence Act will provide remedies to address situations to immediate danger and minimize the disruption to victims' lives.

And finally in this area, Mr. Speaker, amendments to The Labour Standards Act and to The Trade Union Act will be introduced which will respond to the need of balancing work and family responsibilities, something that hasn't been considered for many, many years.

Mr. Speaker, just yesterday afternoon the Associate Minister of Health, the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, announced a planned new initiative of interest to all Saskatchewan youth, families, and communities.

Later this month, Mr. Speaker, we will begin an extensive process of consultation with Saskatchewan's young people to seek out their view on public health issues. Their opinions and ideas will be sought to help find solutions to problems dealing with smoking, and drinking and driving. Their input will be considered before any legislation dealing with changes to The Highway Traffic Act, The Vehicle Administration Act, the driver licensing regulations and The Minors Tobacco Act are tabled in the House.

To conclude my thoughts and remarks in relationship to the topic of families and youth, I think it is only fair and appropriate that at this time I express my thanks to the members of my family for their cooperation, support, and understanding, and for the personal sacrifice that they have had to make in their lives as I go about the task of serving the needs of my constituents and the residents of this province.

Just a few general comments before I conclude, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that sound fiscal management has been a priority for our government. And less than a year ago our astute Minister of Finance, the member from Saskatoon Westmount, presented this Assembly with a four-year plan to balance the budget in 1996-97.

There are many other initiatives that our government has undertaken in the areas of education, economic development and job creation, agriculture, and the environment, just to name a few. Time does not allow me to deal adequately with all these very important issues. However my colleagues have and will discuss these topics thoroughly in their address in reply.

Mr. Speaker, as we look forward to 1994, it is important to recognize that this year will mark two important events in our

history. One, being the 50th anniversary of the D-Day invasion which launched the deciding battle of World War II and with it the victory for the western world.

And I want to pay a special tribute to the many men and women who had sacrificed their lives fighting for what they believed was right. To them and to our veterans we owe a debt of gratitude for the preservation of democracy, in order that we and generations of the future can live as free men and women, if we so desire. As government we will join veterans' organizations across Saskatchewan and Canada to mark this important anniversary, Mr. Speaker.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the election of the first social democratic government in North America under the leadership of Tommy Douglas. As together we embark on this continued journey of renewal, we are writing the history of the beginning of the next 50 years of social democratic government in this province and the benefits it brings to the people.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents I am committed to this journey of renewal and I place my full support behind the Speech from the Throne as read so eloquently by Her Honour, Sylvia Fedoruk, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1645)

Mr. Johnson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all I'd like to say thank you for the way that you have been chairing and handling the House. It's been providing an entertaining and very different Speech from the Throne and the discussion going on than what took place over the past two years.

The first thing, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to do is to comment on some of the remarks made by previous speakers in the debate. I'd like to congratulate the mover, the member from Regina Lake Centre, for her remarks on the motion, and the seconder, the member from Biggar, in following the mover's motion.

Mr. Speaker, this particular debate that follows the presentation of the throne speech is a debate that allows members to move in a number of different directions, but there are usually some things that one would find in the speeches made by non-cabinet ministers.

And I'd like to take a little while to comment on the speech made by the member from Kindersley. It was a very entertaining speech. It discussed a number of items that an individual . . . that he put forward and

described and what this person felt and where he met him, etc. But the member may not have understood what he was really doing in speaking in this debate and not coming up with a single issue that affected the government, neither pro nor con. And since he is a member of the opposition, I believe that we can look at that, after having a government in place for two years, as a very high recommendation to this government for its actions over the past two years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Because, Mr. Speaker, in a debate, in this particular debate, where one can be very wide-ranging in discussion, not to have a single item that you are contrary to what the government has done, and in opposition, indicates that that government had to have been doing some very excellent work.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a little time and comment on some of the remarks that the member for Regina North West said in this debate. And although the *Hansard* is not working or is not available to me at this time, I believe that her remarks went something like this, that the government hid from the media the information regarding MA (ministerial assistant) employment regulations. I'm not able to quote verbatim what she said, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure that you and others will be able to look it up at a later date.

Now the member made these remarks in this Assembly, and she is a member of a party that is the only party in this Assembly to have over 50 per cent female representatives as their members. And that is the Liberal Party.

An Hon. Member: — That's down from 100 per cent.

Mr. Johnson: — That's down from 100 per cent, yes. But, Mr. Speaker, I want you to keep this in mind because what her remarks were in regards to the MA salaries, that she said that they'd been hidden, indicates to me that she doesn't do her own research, that she was simply taking notes from the member who sits in front of her. And as everyone will understand, his research into items is not necessarily the very best. Because, Mr. Speaker, I hold in my hand a copy of the *Saskatchewan Gazette* dated November 26, 1993, part II, revised regulations of Saskatchewan. The Public Service Act, section 46, order in council 830, dated November 17, 1993 and it says: the regulations for ministerial assistants employment regulations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this *Gazette* was published on the November 26 and the member from Regina North West said that this government had hid from the media information regarding MA's salaries. An interesting thing — hid from the media, meaning to say that we are attempting to keep the public uninformed and I have here eight pages that detail for anyone's interest exactly what was said.

But it indicates that the member is not interested in doing the kind of research that would allow her to back up her statements. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the material I have here from the *Saskatchewan Gazette* will indicate that of the individuals that they were talking about, 16 of them are from

Executive Council and only two were clerical staff in the Ministers' offices.

But, Mr. Speaker, what is even more interesting about that and the reason that I had indicated earlier that the member from Regina North West was a member of a party that has over 50 per cent women as members in this House, is that all of these individuals, all 18 individuals are women. And what took place in putting forward the revised regulations basically says that everybody gets paid according to the category that they're in, not according to the sex that they are.

And, Mr. Speaker, what I see in this is that the members of the Liberal Party in this Assembly are prepared . . . are not prepared to put forth items and to support those things that would support women in our society. And it's not something that you would . . . It's not something that just happens with this newest member. It also is something that the leader of the party has done previously. And you can look at, say in November 1992, after the government raised the minimum wage, Haverstock said: I'm convinced that ultimately jobs will be lost as a result of this decision. Never one to support those at the bottom end of the pay scale.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to indicate one of things that has occurred recently in the Turtleford constituency. I recently attended the opening of Ski Timber Ridge, a new ski hill just south of Big River. The event was a send-off for an Olympic team representing Saskatchewan at the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer. The members of this team are Kim Ennis, Lloyd Pinay and Laurie Afseth and they will be participating in a snow sculpturing competition that will be held at the games.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — I had the opportunity to discuss the sculpturing of snow with Kim. And although I'm not an artist or a sculptor myself, I found it very interesting and I thought maybe the members of the Assembly would also find it interesting.

Snow sculpturing is an art with some very unique qualities. The medium is soft, it is fragile, and great care must be taken to maintain the structural integrity of the sculpture. Nevertheless, the finished sculpture can be a creation of fantastic detail. The fact that the creation is not permanent only enhances the beauty of it. This art celebrates the immediacy of life.

There is also a problem with light in snow sculpturing because sculptures are really a creation of shadows, and snow plays games with light. Snow is a trickster, sometimes absorbing the light, sometimes reflecting it in seemingly a haphazard manner. Snow actually

appears at some times to emit a glow. The artist must play with this trickster to exaggerate or understate different parts of the physical sculpture in order to create a perfect visual sculpture for the individual observing it.

I ask this Assembly to support, along with myself, to support this team in Lillehammer while they sculpture a 15-foot eagle whose overspread wings protect a child reaching out for an egg — an image, Mr. Speaker, an image of renewal that I believe is appropriate for presentation from Saskatchewan for today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the time. I will be supporting the resolution when the vote comes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I was not able to hear the last words of the speaker. I'm not sure whether he adjourned debate or not. Did the member ask . . .

An Hon. Member: — He did.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:55 p.m.