

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**February 9, 1995**

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition, and allow me to read the lead-up to this petition:

To the Hon. Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in the legislature assembled, the petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly showeth that Mrs. Carol Krieger of Yellow Grass wishes to build a multi-bed personal care home in Avonlea; that whereas Mrs. Krieger owns and operates similar type facilities in the town of Yellow Grass and the city of Weyburn, and whereas the community of Avonlea supports this facility both in principle and financially, and whereas this is a private facility requiring no government funding but has a potential for cost savings to the provincial health care system, therefore we the undersigned feel the province of Saskatchewan is showing unfair treatment and discrimination against the community of Avonlea by not giving Mrs. Krieger a licence to build this facility.

And this petition has been signed by a number of people from the Avonlea area. I so present.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here from residents of the constituency of Thunder Creek. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, because this is a new petition, I should read the preamble in its entirety:

To the Hon. Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in the legislature assembled, the petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly showeth that Highway No. 42 is in extremely poor condition due to dense traffic, an extremely cold winter, and a heavy precipitation last fall; and that the condition of Highway 42 will deteriorate even further due to increased vehicular activity during the summer months because of grain trucking, tourism, and other secondary industry and processing traffic.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate the total amounts of funds garnered from the taxpayer for fuel tax, vehicle licence fees, and provincial sales tax on new vehicles toward the maintenance and capital costs of Saskatchewan roads, and further that the Government of Saskatchewan dedicate any monies available from the federal infrastructure program toward Saskatchewan's road system rather than provide these sums toward capital construction of casinos in Regina and Saskatoon. As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And today, Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to present these. These are citizens from Tugaske, Craik, Saskatoon, and others. And in following days, Mr. Speaker, there will be more.

**The Speaker:** — Before I call the next order, I'm not certain about, I would have to have a look at the petitions, but I hope members are only reading the prayer when they are presenting the petitions. I will have to check that to make certain, but I just want to remind members that only the prayer is read.

**NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS**

**Mrs. Bergman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Monday next ask the government the following question:

Regarding the Department of Health: (1) how many employees of your department attended the Canadian public health convention in Calgary; (2) what was the cost of those staff attending, including their registration, travel, meals, and accommodation.

**Mr. McPherson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Monday next ask the government the following question:

Regarding the department of Executive Council: (1) how much is being paid this fiscal year to Phoenix Advertising Group by your department; (2) what were the services that were purchased or commissioned; (3) were all the services paid for actually received; and (4) how was Phoenix Advertising Group selected to perform this service.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, three individuals who are with us this afternoon to witness the question period. I'd like to introduce them and ask them to stand. Mrs. Carol Krieger from Yellow Grass, administrator of the private care home there; Gary Nelson, mayor of Avonlea; and Tim Forer, Avonlea town administrator. And I'd like the Assembly to welcome these individuals to the Assembly this afternoon.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Bradley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to welcome the members here that have come today from Avonlea and from Yellow Grass. And I'm very pleased that they're here to be able to witness question period, and just welcome here today. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Stanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like the Assembly to welcome a former colleague of some of theirs, Bob Long,

and also a constituent of mine and a dear friend. Say welcome to Bob, everyone.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Simard:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, is my mother Antoinette Simard, and she's been here many times before but I have never taken the opportunity to introduce her. And I would like to say a few words about her today.

Antoinette was born in Ituna, Saskatchewan in 1912 and she was born upstairs above her father's store. Her father also owned the first hotel in Ituna, Saskatchewan, which he later closed during prohibition because it was almost impossible to make a living.

Antoinette's family moved to Meadow Lake in 1919. They were attracted to Meadow Lake because of the beautiful trees and the lakes, and the children were enticed there because of the spruce gum on the trees. They went in 1919, and at that time the village was called Lac de Prairie. I bet you didn't know that, Maynard.

Antoinette's father was a homesteader, a freighter, a trapper, and a justice of the peace and her mother was a person who was extremely interested in education. She made sure that all of her four children got a post-secondary education which was — even though they were as poor as church mice — which was quite extraordinary back in those times.

Mom taught for 36 years. Her first school was in Junor, Saskatchewan in a little log cabin with no electricity. Many of her pupils could not even speak English but to this very day she still visits with a number of them. She retired in 1976 and is still very active in her community of Meadow Lake.

Although she does complain to me from time to time about getting old, and I'm trying very hard to understand, but I don't think she's getting that old.

For me she's been a source of strength and comfort, and she certainly is every inch a mother and every inch a professional woman. And today I want to say thank you to this very gracious lady who has been my comfort and my inspiration. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't sure how to begin here as well, but I smiled to myself when I heard the member from Rosthern introduce his constituency assistant as a person that made him look good. Well in my case it works, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to introduce to you and to the Assembly my constituency assistant, Susan Karpenko, who has been down for the week to witness the throne speech and to also view the proceedings during the week. So, Susan, if you'd please stand and let us welcome you.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Sonntag:** — And also I'd like to take the opportunity to welcome my constituent as well, Mrs. Antoinette Simard, who took the opportunity to travel down with me as well. Thanks for coming, Antoinette.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Aberdeen Seed Processor

**Mr. Roy:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to announce today to you and to the House a business project which is creating jobs and economic activity in my area, and further evidence of the positive economic environment in Saskatchewan.

Horizon Seed Processors is starting a business this month in Aberdeen, Saskatchewan. This plant, which was established by local farmers, will clean lentils, peas, and mustard to export standards and then ship these commodities by bulk to buyers in Montreal, Thunder Bay, and Vancouver.

This business is expected to employ six people initially. This plant, which is situated north-east of Saskatoon, will provide farmers with new markets for their escalating production of specialty crops. This group of farmers came up with an innovative idea, Mr. Speaker, and now we see this project coming to fruition. Initially the plant will have the capacity to clean 500 bushels of peas and lentils per hour and 200 bushels of mustard per hour.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that this plant will be a major boost to the local economy and will provide employment and support to local families in the community. I want to wish the group of farmers the best of luck as they establish this business, as I know it will prosper in the years to come. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### The Victims of Domestic Violence Act

**Ms. Lorje:** — Mr. Speaker, the constituents of Saskatoon Wildwood are concerned about domestic violence, as are we all. Contrary to the judgements of moralist Murray Mandryk, we in this legislature occasionally do something right. Even less occasionally, we drop party lines and get it right together.

Last session, with the support of all parties, The Victims of Domestic Violence Act was passed. After several months of preparation by police and the judicial system, the Act was proclaimed last week. And according to a report in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*:

(Barely had the Act) been proclaimed as law when a Saskatoon police officer asked a specially trained justice of the peace to issue an emergency intervention order under the Act, and the JP agreed.

Mr. Speaker, in that one sentence is contained all the elements of the Act and the reason for which it was created. An incident of domestic violence must be met and dealt with immediately to avoid incremental violence and to protect the victim — not to punish her or him. With the specially trained JPs (justice of the peace) and with police officers empowered to intervene immediately, victims can now be helped without delay, avoiding the red tape which previously had hampered effective action. Police support this Act, and they're a tough sell. All front-line workers helping victims of domestic violence help support it.

We all lament the necessity for such an Act, but I think that each member of this Assembly can take some satisfaction in being a party to its creation. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **Saskatchewan Science Centre**

**Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to inform you and the members about the remarkable success in 1994 of the Saskatchewan Science Centre which is located in the constituency of Regina Victoria.

The Saskatchewan Science Centre attracted 240,000 visitors in 1994, making it the number one year-round education and tourism attraction in Saskatchewan. This number includes 36,000 students from across Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, Montana, and North Dakota. Mr. Speaker, this tourist attraction means \$3.7 million to the provincial economy.

The Saskatchewan Science Centre is a community organization that brings science to life through entertaining hands-on exhibits, science demonstrations and shows, student workshops, and IMAX films. One of the outstanding projects in 1994 was a major outreach program called The Safari Project. As Saskatchewan's first-ever live, interactive television program, Safari linked provincial classrooms by satellite feed to a remote research team near Barkley Sound, British Columbia. This was all made possible with the help of the Saskatchewan Communications Network, SaskTel, and the Department of Education, Training and Employment.

Mr. Speaker, the Science Centre is to be congratulated for all of its success and I know that 1995 will be another record-breaking year. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **Lumsden Park Manor**

**Ms. Murray:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of last month I was given the privilege of cutting the ribbon at the grand reopening of the Lumsden Park Manor in my constituency. I was also pleased to present a painting by Saskatchewan artist Bertha Dick to the residents of the manor in recognition of this happy event.

Home to a number of seniors, the manor was severely damaged by fire last February. To restore the building and to return the

residents to their home, the community of Lumsden, the residents and their families, and many groups and organizations from the surrounding area came together in an act of community spirit that is typical of Saskatchewan. The project of restoration brought even closer an already supportive community.

The building has been restored and improved, the piano and shuffleboard table are being used again, and a library has been created out of a small lounge area. Books donated by the community will fill the shelves.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of Lumsden Park Manor were happy to be back in their home. They organized a tea and 150 guests joined us at the grand opening. The ribbon I cut was held by the two most senior seniors, Irene Irvine and Margaret Schropp, both in their 90s.

I thank all the residents of Lumsden Park Manor for a pleasant afternoon and I congratulate Cheryl Ashurst, the manager; Terena Bannerman, chairperson of the board; and all who were involved in restoring this much-appreciated facility. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **Wheatland Souris Winter Games**

**Ms. Bradley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently it was my pleasure to participate in the official opening of the Wheatland Souris Regional Winter Games. This event, entitled Come Alive In 95, was held from January 27 to February 4 in the four communities of Pangman, Ceylon, Parry, and Khedive. The games drew 1,560 participants, both young and old, in 44 events; events that varied from archery, hockey, karate, dance, bridge, Trivial Pursuit, gymnastics, and curling, just to name a few. The oldest participant was 93-year-old Mike Allewell and the youngest participant was 3-year-old Devin Sheppard, both from Pangman.

One of the highlights for me was to participate in a celebrity archery shoot. My target, as displayed in my office, had a balanced budget, re-election, and full employment. I hit my mark twice, but in good co-operative spirit I also hit the target beside me twice.

These winter games are a fine example of community celebration on Saskatchewan's 90th birthday. These communities came together to celebrate culture, community, cooperation, in the spirit of participation and fun.

Mr. Speaker, these kinds of events don't just happen. They're made to happen and made to happen by a games executive of 19 members, countless volunteers, participants and spectators and hours of work and planning. The reward, a tremendous community event. Congratulations on a job well done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **Special Wedding Anniversaries**

**Mr. Flavel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to pay tribute to four people from Last Mountain-Touchwood. And I want to start with the youngest of the four — John and Mary Werner from Cupar who this weekend will be celebrating their 75th wedding anniversary. In that 75 years they have three children, eight grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren. And they have spent most of their life farming in the Cupar area.

And I said they were the youngest because I also want to pay tribute to George and Julia Hubick who on November last celebrated their 77th wedding anniversary. Of that marriage came four boys, 14 grandchildren, and numerous great-grandchildren. They farmed in Strasbourg area.

So I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that Last Mountain-Touchwood is a very good area to live in at longevity and I want to certainly say a special congratulations to these four people.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### On-Reserve Casinos

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is going to be directed to the minister for gambling. Madam Minister, we have another day, and we have another flip-flop on the Premier's chaotic gambling policies which, I might add, is becoming a trademark of his as it becomes more and more entrenched.

The media, Madam Minister, are reporting that the Premier, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, who swears he's against gambling, has now decided to allow full-blown Las Vegas style casinos on Indian reserves in Saskatchewan. Now many people, Madam Minister, consider this to be a display of weak leadership, I might add out of the deepest respect, Mr. Premier.

So my question is to the new minister of Gaming, who may have been appointed as a rubber-stamp I would suggest to the Premier's edict. Now, Madam Minister, it's becoming more and more evident of that fact. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians is reported to be tabling your agreement in their pseudo-legislature. But I see nothing in this, I see nothing in this Legislative Assembly. And, Madam Minister, and Mr. Premier, I take that as an insult, an insult to this institution and to every sitting member in this Assembly.

Madam Minister, I ask that immediately that you table that document in this legislature now.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Well I think, member opposite, I want to thank you for your question and just start out by saying that you have me confused with the Leader of the Third Party. That's where the flip-flops occur, not over here.

This issue has been on the table for three and one-half years; this is not a new issue. But as a new minister I am anxious to bring this discussion to a close. We had an original agreement that contemplated two casinos in Saskatchewan. Since that time circumstances have changed. There's been a change in the Saskatoon decision and we have a new chief for the federation, Chief Blaine Favel. This has required us to revisit our agreement and that's what we're doing. Discussions have been productive and we believe that an agreement is close, and if and when we know, an announcement will be made. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, that is precisely the problem that I am trying to identify and impress upon you. Once again, Madam Minister, your Premier has struck a secret deal behind closed doors — a deal that will literally affect thousands of Saskatchewan citizens — and you don't have the courage to open the books so that the people that represent them, the people, the men and the women of this Assembly, can see it. The people who represent the Saskatchewan native population are reported to be reviewing it today yet everybody else is being kept in the dark. If you don't have the courage to table the deal then you'd better be prepared to answer some questions right now.

Madam Minister, how many Las Vegas-style casinos will be allowed? Where will they be located? And will any of them be located in Saskatchewan cities, towns or villages? Answer that now so that we know.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the member from Rosthern for his question. We've said from the beginning that our role is to limit, regulate, and control gaming in the province and I will take, as minister, whatever steps are necessary in order to make sure that we achieve that goal. We are not anxious to have a repeat of the unproductive situation that occurred at White Bear. It does involve the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians directly, so we are discussing it with them directly. And I will let you know as soon as we have reached any decision on that.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, again I say to you, that is precisely the problem that I'm trying to address. We don't know what is going on. And I'm going to suggest to you that one of the reasons . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Neudorf:** — And your colleagues keep the people . . . are proud of the fact that you're keeping the people of this province in the dark while you're going on with your secret plan. You either don't have the answer to that question because you're going by the seat of your pants . . . you don't have any complete policy worked out. You're doing everything in a secretive, in an incoherent and an incompetent fashion, Madam Minister. That's what I'm saying to you.

Now, Madam Minister, what happens with a deal with Saskatchewan's charities and exhibition associations? Will they get their 25 per cent of the winnings from the reserve casinos that will now pop up all over the province? And what will that piece be? I remind you, Madam Minister, that . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. The member has already asked three questions and I think the minister should get a chance to answer them.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — I'd like to thank the member opposite for his question and we still have time for some more.

We have made it our policy, and particularly myself, I've been involved in this discussion, to protect the community share of gaming revenues. Exhibition associations have been kept whole. Bingos and charitable gaming, we have held them at their all-time revenue-generating high in this province, not sometime in the past when revenues were lower. We have restored some additional funding to the lotteries that were lost when the sports groups were striking and we have restored some VLT (video lottery terminal) revenue to the communities — as much as we could responsibly do within the context of a balanced budget.

So I would have to say that our approach to gaming has been responsible in every way and this will be too, and if and when any agreement is signed, you'll have a chance to challenge it and scrutinize it in the House.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Madam Minister, what I'm asking you: is this an agreement? What is in the agreement that the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians is looking at right now, making a decision on? We want to know that. We are the legislators of this province. We have a right to know, as the representatives of the people, before you do a deep, dark, secretive mission and accomplish that on your own.

So we want to know: what is the spoils going to look like? We want an answer to those questions. Are you prepared to give them to us now?

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you to the hon. member from Rosthern. I don't want to be rude in reminding you of this, but having sat on both Crown Corporations and Public Accounts Committee, it was two years after most of your decisions that we were able to receive any reporting on what you had actually decided. In fact, your cabinet had people who met behind closed doors to make deals that nobody ever knew about — not even other members of your caucus. So I would have to say if we're going to talk accountability, when we have something concrete which can be discussed, which is not just a whole series of discussions, then it will be brought here for discussion, and I give you my word on that.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Madam Minister, the bottom line here is that you and your Premier have struck a secret deal behind closed doors, a deal that's fundamentally going to change the direction of this province, a deal that will affect hundreds of thousands of Saskatchewan citizens, and yet you do not have the courage to open the books, to let us know what is going on before it's a done deal.

Madam Minister, are you prepared to present that document of yours that you have now presented to the FSIN (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations) pseudo-legislature; will you present that and table it today in this legislature so that we, the representatives of the people, can have a look at it before it is a done deal, so that the people of Saskatchewan can also have a say in it before it is a done deal? They want to have a voice in this, Madam Minister. Are you prepared to give it to them?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — I will remind the hon. member from Rosthern that we have had gaming in this province since 1969. Our directions remain the same as they have always been — to limit, regulate, and control gaming activities.

You know, as well as I know, that it is not possible to negotiate in public. When we have something concrete to discuss, we'll bring it forward to the legislature.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **Personal Care Home Licensing**

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, allow me to begin by welcoming the member from Wakamow to the real position of Minister of Health. I look forward to addressing a number of issues with the minister through this session.

But let me begin today, Mr. Speaker, by bringing to the attention of the member that the town of Avonlea and Carol Krieger have been trying to obtain a licence for a personal care home for almost a year, and to no avail to this date. In fact I just presented a number of petitions to the House regarding that matter.

The town of Avonlea approached Carol to build a home in their community and held a meeting to see what kind of interest there would be for a home. And guess what? At that meeting, within the Avonlea community, people committed some \$350,000 of their own money to help with this personal care home, to help it get started. They committed this money because they want to live in the community that they've grown up in.

Mr. Minister, this will not cost taxpayers money. Mr. Minister, why is it taking so long for a licence to be granted? What is the hold-up?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to the member I want to thank him for his question. I was concerned I

might go through this session and not have a question. I thank the member for his question. And I appreciate the member's well wishes at the initiation of his question, of course. If he wants to make this job a little easier, he has a role to play there.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue that the member brings before the House today, specifically Mrs. Krieger's application for a personal care home in Avonlea, let me say two things. On a general sense, we have been engaged within the department over a number of months on the development of a long-term care strategy total for the province of Saskatchewan. That work is coming very near to a conclusion, and I expect the department will be delivering to me a draft strategy very shortly.

On the more specific issue of Mrs. Krieger in Avonlea, I know that Mrs. Krieger has met a number of times with the department and that she has been made aware of this work towards a long-term care strategy. And as soon as the strategy is in place, we'll be certainly in contact with Mrs. Krieger and with yourself.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in listening to the minister's answer, I'm almost beginning to think we've got another gaming policy that's developing.

Mr. Minister, I understand that the Health department has been reviewing this issue, as you indicated, and developing a strategy. And I have a letter signed by yourself, dated August 25th, that states, and I quote: "This process should take three to four months." That four months ran out in December, and in the meantime, the waiting-list for this care home continues to grow to, at this time, more than 40 individuals.

In addition, Mr. Minister, the Thunder Creek District Health Board have said they have no objection with the proposed home. The local community needs it — again at no cost to taxpayers. I think it sounds reasonable, Mr. Minister.

So exactly what is the problem? If the community and the district health board want the home, why hasn't it been allowed to proceed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I repeat, we have been at work, as the member knows, as I corresponded with the member, on this long-term care strategy. At the point of letter-writing to the member, I expected that that strategy would be complete by the end of the year. We're now looking at a time frame taking us into the new year.

I want to say to the member and to all members, we are not about to start doing piecemeal strategies. We want to develop, as we have with all portions of health renewal, strategies which will be appropriate across the province, appropriate to all districts. This is an extremely important portion of health care delivery in our province — the provision of services for long-term care. We're taking the time to do the strategy right.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again to the minister. Mr. Minister, last April Carol Krieger was informed by your department that a moratorium was put in place by the minister and that perhaps personal care homes would no longer be able to be built. Mr. Minister, Carol has had to build additions onto the personal care homes she operates in Yellow Grass on two occasions because of the growing number of seniors who require aid. And, Mr. Minister, your government just promised us more jobs for the province of Saskatchewan. Well here is an immediate fix to some of the jobs you're looking at trying to creating, and you don't even have to spend a dollar for it.

Given such needs, Mr. Minister, needs that cannot be solved through home care, why have you placed a moratorium on these facilities?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Again I repeat, Mr. Minister, it is our intention to work through policy decision making, particularly in the field of long-term care, that will be appropriate to every district and every region and every citizen of our province. And we're doing that carefully. We're doing that not piecemeal, Mr. Speaker. We're doing that in conjunction with the broad range of services that should be, are, and will be available to the seniors of our province particularly.

If the member would hang onto his seat and listen for announcements next week in terms of community care, he will be exceedingly pleased at the kind of announcements that will be made next week in broadening services across our province in every district for the seniors of our province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A further question to the Minister of Health. It seems, Mr. Minister, you have money for a number of things in this province but you have no money to really look after seniors across the province — the seniors who built this place, seniors who built this province.

Mr. Minister, as I indicated earlier, Carol Krieger has received no government funding such as grants to help with the construction or maintenance of her homes. And her residents do not receive a government subsidy. In other words, she is providing a service to the people of this province at perhaps a third to a quarter of the cost that the government is spending to keep seniors. Further, Mr. Minister, this is not an isolated situation. Many rural communities like Eston and Martensville need personal care homes, and they have raised funds to build them and are getting the runaround from the government.

Mr. Minister, Carol has requested a meeting with the minister . . . with the former minister. To date, a meeting hasn't taken place. Will you take the time this afternoon, Mr. Minister, to sit down with Mrs. Krieger, the mayor, and the administrator of the town of Avonlea to discuss their concerns? Will you make that commitment, Mr. Minister? They're here to meet with you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — On the latter, given the constraints of my calendar, I'll be more than happy to meet with Mrs. Krieger and with the mayor and the town administrator of Avonlea this afternoon. But I can tell you, and I can tell all who will be listening now, the response will be no different than the response in this House: that we are developing the long-term care strategy and that strategy will be developed and presented to the minister, and I will approve or disapprove that strategy.

Now I want to talk about the member's earlier comments about monies being made available to the seniors of our province. I can tell that member — and he should know this — that in the last few months, under the leadership of the former minister, we have established in this province a home IV (intravenous) program; we have established funding for home palliative care; we have established programming and funding for home renal dialysis. These are valued community-based, home-based services.

Then he's got the gall, Mr. Speaker, to come into this House and say, why don't you folks have more money for the people who built this province? Well the people who built this province know why this government is in such difficult financial circumstances. It's the financial history and record of that particular party in government, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Gaming Strategy

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on May 29, 1994 the Government of Saskatchewan created a new Crown corporation, the Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation, to oversee and manage casinos in Saskatchewan. The Gaming Crown has set up shop in a hotel across from the Union Station parking lot so that it can watch a sign that says, future home of a Regina casino. It must be an awfully important sign because the Premier has a lot of high-priced help making sure that nobody takes it down.

I table information that we obtained recently which details the names, the salaries, and the job descriptions for all employees of the Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation. The president, \$8,500 a month; the vice-president, \$7,058 per month; the vice-president of development, \$6,400 a month; and the executive director, \$4,750 a month. And the list goes on — \$33,000 a month to keep an eye on a sign in a parking lot.

My question is directed to the Premier. Why would the government hire all of these individuals at such great expense when there has clearly been nothing to manage?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Leader of the Liberal Party. Obviously these people are working on the casino policy and much of the negotiations that the members of the official opposition were asking about earlier — who's doing the work; who's working through the arrangements that are being made for the policy?

But, Mr. Speaker, I think what's more important is this continued attack by the Leader of the Liberal Party on people who work in government. The day before yesterday it was the people in the Department of Economic Development — no good, she says, waste of money. Today it's the Gaming Corporation. But even more than that are the five former press secretaries who have worked in her office.

Mr. Speaker, I don't mind being attacked in this House by a fellow politician, but I think this continuous attack on the people who work in government by that member tells you something about the character and what she would do if she were ever premier of this province — attack innocent people who work in government. No basis in fact. And I say, why don't you cease and desist this attack on the civil service of Saskatchewan and try to deal a little bit more appropriately with your own press secretaries?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering when the minister will cease and desist in being so terribly defensive and actually answer some questions for a change.

It is again glaringly obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP (New Democratic Party) government does not have a plan, nor does it have any knowledge on how to administer gaming in this province.

We now know that negotiations are being conducted to reverse yet another NDP policy decision regarding casinos in this province. The government's own study clearly indicates that Saskatchewan can support but one large casino. These new negotiations will create a framework for the development of an additional five casinos in this province, with the exhibition casinos still operating, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to table an excerpt from the Fox study commissioned by this very government, this very Premier, paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, which suggests a definite limit on the number of casinos that Saskatchewan can support.

My question again to the Premier: does he believe, Mr. Premier, that it is responsible for there to be a Crown casino when this new competition that has now been presented might render it a failure?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, again I appreciate the question, and what I'm a little concerned about is the fact she says we have no experience on gaming. And I guess the fact that I haven't owned racehorses like this member has does give me a little bit of a disadvantage on my knowledge of gaming. But to say that we have no policy and no idea how to manage the gaming of the province completely flies in the face of what is in fact happening.

We have had very close relationship with the Regina Exhibition Association on developing a casino strategy in Regina. The Regina Economic Development Authority has been very much involved. The downtown merchants are involved in advising the government. The Regina Chamber of Commerce with the

previous administration under Mr. Boutilier, as well as Jamie Wilson who is the new president of the chamber, very much involved.

And you can go on attacking all these people who are putting a big effort into development of the gaming policy, but you are very much in isolation, believing that you know more personally about gaming than anyone else. And maybe that's true because again you have had lots of experience with gaming — owning horses, racehorses.

But I tell you that grandstanding in the House is not the way to accomplish what we're trying to do in a very sensitive way: build a gaming policy that is in the best interest of all Saskatchewan citizens.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister actually knows that his own studies indicate that Saskatchewan can only support the equivalent of one major casino regardless of all of the good work and good intentions that have been brought forward by people interested in having a casino in Regina.

If the casino market is oversupplied, someone is sure to fail. There simply must be a re-evaluation of the market and an assessment done by someone with no vested interest to see what the impact of this new agreement will have on the viability of casinos in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, do you believe that it is sensible, that it is responsible, to move forward and build a Crown casino in Regina without objective evidence which indicates that it can succeed, given that you are now coming forward with added competition that was not in the equation before?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I can guarantee the member obviously that the partners involved in building a casino will do the economics on whether or not a casino should be built.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It appears the government simply wants to dig deeper and deeper a hole for itself. So far they've announced a deal that includes exhibition boards, gives \$1.75 million to the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations to cover the costs of establishing a partnership. Then they set up a Crown corporation last May, some eight and a half months ago, that is paying for its four managers more than \$25,000 a month to manage basically nothing.

How is it, Mr. Minister, that you can justify spending precious tax dollars to employ people to oversee a casino that, once you get objective information, may never even be built?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, on the one hand the Leader of the Liberal Party says we should do more analysis, more study; on the other hand she says we should spend less

money and have fewer employees. And I just don't understand how you can have it both ways.

It's a little bit like balancing the books of the province. You say on the one hand we should be doing more, cutting taxes, but on the other hand you've already announced that you would spend \$300 million more if you were elected. You can't have it both ways. You can't say to the government, you should be doing more studies and more analysis but have fewer people.

And I say to you that you are so confused on this issue, as you were on jobs, that the people of Saskatchewan are really beginning to wonder about your credibility on any issue that you get up and talk about in this Assembly.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### **Bill No. 1 — An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Four Year Term/"FYT")**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, I move a Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Four Year Term) be introduced and read the first time.

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

### **Bill No. 2 — An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Legislative Utilities Review Committee/"LURC")**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move a Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Legislative Utilities Review Committee) be introduced and read the first time.

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

### **Bill No. 3 — An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Free Votes/"FREE")**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move a Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Free Votes) be introduced and read the first time.

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

### **Bill No. 4 — An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Appointments Review Committee/"ARC")**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, I move a Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Appointments Review Committee) be now introduced and read the first time.

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

**Bill No. 5 — An Act to amend The Government Organization Act (Executive Council Reduction/"ECR")**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, I move a Bill to amend The Government Organization Act (Executive Council Reduction) be now introduced and read the first time.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave of the House to make a short personal statement.

Leave granted.

**STATEMENT BY A MEMBER**

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On December 22, 1995, I voluntarily withdrew from the New Democratic Party caucus as a result of charges which had been laid against me.

I had not taken part in any caucus deliberations since that time. However I have written to the Premier this week informing him of my plans with respect to the decision last Friday by the Court of Queen's Bench. My case is still before the courts in that sentencing has been adjourned to March 10, 1995 and the normal appeal period would follow that date.

It is my intention, Mr. Speaker, to carry on my duties as MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for the constituency of Quill Lakes until this matter has been fully disposed of in the courts. However I also respect this institution and care for my party too much to continue to sit in the Chamber should this court decision stand.

Therefore my letter to the Premier makes it clear that I shall voluntarily resign both as a member of the New Democratic Party and as a member of the Legislative Assembly should a conviction remain in place following either my decision not to lodge an appeal or all appeals have been exhausted. It has been my honour to represent the constituency of Quill Lakes in this house for 20 years, and as anyone who knows me should appreciate, this is a very difficult decision for me, but I feel it is the only appropriate course.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my wife, Shirley; my family, Maury, Douglas, Lisa; my brothers and sisters; my constituents and others who have supported me throughout this difficult period.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, to, with leave, move a motion to change a member of a committee.

Leave granted.

**MOTIONS**

**Substitution of Members**

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Fairview:

That the names of Mr. Kowalsky, Ms. Stanger and Mr. Knezacek be substituted for those of Mr. Thompson, Ms. Bradley, Mr. Whitmore on the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills, and that the name of Ms. Lorje be deleted from the list of members on the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Fairview:

That the name of Ms. Murray be substituted for that of Ms. Crofford on the standing committee on the constitution.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for The Battlefords:

That the name of Ms. Hamilton be substituted for that of Ms. Crofford on the Standing Committee on Estimates.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Canora:

That the name of Mr. Penner be substituted for that of Mr. Koskie on the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Fairview:

That the name of Mr. Kowalsky be substituted for that of Mr. Renaud on the Standing Committee on Municipal Law.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, second by the member for Regina Lake Centre:

That the name of Ms. Bradley be substituted for that of Mr. Thompson on the Standing Committee on Non-controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Rosetown:

That the names of Ms. Lorje and Mr. Sonntag be substituted for those of Ms. Crofford and Mr. Thompson on the Standing Committee on the Environment.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, finally I move, seconded by the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow:

That the name of Ms. Stanger be substituted for that of Ms. Crofford on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Motion agreed to.

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Whitmore:** — I rise, Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

**The Speaker:** — What's the member's point of order?

**POINT OF ORDER**

**Mr. Whitmore:** — Mr. Speaker, a motion that was brought forward a few minutes ago in terms of substitution of committee members and, based on your ruling that you stated in the terms of verbatim of *Hansard*, referred to me as Ms. Whitmore. I would like that corrected, please.

**The Speaker:** — I would like to inform the member that my eyesight is very poor. I can't tell the difference.

The member's point of order is duly noted and a correction will be made.

Order, order. Order.

(1430)

**STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

**Ruling on a Point of Order**

**The Speaker:** — Before orders of the day, yesterday in this House, the member from Saskatoon Wildwood raised a point of order regarding an intervention by the Chair when the member for Kinistino was making a statement as he himself said, as, and I quote, chair of a caucus committee, in the period for statements by members. I agree that some clarification of the position of the Chair and the purpose of private members' statements is needed.

The Special Committee on Rules and Procedures designed the provisions for a period for statements by members during three periods in 1992. The Assembly used the new procedure for a short period on a trial basis that year. In 1994, the Rules Committee again discussed the proposal and recommended a permanent rule change to adopt a 10-minute daily period for members to make brief, timely statements on issues of personal concern not necessarily restricted to constituency matters.

During its deliberations, the committee members wrestled with the question of the purpose and content of members' statements. I refer members to the verbatim report of the meeting of the Rules and Procedures Committee on February 15, 1994 where members repeatedly identified their chief concern about their earlier experiment . . . about the early experiment was that the period became less effective as an opportunity for private members as the statements became increasingly partisan.

On page 4, the member for Rosthern said:

Unfortunately, the way it was developing . . . and I don't know why it developed into a partisanship kind of procedure at times. Now maybe it was because we had not laid down strict enough guidelines and strict enough rules as to how it was going to be employed. Maybe we didn't give Mr. Speaker enough persuasive powers to control the issues so that indeed it achieved the objective that we were trying to do, and that is make a statement of our constituency, non-partisan, with no rhetoric or inflammatory remarks included.

On page 7, the member for Churchill Downs said:

. . . I think to ask the Speaker to determine what's partisan and what isn't, I think is very difficult, Bill. I mean I support your view, because I think they're much more effective if they're not (meaning not partisan) . . . I think the public kind of tune out when they get partisan. But to try to make a rule which says they can't be partisan and the Speaker's got to enforce that I think involves some very difficult value judgements.

On page 7, the member for Elphinstone said:

What about the possibility, Bill, of members may make statements about subjects of interest or concern of a public nature, like just words that would at least lead us in that direction. Because in all honesty, if we could go back and do that period over again, I think we'd all be better off if we had, as House leaders, avoided them becoming political.

My intervention yesterday reflected the views of the members of the Rules Committee regarding the intent of the members' statement period. The Rules Committee verbatim also shows that the committee felt unable to adequately define what was overly partisan and thus decided to leave the discretion to the member rather than requiring the Speaker to rule on that grounds.

Therefore, as the Speaker of this House, I can only remind members that it is their individual responsibility to ensure that

the period for statements by members retains its value as an opportunity for the views of individual members to be heard rather than become merely another opportunity to air the positions of party caucuses.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**SPECIAL ORDER**

**ADJOURNED DEBATES**

**ADDRESS IN REPLY**

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to be able to continue on with my speech on the throne speech since we were interrupted by the clock yesterday. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to continue on where I left off to some degree yesterday with regards to economic development here in the province of Saskatchewan.

I believe that yesterday I covered some of the positive stories that were happening in my constituency in regards to economic development, with Norquay Alfalfa, for example; Sask-Can Fibre; and a group of farmers at Preeceville who are looking into the real possibility of establishing an intensive hog operation in that area; as well as the diversification of agriculture in regards to assistance from the Government of Saskatchewan with a group of farmers in Norquay who were progressive enough to look at establishing a feeder co-op there and a breeder co-op which has resulted in the addition of over 300 bred cows in the Norquay farming area, as well as 100 to 150 feeders going into a feedlot operation there, part of a backgrounding, overall backgrounding operation.

That, Mr. Speaker, I think is just a clear indication of the optimism that is felt out there in rural Saskatchewan, and in Saskatchewan as the whole, both urban and rural. And that, Mr. Speaker, has come about as a result of the clear sense by the people of Saskatchewan that there is a government in place here in the province today that knows where they're going, wants to rebuild this province, and has laid out a very worthy and a very optimistic path for that economic development to happen.

As the result of that, Mr. Speaker, we see according to StatsCanada figures — and there's not too many of us that can argue with StatsCanada figures except of course those, Mr. Speaker, in the Liberal Party — that clearly indicate that since 1992 there's been 7,000 jobs created in Saskatchewan. Some 7,000 jobs, Mr. Speaker, since 1992. And that, Mr. Speaker, also over and above the total youth employment that has been increasing steadily, rising from an average of 74,000 in 1992 to 75,000 in 1993 to 76,000 in 1994 — a clear indication, Mr. Speaker, that this government recognizes the value of our youth and the value that our youth needs to be trained, trained properly to meet the challenges of the future.

As we all know, we're living in a changing world and a changing society. And the traditional jobs that you and I, Mr. Speaker, were used to being able to get involved in after our educational process had been completed and looked forward to having a career in that same occupation for 25 or 30 years, we well know Mr. Speaker, that that likely will not exist in the future.

In the future, it is suggested that careers will last some five to seven years, and if we don't continue to upgrade ourselves, retrain ourselves, we will soon become obsolete to the company or the firm we may be working for. Well, Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes that and, as a result of that, we started embarking on a path of providing the facilities for training of our youth so that they can be well equipped to meet the challenges of the future.

All this, Mr. Speaker, contributes to the optimism that is spreading like a wildfire across Saskatchewan. It is that optimism, Mr. Speaker, that has spurred the development of the 7,000 jobs that I have referred to earlier.

The development of those jobs did not take place at a government initiative. Yes, Mr. Speaker, government played a role in creating the atmosphere for those jobs, but those jobs are 7,000 sustainable jobs in the economy of Saskatchewan because those jobs were developed and created by small and medium-sized business. And we know, Mr. Speaker, small and medium-sized businesses in this province are the engines that drive the economy of Saskatchewan.

That's what sets us different from the other guys, Mr. Speaker, and I'll just refer you to some of the comments I made yesterday about the other guys. As the history of Saskatchewan has shown us, particularly the political history of Saskatchewan has shown us, that in Saskatchewan there is really only two political parties, and that is the NDP and the other guys. And the other guys, whether they're running under the banner of the Tories or they're running under the banner of the Liberals, they're still the other guys, Mr. Speaker, still the other guys with the same ideas, the same goals — now what scares me, Mr. Speaker — the same hidden agenda. The agenda of delivering the economy of Saskatchewan to the hands of doomed-to-fail megaprojects.

Doomed to fail megaprojects, Mr. Speaker, have been the record of both Liberal and Conservative governments in Saskatchewan. And that is exactly what the history of the Ross Thatcher Liberal government of Saskatchewan has indicated to us, and that as we all know, Mr. Speaker, the most recent Tory government in this province that has left us with a humongous debt and deficit situation.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan has built this province on a desire of cooperation, on a desire of community, and a desire of working together to build a society for all of us. And that common sense, community-based jobs creation approach is what is going to turn this economy around and what is playing a big role in turning the economy around as we view it today. I will build a better and stronger Saskatchewan for tomorrow.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Harper:** — There is no doubt in my mind, Mr. Speaker, as I meet with the town councils across my constituency. I had the opportunity just the other day to meet with the town council in Canora, the first opportunity I had to meet with them in recent weeks. And there was a positive atmosphere there, Mr. Speaker, a positive atmosphere because they realized that they're going to have to play a role in creating economic development for their community if they plan to survive in the changing world.

We're already seeing some positive things coming out of Canora. Some two weeks ago or three weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity attending a ribbon-cutting ceremony at a Turbo service station which was newly renovated, and it coincides with the central mall operation in the town of Canora. And that day the administrator of the mall told me, Mr. Speaker, that over 1,500 people had gone through that mall in that small town in that one day — a clear sense, Mr. Speaker, of optimism and a desire of the people of Saskatchewan to participate in the rebuilding of this province.

Just recently, Mr. Speaker, Sask-Can Fibre, which operations is located in Canora, announced a partnership agreement between themselves and Cargill of Canada Limited to develop a pilot projects for the processing of flax straw fibre. And that pilot project will be launched in the very near future, creating some four jobs through the pilot project which will run for a period of approximately two years. And at the end of that pilot project will be developed a full scale processing operation.

Also, Mr. Speaker, recent announcements in regards to the town of Canora has been the announcement by United Grain Growers of their desire to establish a large throughput cement elevator in the town which will facilitate the handling of grain and various agriculture crops grown in the area by the farmers there. But we'll also have the ability to supply fertilizer and also have the drying ability, and it will be basically a one-stop shopping operation there, Mr. Speaker. Those are just some of the indications of the positive things that are happening out in my constituency.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that we also want to spend a few moments on recognizing the good work that's been done by both the former member and minister of SaskPower and SaskEnergy, as well as the present minister for SaskPower and SaskEnergy, and the recent announcements of the savings of about \$45 per farm as a result of a reduction in natural gas prices of some 6.5 per cent. It's a clear indication, Mr. Speaker, that this government, as it recognizes savings, will pass those savings on to the consumers — a clear recognition, Mr. Speaker, of a fair and honest and a forward-thinking government here in Saskatchewan, very similar to what our approach has been in health care and health care reform.

As we indicated early in the reform process, that the amount of money identified as savings within that health care as a result of the reform of health care would be pumped back into health care to provide a more efficient and a more effective system of delivery of the services. That we saw, Mr. Speaker, in last year's budget where there was some \$10 million pumped back into rural health care. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, we are able to

modernize many of those facilities out there. A couple I'll draw your attention to are in my constituency.

(1445)

In Norquay, for example, where we have a health centre . . . has now been able to acquire a new automatic defibrillator which has assisted in heart attack victims, and that equipment, Mr. Speaker, was not available before simply because of the cost of it. But because of the savings that's been identified within the district, that new modern equipment is now available in Norquay and Invermay facilities. And that, Mr. Speaker, is just a beginning, just a beginning of the good news that's going to be coming across this province, coming to health care and health care services.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, the major part of our population . . . and I believe, if my stats are correct here, Mr. Speaker, that 13 per cent of the Saskatchewan population are senior citizens. Well out in my area, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency, we double that. Some 26 per cent of the population there are senior citizens. And we — in this generation, my generation — and we, as people of this province of Saskatchewan, owe a great deal to those seniors for those are the people who built this province. Those are the people who made the sacrifices and paid the price of building the Saskatchewan that we know today. Those are the people, Mr. Speaker, who are the most disheartened and saddened by the effects of the other guys on the economy of this province over the last 10 or 12 or 15 years. Those are the people that remember, Mr. Speaker, full well, the fine and prosperous province we had here in Saskatchewan prior to 1982.

And those are the same people, as I meet them in the coffee shops and as I meet them in the senior citizens' homes, will tell me that keep up the good work. Pass on my message to the Premier. Keep up the direction you're going and keep rebuilding Saskatchewan because we know that you can make Saskatchewan the province that we all know it can be, and that's a province of prosperity and a province of opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed my opportunity to rise here in the Chamber and offer my comments on the throne speech. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude my remarks now, and thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very, very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed my pleasure today to present to the members of the Legislative Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan my address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Eight months have lapsed since we as a group left this Chamber, and a lot of changes have taken place in all of our lives in those eight months. I want to acknowledge some of those life events before I begin to speak to the throne speech that we heard this past Monday.

During this intersessional period, I've seen many of the members here in various committee meetings, so I have been able to keep an update on some of their lives.

To Mr. Speaker I want to extend my hearty congratulations on the birth of his grandson Benjamin, baby brother for his granddaughter Hannah. Mr. Speaker and I have been competing in the grandparents' sweepstakes for this last couple of years now. And on two occasions he has scooped me with the births of his grandchildren: Hannah, who beat the birth of my first granddaughter, Carson, and now Benjamin arrived considerably earlier than my second granddaughter Mckenna, who made her appearance on September 29.

Also on the subject of new arrivals, I want to extend a warm welcome to our legislature to the new Clerk Assistant, Meta Woods. Now Meta has an extensive and impressive résumé, and it is easy to see why she was the successful one of 128 applicants for the position. Although Meta commenced her work here in September and has already gotten her feet wet, so to speak, working on the Special Committee on Driving Safety, this is her first full legislative session, and I wish her well.

Along with the changes in the Clerk's office, is the appointment of Greg Putz as Assistant Clerk, a role that he fills with remarkable calm and ability. Another familiar face that is gone from the Clerk's office is Joyce Rublee, who served as the administrative assistant to the Clerk until her recent retirement. I want to congratulate her replacement, Monique Lovatt, who has taken over those duties after serving as a back-up person to the position for several years. As well, congratulations to Pam Scott, who moved up from the personnel and administrative services branch to the Clerk's office, to fill Monique's former position.

I want them all to know how much their hard work and experience is of great, great value to our members and our caucus staff. And while the positions they occupy may be different from those that they have had in the past when we sat here last, there is considerable comfort to the members in this House that such talented individuals are still here to perform their duties at their demanding jobs.

Now I want to welcome the pages for this session: Rhonda Adams, Trevor Hande, Kristina Johnson, Leanne Notenboom, and Lisa Panchyk. I hope their experience as pages is a positive and memorable one.

And I want to extend a very special welcome back to our Clerk, Gwenn Ronyk. Although I have had the opportunity to see Gwenn frequently over the past few months while we've been conducting budget deliberations and other matters at the Board of Internal Economy, I know that she and her staff have had to endure a very arduous few months. And as usual, however, the Clerk of this Legislative Assembly has handled herself with her trademark professionalism and grace.

And welcome back too, to the broadcast services fellows, Gary, Kerry and Ihor. And on the technical side, welcome back to the *Hansard* transcribers and personnel whose meticulous work is very, very much appreciated. It is nice to see the familiar faces of our ushers and security personnel, as well. Their wit and

charm are always refreshing to me as they are to everyone who visits this Chamber.

Our corps of commissionaires staff has changed somewhat since we were here last, and I welcome those new people to this building. It is with great personal sadness that I want to acknowledge the passing of one of our commissionaires, Denis Blondeau, who died last December. Even when battling cancer, Denis's kindness and optimism never faltered, and I will miss Denis personally very, very much.

Now to my fellow Assembly members, congratulations to our new Leader of the Opposition. I, perhaps more than most, can attest to what a gigantic task he has before him as he begins to rebuild his party. And while our views on how to tackle the issues facing the people of this province and perhaps our approach to addressing those issues may differ, I know that we share a commitment to serve the people of this province to the best of our respective abilities.

To the member for Thunder Creek who served as Acting Leader of the Official Opposition over the last several years, I want to thank him for his cooperative relations with our caucus during his tenure.

And on the government side of the House, I want to acknowledge the hard work and personal sacrifice that was made by the members for Regina Hillsdale and Swift Current during their years as members of Executive Council. Again while I may not have always agreed with their choices and actions, I certainly know and appreciate how much of their energy and their souls went into their work.

To the two new members of cabinet, the member for Regina Lake Centre and the member for Athabasca, I wish them both well in their portfolios. I know they are both very capable individuals. And to the other members of cabinet who have assumed new duties, I wish them well too.

Lastly, I want to extend a welcome back to all members of this House. We share a common and rare experience to have the opportunity to serve the people of this province as their government. That is a responsibility that I do not take lightly. I know that they all work hard to accomplish the things that they believe in, and that work often goes unappreciated or unnoticed by many. I hope that by setting an example of dignity and respect for one another in this Chamber we can set about changing that attitude that is unfortunately so prevalent among our public.

As member for Saskatoon Greystone, I have the distinct privilege of representing what is currently the largest urban constituency in Saskatchewan. Saskatoon Greystone is a wonderful mosaic of Saskatchewan people which includes many seniors and children, labourers and academics, immigrants and families that are descendants of the original settlers of Saskatoon.

My constituency borders on the beautiful campus of the University of Saskatchewan, and many of my constituents are students. The Sherbrooke Community Centre, which provides

special nursing care to so many seniors and those with special needs, is an important part — in fact a core part — of Saskatoon Greystone. Because of that and the proximity to Royal University Hospital in my constituency, I have a large number of people involved in health care professions. Therefore the issues of health care are always front and centre in my discussions with constituents.

As Leader of the Third Party opposition, the whole province of Saskatchewan becomes an extended constituency for me and for the other members of our caucus. Many of the issues that I will raise this session and in reply come to me from all corners of our province.

One thing must be made clear at the outset. The message is consistent. Whatever optimism and hope the people of our province feel about the future does not translate into a feeling of optimism and confidence in our political system. It does not translate into a feeling of optimism and hope because of our government.

People do see a coming together of many positive circumstances — generally those things that are outside of one's control. They feel much more reassured that we had probably one of the most beautiful spring, summers, and falls that we've had in many, many years. They have been optimistic about the lowered interest rates for a period of time, that crops were better, that resource prices are high. And yes too, we must admit that even the new federal government raised some optimism for people. All of these things have given people some hope.

At the same time they watch their provincial government doing many things that they see as counter-productive: making decisions that erode and threaten the ability of an individual to take advantage of opportunities.

My remarks this afternoon will reflect the hopes and dreams, the concerns, and yes, even some of the fears about the future that people have shared with me as an elected member of this Assembly.

As I listened to the Speech from the Throne, I was listening for the things that the people of Saskatoon Greystone and other communities in the province would want to hear. I was hoping that the Speech from the Throne would define the government's vision, its short- and long-term vision, and commit to some measurable goals. Other provinces in Canada are actually looking at measurability; the province of Saskatchewan's government has not.

I was hopeful that the government would have listened to people and would understand the people it serves and would strive to live up to their expectations. Mr. Speaker, these have been three and a half very critical years for Saskatchewan, three and a half years in which a great deal could have been done to set the stage for the future, three and a half years in which the government has had its focus locked on raising revenue to reduce the deficit with no understanding of how its approach was having an impact on people's lives.

The Speech from the Throne talks about Saskatchewan from a government's perspective. The government's goal was to raise money so they can claim success. They saw the problem as a revenue problem: raise taxes, utility rates, increased every licence fee. They did not see this as an expenditure problem.

But the people did not elect this government on the understanding that raising money would be the driving force behind its policies. Indeed there was no mention at all about addressing the deficit by raising more taxes. Every campaign promise was about how they absolutely could operate on \$4.5 billion.

And I give another quote: to save enough in government waste and mismanagement to eliminate the deficit. End of quote. I, like most people, am a very hopeful and optimistic person by nature. I would not have been able to meet the challenges of rebuilding the Liberal Party from 4 per cent from the political ashes if I were not a hopeful and optimistic person.

And like the people of Saskatchewan, I rely on faith and hope to keep looking to the future, to look to a better tomorrow, to keep believing that better days do indeed lie ahead. And that is why the provincial government has disappointed so many people. That is why there is such a dearth of a feeling of trust for government today.

(1500)

They knew in 1991 what people wanted to hear, this New Democratic Government. They knew that people were angry, were disillusioned, were fed up with deceit, incompetence, corruption, and dishonesty from government. The current administration knew what to promise in order to get elected, but the evidence is clear on their failure to deliver better, simpler government and government truly in touch with the people. It is tragic indeed that this administration was in a position to change all of the things that people were feeling so very discouraged about, that they were in a position to put the political system back on track in Saskatchewan.

And I want to take a moment to just talk about something called opportunity. How often does one have a chance to make real and meaningful change that will preserve and protect the democratic process. The opportunity to overhaul government, to truly improve the process, to make it more accountable, is the opportunity that people gave to this government in 1991. People truly wanted to have a significant change. And, Mr. Speaker, this government I believe has wasted that opportunity; in fact tossed it aside because they did not really want to change anything substantive about the system as long as it allowed them to keep power and control. What old politics is really all about — as long as they could keep secrets safe within the system.

And that is truly regrettable. It would have been so much easier, in fact so easy, for a government coming in with so much goodwill from people, to set election dates. It would have been so simple to have an independent commission to review MLAs' salaries and per diems and allowances in place in 1991. It would have been so easy for this government to acknowledge

that there had been no accountability on the expenditure of caucus grants year after year after year, until it added up to over 7 or \$8 million for two caucuses in probably less than a decade.

It would have been so easy to do the right thing. But it is so familiar to do things the way that they've always been done.

The throne speech contains a promise to increase accountability from elected representatives. Well we do know that there has been considerable sadness caused by the cases of two sitting members in this House. In the time that it has taken to deal with what has transpired, to look at the investigations of allegations, to bring people to trial, to convict individuals, the entire Government of Saskatchewan, with a 53-member majority, has now finally after three and a half years, on the eve of an election, finally appointed an independent committee to do in 90 days what it should have started and been able to do three and a half years ago.

In the dying days of the last session before an election, the government has decided to let someone else recommend some rules. Again I ask the question on the minds of people all over the province. What has kept all of the 53 government members so busy that they could not have made this happen three and a half years ago?

And what of accountability? For those 10 years, we do know that the NDP and PC (Progressive Conservative) caucuses have divided up close to \$8 million of taxpayers' money to run their caucuses. The NDP was too unhappy to crack open the books and hand them . . . was only too happy is what I should say, to hand over the books of the previous administration to the Gass Commission to reveal the truth of the previous government's management. But why haven't they chosen to turn over their own caucus books for examination? If they are committed to open, honest, and accountable government, why don't they turn over their records from the 1980s and explain what they did with taxpayers' money? And that is at the crux of the matter, Mr. Speaker.

People believed that this government made a commitment to make real changes to the system, but that is what was promised. But instead of doing what was promised, the government chose to do other things that were not talked about at all going into that last election, and now they've chosen to not talk about them all over again in the Speech from the Throne either. The opportunity is not lost, Mr. Speaker, but it appears very unlikely that it will be this government that will truly change the system that they helped to create.

The first act of a Liberal government will be to introduce an entire package of reforms that we ran on in 1991 and we believe in as much today as we did then. However as a final attempt to see these changes enacted before this session closes, we will lay the Liberal legislative reform package before government members. It is our hope that the individual members of this Assembly will see the value of endorsing these initiatives even though their own government has chosen to abandon its promises.

The Legislative Assembly amendment Act is a series of reforms to the legislative process including free votes in the legislature, including set election dates and regular sitting dates. The Liberal legislative agenda will include a Bill to provide an enforcement mechanism for the code of ethical conduct that members of this House adopted in June of 1993. During the debate in this House on that code, I welcomed its introduction and adoption, but I cautioned members that this code stands only as a statement of principles and is not likely enforceable.

I believe that this is a weakness, a weakness that can be addressed and which I will address through the introduction of a code of ethical conduct enforcement Act, also known as anti-corruption legislation. This Act will, among other things, provide for an independent body to review various actions that may take place in this particular House. And I'll obviously have much more to say about this legislation when it is introduced within the next few days.

It has been with great disappointment to view the government's lack of commitment to real reform. In fact I think most of their reforms would be perceived, when we're looking relative to what's transpired in other provinces, as shallow.

And I acknowledge the efforts of the official opposition to table legislation, but it is perceived by many to be a dead-end process when the government members are not free to support even the most common sense initiative even if it comes from an opposition party.

The throne speech is sadly lacking in its treatment of the fiscal pressures that have been imposed by this government. Gambling and labour legislation, and tax and utility rate increases have damaged our economy. One can read the Burns Fry report which goes on at length about such things. Whether it be gambling or labour legislation or tax increases, utility rate hikes, the increase is to every licence fee in the province of Saskatchewan. All of these things are now part of the legacy of this government. But to read the Speech from the Throne, one would think that none of this had ever taken place.

The most surprising thing, however, is that it does not appear that the government understands that the people of this province are fearful. Most of what they have done has been with total disregard for the impact on people and an arrogance that has made people feel that their input is not welcomed by the people who have been elected to serve them.

In the last session, Liberals responded to the people's need to be heard. We introduced a private members' motion on gambling to offer government members an opportunity to voice their support for, opposition to, or suggestions concerning expanded gambling in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, not one of 53 members of the government side stood and said one word on behalf of their constituents. Not one had anything to say on this particular motion. And I think that one of the things we should make reference to is precisely what has happened in the province of Saskatchewan under this administration.

We have heard as recently as today how all of the charitable organizations should feel so much more secure because all the

dollars have been returned to them since there was a hundred per cent increase in their fee — licensing fees. Now to the Government of Saskatchewan, of course, the NDP government, who probably doesn't really understand addition very well, a 2 per cent to 4 per cent increase in a licence fee is not a 2 per cent increase. It's a 100 per cent increase. And what has transpired since the introduction of that licence fee hike has been the destruction of one charitable organization after another, as VLTs have been introduced and as bingo profits have gone down for these charitable organizations, non-profit organizations, and service clubs from one end of Saskatchewan to the other.

Simply giving back that percentage of licence fee is doing nothing for these people who say, so tell us, is this going to change next month? Can we put this in part of our budget? Is this going to be predictable now? But no, it's the same ad hoc, flip-flop, not-knowing-what-they're-doing way of dealing with gambling.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, it was mentioned even today — left out of the throne speech, of course, but mentioned today — that people should be satisfied with the changes in licence fee structure. Ask yourself about Sask Lotteries. One has to really think about what has transpired when Sask Sport, previous to this government, had to spend on a licence fee \$7,500 to the government. When they came to power they increased that licence fee to \$19.2 million, Mr. Speaker.

Is it any wonder that sports, culture, and recreation for young people all across this province has been diminished substantially when most of the money now goes to the government instead of to the people and communities of our province? And they think that people should be excited in Sask Sport, throw up their hands and say, oh, thank you, thank you, for reducing this fee, when it's now reduced to \$17.5 million, Mr. Speaker. From \$7,500 to 17.5 million — that is nothing less than greed.

And everyone's supposed to feel satisfied in Sask Lotteries and Sask Sport, that this obnoxious way of dealing with gouging fees and taking it out of the hands of people who could benefit from it, and going into the greedy hands of government — people are supposed to be satisfied with having a reduction now of going down to \$17.5 million. I don't know if anyone in this House, Mr. Speaker, can even figure out the percentage increase from \$7,500 to \$17.5 million, but that's a heck of a lot of zeros.

It is the lack of commitment on the part of members to convey their views, the views of their constituents, in this Assembly on that particular issue of gaming that is totally unconscionable. As if the people they represent don't have any point of view on this. As if the people they represent don't care about \$1,000 on average every single week from every single VLT machine being vacuumed out of local economies. As if that's not having an impact on the lives of the people they represent.

And they have not one word to say about it, Mr. Speaker — not one word — when they had an opportunity. And today they don't have one word to say about it in their throne speech.

The Liberal caucus responded to the public's desire to be heard, Mr. Speaker. And we engaged in a consultation process that took us across the province asking for input, hearing from the concerns of all of the people who worked as town councillors and city councillors, individuals from the chambers of commerce, from charitable organizations, from non-profit organizations, service clubs, ministerial associations who can speak at length about the social aspects of this problem.

And what did they report? That the .3 per cent of 1 per cent of all the revenues that were projected being able to be brought in for the greed of government and were spent on treating the social problems created by this government's gaming policies, that .3 per cent was doing nothing to help the problems in those communities.

And we now have an announcement this week, Mr. Speaker, following the Speech from the Throne with not one word in it about gaming, we now have an announcement by the Minister of Health telling us that that's been increased from a measly .3 per cent by another measly percentage of money that won't put a dent in the problem that has been created by this government's inept gaming policies.

Every single place we went throughout this province, Mr. Speaker, everywhere the message was the same. Communities resented the top-down approach that was being taken by the government. Charities and community leaders resented the unfair gouging of revenues from their local economies. Hoteliers have found that VLTs added to their administrative duties and in some cases decreased the sale of their liquor to their patrons as well as food that was purchased by people. Even the workers in their establishments, the people who were servers — the waitresses — were no longer able to make the money that they previously made because instead of getting tips, people took the tips and put them into VLT machines.

(1515)

What we discovered of course was relative to other places. A lot of our hoteliers believed that, as much as they didn't want them there, they did indeed need them there. But 15 per cent was not enough. Because the message was clear to us, because we bothered to go and listen, we put forward a policy statement which was sensitive to the concerns of local people and which left a very fair portion of revenues in the community.

I want to say that a great many people approached me at the SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) convention in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, to say that they believed the government would have offered nothing to them if the Liberal caucus had not forced their hand; that in fact the meagre 10 per cent that the government is giving back to local economies would not even have been there.

This is the great strategy, the great plan, of this particular administration, Mr. Speaker. They talk about their three-pronged plan. It was no plan, Mr. Speaker. They didn't even know enough to project in the future that they were going to destroy local charities, that they were going to destroy local

economies, that they were going to ruin the sports, culture, and recreation of this province by their own silly gaming policy. In fact I don't even know how they can call it a policy. It keeps changing every other week.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that the government has chosen to ignore very sensitive issues in their Speech from the Throne. Quite frankly, it is precisely because they lack sensitivity. Once again, Mr. Speaker, it is a government that is not being judged on its promises but on its performance. For many people, the arrogance and unfairness that has been demonstrated on the gaming issue has been characteristic of this government on many other issues, and we all know about health care reform.

But that is their legacy, and public attitudes have changed because of it. No longer will they ever take government at its word because actions are what speak louder than words. The Speech from the Throne talks of hope and promise. But as much as the government relies on luck and trying to manipulate truth, the people of Saskatchewan have come to the stark realization that this is all this government has to offer.

But hope is not a strategy, Mr. Speaker. So in reviewing this Speech from the Throne, it is important to ask, what is the real strategy for the people of this province? What is the strategy of the Government of Saskatchewan for the people of this province? The government has talked for the past three and a half years about plans to create jobs and economic development.

But we've not seen anything like a true plan unfolding, one with ongoing measurability. We have not seen . . . or we have seen the fiscal policies of the Finance department contravening the rhetoric of the Economic Development minister. We have heard statements about the need to strengthen rural communities, followed by gaming policies and health care policies that hurt local communities and economies.

We've heard time and again the government does not create jobs; small business does. But the policies of this government have been roadblocks to job creation. In spite of the best efforts of the entrepreneurs of this province, it has been government policies that have limited our recovery of jobs and kept the province at the bottom of provincial . . . provinces of Canada.

And so, Mr. Speaker, people looking for hope and direction and encouragement from this government have gotten the opposite. They heard from the Labour minister who appeared on the front pages of *The Financial Post*, they heard this pronouncement about the labour legislation in Saskatchewan brought in by their government — that it was brought in to protect the workers from the ruthless greed of business. If there's been any greed in the province of Saskatchewan, it has clearly been on the part of government, not on the part of business.

Utility costs are another omission in the speech. They talk about job creation being a priority, Mr. Speaker. But this government's decision to charge unfair prices for utilities has made our businesses uncompetitive; 1,331 employers have disappeared from our province since 1991. And it's unlikely that

they just simply left because they retired on their profits. It is more likely that they moved to a more affordable climate, a more affordable business climate, or they simply went broke.

The fact is that if Saskatchewan were experiencing the phenomenal economic growth under a free enterprise government, if Saskatchewan had a government the people trusted, a government that would set high goals and eliminate barriers to investment, there would have been jobs growing two and three years ago when they began to substantially grow elsewhere. If we are in last place during the best of times, we will stay in last place during the rest of the times, as long as we have visionless government.

The current government was elected on promises — promises that \$4.5 billion was simply enough to run the province of Saskatchewan. And people feel betrayed again. They wonder why the Premier would say \$4.5 billion simply has to be enough to run the province when the budgets were closer to \$5 billion every single year since 1991.

People have sacrificed a great, great deal. But the government gave up virtually nothing in comparison. The Premier allowed spending to go half a billion dollars over budget every year since the NDP were elected. The fact is the government had to collect that extra revenue to pay for that broken promise. The price tag works out to \$6,000 for the average family of four since 1991.

So people are very suspicious when the Premier now tells them all other kinds of things and simply believe in us one more time. The truth is, Mr. Speaker — and I've been all across Saskatchewan, including Melville last night — the truth is that no one trusts this provincial government. We believe that a responsible government should not expect people to give them *carte blanche* to run up deficits and then tax their way out of predicaments. The Liberals have advocated, since 1991, a taxpayers' protection Act, and we will use the legislative process to bring that legislation before the members of this Assembly.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, we would be delighted if the government members would ever be unshackled from their party chain gang long enough to be allowed a free vote on such a vote. But once again, both opposition parties are restricted to introducing legislation as a show of good intention, knowing full well that the chances of passing it are virtually non-existent.

Mr. Speaker, this would be an initiative acted upon in the first year of a Liberal administration in this province. It is simply not good enough to make promises without ensuring that you have to deliver on your commitments.

The New Democrats have had every opportunity to do the right thing in this legislature. The Speech from the Throne talks about responsible financial management and how it calls for much more than a balanced budget in any one year. We knew that in 1991, Mr. Speaker. The Liberal Party and the people of Saskatchewan knew that in 1991. They expected the government to make this part of the plan from the very beginning.

And what was stopping the government from putting that forward? What was stopping the NDP from taking a complete plan to Wall Street and Bay Street and saying: here is exactly what we are going to do with the financial situation of the province of Saskatchewan; we have a four-year mandate; these are the taxes that will be charged under the taxpayers' protection Act and we will live within this budget for 1992, 1993, and for the budget of 1994? What stopped them from saying, we will balance the budget in 1995 or '96 or earlier if we achieve extra revenues?

The only thing that stopped this government from putting such a plan forward was politics — nothing but crass politics. They wanted to save balanced budget legislation as their ace in the hole, their grand finale before an election. Well I give them credit. It does make for good politics, but it is not the stuff of which good governing is made.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech says that:

. . . The Balanced Budget Act will promote long-term financial stability and integrity in the administration of the province's finances.

So all I ask is this: if government was most interested in long-term stability and integrity, why would this not have been their number one priority as part of the first budget they ever introduced? Why not leave the political strategy out of it and just give people a break for once and concentrate on governing?

Between the time this government started talking about legislating balanced budget, at least three other provinces will have introduced balanced budget legislation. Not what they keep going around the whole province telling people — three other provinces have done this.

While other provinces have been busy building jobs to make balanced budgets sustainable, this government has spent three and a half years talking about what other provinces have just done as a matter of course. While other provinces have emerged from a recession with sustainable jobs and the ability to attack their long-term debt using the economy as a powerful weapon, the Government of Saskatchewan has lucked out on windfall profits and gambling money with no viable plan to sustain the cost of their big, big government and no viable plan to make government smaller.

So, Mr. Speaker, the NDP has done all that they can do. Raising taxes and leaving big government untouched is going to be their legacy. Proliferating Saskatchewan with VLTs will be their legacy.

The Finance minister says the spending cuts are behind us. In other words, the government has come through the worst financial crisis in the history of Saskatchewan intact while the people are left picking up the pieces on Main Street, Saskatchewan — victims of an insensitive and greedy government.

The speech implies that all the problems are over. The Minister of Finance said it on CBC radio last night — all the cuts are

over; all the problems are over.

What they do is gloss over the farm debt crisis by saying that farm families faced high debt in 1991. They're talking as if there's no debt crisis for farmers any more in the province of Saskatchewan. And they quickly skip over this whole section in the Speech from Throne saying, we will not talk of debt-ridden farms. Well what a great relief for everyone who's debt ridden in Saskatchewan on their farms.

Well not talking about a problem doesn't mean there is no problem. Farm families are enjoying a much-deserved and long-awaited increase in their incomes. But the rural economy has been astonishingly attacked.

The economic minister admits that there are thousands of jobs gone from the agriculture sector in rural Saskatchewan. The Economic Development minister says the jobs lost in rural Saskatchewan are ruining his numbers; that the jobs in agriculture maybe shouldn't be lumped in with all the rest, as though they don't really count somehow. And the minister also fails to realize that while prices are up, prices also come down eventually. But that is not the case with farm input costs which will continue to climb as the result of higher fuel costs, fertilizer costs, and machinery.

The government seems to forget that increased utility costs mean less profits for farmers to apply to their debt. One dry year or higher interest rates or a drop in grain prices would put people right back behind the eight ball. Because there are still very high levels of debt in rural Saskatchewan and it will take farmers time to address them, just as it will take government time — as much they don't like to admit it — to address the debt of this province. And we are going to have to grow as a province, Mr. Speaker, in order to address that debt; not chase the people out of here, but to grow the population of Saskatchewan.

Government must have long-term strategies in place to encourage rural development so that the people of our province who don't live in Saskatoon and Regina can address their very serious challenges.

The most striking thing, I think, in this speech is how the government tries to make us believe that it is taking initiatives to put the finishing touches on health care reform in rural communities. The finishing touches, Mr. Speaker? I don't know where all these members who represent rural constituencies have been, but if they think that the problems of health care reform are behind us, they aren't listening to anyone.

(1530)

They most certainly do not hear from the people that I hear from, the letters that flood our office, the tragic cases that we are hearing, from not only those people who require care but those who are no longer around to provide it. And to hear from physicians and surgeons who have to make choices about whether or not they give people full treatment because of the lack of things available to them to be able to supply people — such things as leg pumps to prevent blood clots in legs, and

saying they're not available; can't put them on someone after a car accident.

I mean what are these people doing, to think that in fact they can talk as if health care reform, the primary things, are all behind us and only the final finishing, wonderful touches are supposed to go on in rural Saskatchewan? I'm just astonished about this. Have we really seen any savings. Have the hospitals that were closed been replaced with adequate services. Who is going to be held accountable?

Right now nobody seems accountable. The government doesn't accept responsibility. You ask any question and it's the responsibility of the district health board. You ask the district health board and they say it's not their responsibility; they don't have any control over dollars really.

And then we find out that in fact of course — if there's anybody who has to catch the ball last — it's the physician, who apparently has absolutely no power whatsoever over anything any more. But that's the individual who's supposed to be left catching the ball at the end.

Who's going to be held accountable for deficits and expensive bureaucrats and liabilities in all these district health boards? These are the questions coming in from all of the corners of the province. The government has drastically changed the system, the Finance minister said last night on CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) radio: It's been drastic, all right. And never once were people warned of drastic changes in 1991 campaign and never has a plan been presented that explains the savings or the true improvements in health care for the people of Saskatchewan which have come about, supposedly, from these drastic changes.

The speech talks about extending special licences to psychiatrists and medical health officers being transferred to district health boards. It talks about transferring all of the Health department staff to the districts, so that rural people will have lots and lots of bureaucrats in their communities. They're not excited, Mr. Speaker. They're not excited at all. What they want are doctors and nurses in their communities — and they're leaving.

It talks about the information highway. It doesn't mention at all about the condition of the highways that rural people have to drive on to get to the nearest hospital, or why there are still not adequate services replacing those that hospitals used to provide in 52 rural communities.

But it is uncheerleader-like to mention these unpleasant realities that have been left out of the Speech from the Throne, because I guess it makes people unhappy with the NDP government. So none of us are supposed to talk about it. Obviously none of the 53 members of this Legislative Assembly on the government side are ever going to talk about it. They've never raised people's concerns that we've been hearing about gambling or what's been happening in local economies or what's been happening as far as health care is concerned.

And these problems with health care don't simply take place in rural Saskatchewan. I find it rather astonishing that not one other member in Saskatoon has heard the kind of problems that I've heard, as a Saskatoon member, on health care. Not one person on the government side has heard about any of these difficulties. So we'll just talk about how everything's now nice and the final touches will be on health care reform. And that's what comes from the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, I don't get paid to make the government happy. The taxpayers pay me to listen to their concerns. The taxpayers pay me to provide the government with their reality. But the NDP finds it unacceptable to talk about reality. Reality, it seems, makes them look bad.

This is a government that claims to care about young people. But the Premier becomes indignant — in fact, mean-spirited and very un-premierlike towards a member of this Assembly — when he is presented with constructive ideas to address the alarming number of youth who have ended up on welfare under this government's term in office, rather than acknowledge that it is absolutely imperative for all of us to work together to offer hope and opportunity to young people, by directing their skills and talents, by preparing them for the jobs he says that he can grow in Saskatchewan, rather than be gracious and accept our efforts to assist.

And as a member called out behind me, Mr. Speaker, you know, one idea. Well there were 10 ideas there yesterday, 10 ideas that were tabled in this House. And there are dozens and dozens more ideas in our platform document for putting this province back on track. Instead of accepting with graciousness and dignity, as a premier should, the ideas of another member, he chose instead to jeer and insult the member. Is this how he expects to foster a spirit of cooperation in our province? Is this what he does to investors when they come forward with ideas?

Mr. Speaker, this session will not be about hope and prosperity for the Government of Saskatchewan. It will likely be more about more manipulation and deceit and political partisanship on the part of the government, the likes of which this province has not witnessed since the NDP could smell a campaign in 1991. That's likely what this session will be about.

So I say let them attack, let them manoeuvre, let them manipulate, and let them coerce. But they should take heed. The real people are not accepting this kind of behaviour. They have made their very serious sacrifices for this province and they want to see government do whatever is necessary to restore trust and confidence by being a model for the people, by restructuring a huge system that is not sustainable, and they want to see the people in this House behaving with dignity.

The Premier and his cabinet become very irritated when they must answer questions or listen to legitimate criticisms. They claim to have balanced one budget. They raised taxes to unprecedented levels; done nothing to reduce the size of government. They have dismantled health care and plugged in VLTs to suck the money off the main streets of local towns and cities, and at the same time believed that this should give us all hope and optimism for the future of Saskatchewan. It is absurd.

Furthermore, where they could provide hope, they don't. Blatant omission from the speech is the nuclear industry. The industry with perhaps the greatest potential to expand our economy, and the government chooses to ignore it rather than risk upsetting some of their left-wing supporters.

How can a government talk about hope and opportunity in one breath, and ignore such enormous potential in the value added processing of uranium and all of the other opportunities in an industry where we should be in the driver's seat in this province.

It is unthinkable that the NDP would devote an entire section to jobs and economic renewal, with not even a mention of the nuclear industry. Can it be, can it be, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this government is once again cowering in fear of the special interest groups that controlled its agendas in the past? Can it be that labour laws and tendering practices and costly environmental legislation is not the final price this government will make Saskatchewan pay so that these career politicians can stay in power? And these are the people who talk of hope.

Well talk is cheap. But an acre of trust and an acre of performance is worth a world of promises. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in spite of this government's lacklustre Speech from the Throne, in spite of their failure to put forward a measurable plan for health care or economic growth, I do remain very optimistic because things can change very, very quickly.

I am optimistic that there is still time to repair the damage to our health care system. I very much believe in the people of this province. I believe that we can make fundamental change to government, fundamental change to this Legislative Assembly, and fundamental change to the economy of Saskatchewan.

People in Saskatchewan are not quitters; they are survivors. And they have just survived two administrations that depict the same old thing. Mr. Speaker, there are untapped opportunities and untapped potential. We can set to work quickly to reverse the damage caused by unnecessary labour legislation. Once it is withdrawn, we can sympathetically begin to unwind the complex rules and costs that government has imposed on job creators and investors in this province. And we will do it responsibly, within the context of fiscal restraint and legislated spending limits for government, legislated debt reduction, legislated rules for MLAs and government caucuses. There is hope because there is still a new horizon for a new economy for the people of Saskatchewan, and there still is on the horizon a government that could provide a very new way of doing things.

Now time has not passed us by, but the clock is ticking. 1995 is our 90th anniversary as a province. I am very hopeful and optimistic that the people of Saskatchewan will say goodbye to the past with very fond memories and will meet the future with new energy, new enthusiasm and, obviously, a new government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I conclude my remarks today by saying the following. There were members of the Legislative Assembly who made mention of — in fact I indeed believe it's the

member from Pelly in his reply today — talking about governments of the past.

There was indeed a government of the past that they can read about in a book by Dale Eisler called *Rumours of Glory* — a government that ran this province through some of the most serious recessionary times possible; a premier of this province who said: it takes no wisdom or talent to balance the budget by raising taxes; that real creativity, real concern for the long-term best interests of people, means that you balance the books by keeping your own house in order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that same premier is the person who assisted, in one term of office, economic development the likes of which has never been seen in this office subsequently — created real diversification, and 11 per cent of aboriginal people were able to get off welfare in one term of that office. That was a Liberal administration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this was an individual who in fact has been seen by, and cited by, Dale Eisler as the only person in charge of a government that created true diversification in the province of Saskatchewan.

He also indicated as premier that if the people of Saskatchewan were not taught that health care wasn't free, that in 25 years the medicare system would be in trouble. I would say that his legacy is one of which we should take heed and probably pay some attention to. There is such enormous potential for our province to create a secure economy that takes us into the next century.

There could be, under the right economic climate and the direction from government, limitless opportunity for the young people of this province to build futures for themselves and for generations to come. There is indeed hope on the horizon, but hope is not a strategy.

And I strongly suggest that this Speech from the Throne, like the last four, contains no strategy whatsoever to provide the people of Saskatchewan with the leadership and direction that translates hope into action.

During this session, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will try to convey alternatives and direct constructive criticisms that point out to the Premier, his cabinet, and the members opposite that there is a better way — a better way to approach the challenges facing our citizens and their communities so that we can contribute together to the future of our nation.

I look forward to presenting the views of the people of Saskatoon Greystone and the views of people around the province who contact me on a regular basis. And I want to spend as much time as possible doing that in a helpful way in this fifth session of the twenty-second legislature of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. I hope you feel the same way at the end of my presentation as you do now, or maybe even better.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start by quoting someone who said: what is needed is a bit more honesty in the system, said the Leader of the Third Party. The quote continues: so honest that you'll stand and admit when you're wrong. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when the Leader of the Liberal Party will stand up and admit that she's wrong. I expect her to do so tomorrow because I take her as an honourable person. And this quote comes out of the *Yorkton This Weekend* and *Enterprise*: What is needed is a bit more honesty in the system, so honest that you'll stand up and admit when you're wrong.

(1545)

When was the leader wrong? But a very few days ago at the SUMA convention in Saskatoon the Leader of the Liberal Party said: Saskatchewan is not going to have a future if the present trend lines continue. Our workforce is shrinking. That is fact. We have lost 9,000 jobs since 1991 and the NDP has no specific plan in place to recover these jobs.

This direct quote from the Leader of the Liberal Party a few days ago in Saskatoon. Subsequent to this, we see StatsCan having assured the following: employment, jobs in Saskatchewan, has risen by 7,000 jobs since 1992. Seven thousand more jobs since 1992. Employment averaged, it says, 450,000 working people in 1992, rose to 455,000 in 1993, and 457,000 in 1994.

The Leader of the Liberal Party a few days ago was bemoaning the situation with young people. I share some considerable concern but again, Mr. Speaker, the facts do not support what the Leader of the Liberal Party was saying then. The total youth employment has risen from an average of 74,000 in 1992 to 75,000 in 1993 to 76,000 in 1994.

The purpose of what I'm doing is not to quibble with, is a steady increase of a thousand jobs a year enough? Clearly it's not. Clearly we would love it to be bigger. The point of my rising is to remind the Leader of the Liberal Party what she states, quoted, what is needed is a bit more honesty in the system, so honest that you'll stand up and admit when you're wrong.

Now this is the Leader of the Liberal Party's opportunity. I listened with a great deal of interest as she engaged in the throne speech. I didn't hear her suggest that perhaps she had erred. Certainly didn't hear her say she was wrong. In fact it seemed to me that the Leader of the Liberal Party was saying, I have all the answers. I have all the answers. It's real wonderful. The Leader of the Liberal Party said, well, you know, I promised an idea a week to us. That was promised some time ago and last time I counted we're about 75 ideas short because it was 75 weeks ago when she promised an idea a week for job creation. Makes us a mere 75 short. And one would have thought with the help of the member for Shaunavon that they could have at least come up with a half a dozen ideas in that time. But could they? No. No.

Today I heard the Leader of the Liberal Party stand there and say, oh but yesterday we gave you 10 ideas. Well yesterday in question period the Liberal member for North West stood up, tabled a document that when our Minister of Education goes

through says, yes, this document is essentially what the Department of Education shared with that Liberal member November last year. The Department of Education, wanting to work with all MLAs, with all the people of Saskatchewan because after all, the goal is improved education and an enhanced Saskatchewan that will benefit us all; all, regardless of political affiliation.

In that spirit this government shares information, shares ideas, seeks some suggestions from a Liberal MLA who ostensibly was trying to be helpful. What's the result of that? A paper tabled in this House. A plagiarized paper plagiarized from our Department of Education. Plagiarized and tabled and claimed to be a Liberal first. A Liberal first.

Well I'm not one to keep count as you know, Mr. Speaker, but it seems to me that's two things that the Leader of the Liberal Party can stand up and say tomorrow, when she has her opportunity, can stand up and say I was wrong; I apologize, I was wrong. I think it goes along with something that the leader was talking about, the Leader of the Liberal Party, the same person. What's needed is a bit more honesty; so honest that you'll stand up and admit when you're wrong.

I shouldn't be surprised that the Liberal leader and the Liberal Party can do nothing much better than come up with plagiarized ideas. After all we're well aware that the Liberal policy vis-a-vis health care is nothing more than a regurgitated Conservative policy that was first put forward five or six years ago by the Conservative Party.

Now I shouldn't be surprised by that, Mr. Speaker. We all know the story of the Liberal and the Conservative Party being like a chicken in the winter, standing on one leg to keep the other leg tucked up and warm and when that foot finally gets so cold, they have an election and the chicken switches to the other foot and stands on that one for a while until that foot gets cold, then they have another election. So they flip-flop between Conservatives and Liberals, but it's the same old chicken.

The reason I'm suggesting that it's largely the same old chicken, you will recall the last session I spoke a little bit about one Ted Yarnton, a former Conservative bagman for the Regina area for the Conservatives who . . . I was shocked when it happened. But the same leader of the Liberal Party introduced none other than Ted Yarnton in the Speaker's Gallery as one of the family of Liberals. One of my team, she said, one of my team. Ted Yarnton, Liberal or Tory, same old story. And I can tell you he's probably as efficient as a Liberal bagman as he was as a Conservative bagman.

Then I think of Cy MacDonald who was a Liberal MLA in the Thatcher Liberal days, sat in this very House, ran for the leadership of the Liberal Party. Well the last time I understood what was going on Cy MacDonald was in charge of making sure that Conservative supporters kids got summer jobs, amongst other things. But Cy MacDonald was very clearly a Tory, very clearly, announced it publicly. Said, well I used to be a Liberal but you know the Liberals have fallen on hard times so now I'm a Tory.

I'm just wondering when the wind's going to change again. Is Cy MacDonald going to be able to make the jump back to the Liberal Party? Will the Liberal Party accept him? I see a Liberal head going yes, so there you are Cy, you got a home, just welcome with open arms . . . flip-flop, doesn't matter. Let's see it. Which way is the wind going? The list goes on and on. We all know Liberal, Tory, same old story.

We know that Liberal policies are plagiarized. Usually, fortunately, their policies are usually plagiarized from the Conservatives versus from us. I spoke a little bit about health care. I just want to remind people that part of the Liberal platform was one of introducing health care fees based on income. That was part of their platform in the last election. I'm sure, I'm sure that I heard just a few minutes ago, the Liberal leader stand up here and bemoan increases in taxes and frankly, Mr. Speaker, I was a little bit confused. I always thought when you have a premium based on income, this is a tax. A health care premium by any other name is nothing but another form of a tax. So we have on the one hand the Liberal leader saying: oh, we wouldn't increase your taxes. On the other hand they say: but we'll introduce a graduated health care premium based on ability to pay. . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I hear a colleague saying, like Alberta. Only with one exception: Alberta's not based on ability to pay; Alberta's simply straight up, just about a thousand dollars a year per family health care premium. Full stop, period.

And I remind the Liberals opposite and the Conservatives opposite, Saskatchewan has zero health care premium. I'm not going to stand here and pretend we have no taxes because that is a long way from honest. We have taxes in Saskatchewan. We have no health care premium like Alberta — Conservative Alberta. We have no health care premium like many Liberal provinces. We have no health care premium.

I can't help it if the member for Shaunavon confuses E & H (education and health) tax with a health care premium. Sorry, I can't help it. If you can't read after this much time, can't read a budget item and understand what's up and what's down, it's too late. I can't help you with that. Saskatchewan has no health care premium; Alberta does.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't touch a little bit on some other comments that the Liberal leader made. I heard the Liberal leader saying that: gosh, is the NDP caving in to nuclear special interest groups? And I found that kind of puzzling because the people that I know that have some real concerns about the nuclear industry without exception are people who don't make a penny off the nuclear industry. Not a penny.

Many of us tend not to have huge amounts of money but have a dedication to the anti-nuclear cause, if I can describe it that way. And I just want to ask, I just want to ask how much the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan and the Liberal Party of Canada and maybe even the Liberal leader benefits from the friendliness, the contributions, the financial assistance, the support, and the aid of Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. — AECL. . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I wonder if there are political contributions? I wonder why it is that at every

opportunity the Leader of the Liberal Party stands up and speaks out so boldly saying, nuclear is the answer.

**An Hon. Member:** — She couldn't be bought and paid for.

**Mr. Trew:** — I hear someone saying she couldn't be bought and paid for. I guess we all have to come to our own conclusion. I could hardly believe that the Liberal leader could be bought and paid for when this same person is one so high on honesty and integrity and, you know, promises to stand up and admit when you're wrong. Stand up and say, gosh I was wrong; I said all this time, I said all this time, you're losing money . . . or losing — well she says we're losing money too — but losing jobs when in fact the reality is one of 7,000 more jobs, the reality is one of 2,000 more jobs for young people in Saskatchewan. The reality is one of growth, of hope, of renewal. And I'm really looking forward to the Leader of the Liberal Party standing up and admitting that she made an error.

I think it should be fairly easy for the Leader of the Liberal Party to admit an error. I've heard the Leader of the Liberal Party saying that MLAs are overpaid and that we should be taking less money.

(1600)

This is the same Liberal leader that as soon as the member for Shaunavon joined her took a 37 per cent pay increase, becoming Leader of the Third Party — 37 per cent pay increase when the member for Shaunavon joined the Liberal Party. The Leader of the Liberal Party took a pay increase.

Mr. Speaker, I invite the member for Shaunavon to listen carefully as I address the matter because it is the Leader of the Third Party, your leader, that took a 37 per cent increase in pay when you joined that party. This is the same leader that has promised to stand up and admit when she's wrong. I think she should be able to do it.

This is a leader — I talked about jobs — promised to bring a project a week. Well I question how much follow-up there's been. I wonder how reliable her words are. I wonder, when they're 75 projects short, I wonder how much of what the rest of what the Liberal Party says can be believed. How much credibility is there there?

The best they've been able to do thus far is to submit some plagiarized ideas.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Liberal Party has talked about integrity. I want to keep coming back to that and I want to find . . . Here it is, this quote again. This quote: What's needed is a bit more honesty in the system; so honest you'll stand up and admit when you're wrong.

Well I have before me the Liberal leader's MLA report to the Saskatoon Greystone newsletter of September 1994, for which she said she voted for the government's legislation on electoral boundaries — said so in her constituency newsletter: I voted for the government constituency boundaries, says your leader, the Leader of the Liberal Party.

The facts are, according to *Hansard*, April 13, 1994, there was a motion to accept the report of the Boundaries Commission. The two other Liberal MLAs, from Shaunavon and Regina North West, voted with the government to accept the report. The Liberal leader was not present, therefore vote not recorded.

Third . . . then it goes on though, okay. You can say, well that's . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I just want to remind the member that he ought not to draw attention to whether or not members are in the House, were in the House, and ask him to keep that in mind.

**Mr. Trew:** — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure exactly what I said. I'll try and be more diligent with it.

The article goes on, the Saskatoon Greystone newsletter: Third reading of electoral boundaries legislation, the Leader of the Liberal Party was not present, the vote was not recorded, and the other Liberal that was there votes against . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Again I'm having . . . I want the member to pay attention to what I say, and that is that he ought not in his remarks point out that members were absent, not present, and to avoid that kind of discussion in his remarks.

**Mr. Trew:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a point of clarification with you I'd like to address. It was my understanding . . . this is for future. I thought I can't refer to whether a member is in here now.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I just want the member to carry on. I don't want the member to dwell on this and to carry on with his remarks.

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Proof of the pudding is in the Saskatoon Greystone newsletter in which clearly the Leader of the Liberal Party has misled her constituency . . . her constituents. And I expect the Leader of the Third Party, the Liberal leader, will stand up — so honest that you'll stand up and admit when you're wrong. I look forward to the Leader of the Liberal Party doing that, probably tomorrow. We have a growing list of things for which she is welcome to stand up and admit she was wrong.

Right now would be a fine time to do it . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Actually that's a very good point. I would yield the floor if the Liberal leader wished to stand up and admit that she had made some errors. I'd be willing to yield the floor right now.

But I guess I will carry on. Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party makes a fair amount of to-do about being in touch. I heard the Liberal leader moments ago saying, we want to be in touch with the people of Saskatchewan; the government has lost touch with the people of Saskatchewan. And yet it draws a kind of a funny picture in my mind. Because I have this picture of the Leader of the Liberal Party driving the highways of Saskatchewan with Senator Herb Sparrow in the back of a limousine — getting in touch with the people, travelling our highways in a limousine.

Now how many MLAs have ever ridden the highways of Saskatchewan in a limousine? Well I only see one. How many MLAs have the gall to say, oh, but I was riding around in the back of a limousine trying to get in touch with my constituents, the people of Saskatchewan. Oh, only one. Only one. Well it's a grand way to get in touch — riding in the back of Senator Sparrow's limousine. A great way to get in touch with the grassroots.

I grew up on a farm, which doesn't have a whole lot to do with the story, except we never saw any limousines on our farm. Did see some grass roots, and I can tell you that if you're playing mind games and you say, what comes to your mind? You know, someone might say pop; you might say Coke. Someone might say milk; you might say cow. But grass roots and limousine aren't the sort of the automatic word associations that I make.

Grass roots and limousine. Well maybe we're on to something here. Maybe there is. I guess Senator Sparrow and Ted Yarnton go together. Senator Sparrow, Ted Yarnton — yes, both Tories. Both Liberals now. Grass roots, limousine. Well I still have difficulty with that connection; but getting in touch, riding around Saskatchewan in the back of a limousine courtesy of Senator Herb Sparrow.

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech is one of about hope and opportunity. We have indicated that what we're going to be doing this session is introducing the first balanced budget in nearly a decade and a half, the first balanced budget which is going to now offer some hope for the present and for the future of our Saskatchewan. With the first balanced budget since the Hon. Allan Blakeney sat in this legislature as premier, we have got opportunities and potential.

And every day that feeling is growing throughout Saskatchewan. Every day the optimism is growing. Every day we're seeing more and more of the benefits. It's going to be like a bit of steamroller, and I think it's going to just get better and better.

Are our efforts enough? I would argue no. If I thought they were enough, then it's clearly time for us to get out of the way and let somebody else carry on the job. But our efforts have . . . We've not reached the goal. We're struggling along to that New Jerusalem, but we're not there. Seven thousand jobs created since 1992. That's not enough, Mr. Speaker. But it's 7,000 real jobs. It's 7,000 jobs closer to our stated goal of 30,000 jobs by the year 2000.

Mr. Speaker, we have implemented a number of changes. It'll come as no secret. It's certainly not a surprise to anybody. I come from a farm background, but I also have a reasonable degree of labour background, having been at one time a member of the International Woodworkers of America. Another time was a steelworker and another time was on the Grain Services Union executive and bargaining committee.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that since we formed government we've increased the minimum wage. And when we did that, while the NDP government increased the minimum

wage, the Liberal leader opposed that increase, according to the *Leader-Post*, November 6, '92.

We then went on. We enhanced, changed the Workers' Compensation Board Act. The Liberal leader spoke against the changes. That, according to *Hansard* November 6, 1992, in which she actually went so far as to say: Workers' Compensation Board actually belongs to workers. She spoke against it; we delivered it.

Then while the NDP government was introducing changes to the occupational health and safety area, the Leader of the Liberal Party, quoted in the Yorkton *Enterprise* and *This Week*, says, quote: What are these yahoos doing, dealing with legislation that is completely irrelevant?

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I got up and spoke in private members' statements. And I talked a bit about safety; talked a bit about the great work that the Saskatchewan Safety Council is doing. My friend the executive director, Harley Toupin over there, and all his staff, all of the volunteers, continue to work very diligently to enhance safety throughout Saskatchewan. It is a very, very worthwhile goal when you've got anybody willing to do anything to try and enhance the safety, to try and reduce accidents, and to try and make the workplaces better in our province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — Mr. Speaker, we passed . . .

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. McPherson:** — For a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — What is your point of order?

**Mr. McPherson:** — Well in listening to the member's speech from Regina Albert North, I note that he on different occasions referred to the voting of other members of the House. I look in *Rules and Procedures*, rule no. 29 prohibits that member from reflecting on the vote of other members. And I was wondering if you would give a ruling to this.

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Mr. Speaker, the member . . . speaking to the point of order. The member opposite ought to know full well, Mr. Speaker, that rule refers to regurgitating the debate and talking about the debate. But the matter of anybody's vote is a matter of record at any time.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I believe the member from Prince Albert Carlton makes a good point. The members are not to reflect on whether a person has been here for a vote or not, because that will indicate whether the member was present in the House or absent from the House. And 29 has nothing to do with how a member voted, whether a person votes for or against a particular item. But you must not reflect on what the Assembly has done in a particular item in the past and criticize the Assembly for what it has done. That's so . . . the member, I did not catch what his words were, but that was the intent of rule no. 29.

**Mr. McPherson:** — Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina Albert North I think made two errors in his speech to the legislature — that being he reflected on whether or not the member was present, but also rule 29 as I read it, states that no member may reflect upon any vote of the Assembly, and not whether they were present for a vote or not, but the vote itself.

(1615)

**The Speaker:** — Order. I do not agree with the member's interpretation of rule 29. That has obviously not been the practice in the past and I do not agree with his. But if the member from Regina Albert North is reflecting on a member's absence or presence in the House, then clearly he's out of order and I think the Deputy Speaker has ruled on that.

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I'm going to say in summation, just to wrap up, this government has . . . one will have to ask whether we've done enough. That's clearly an answer that as individuals we all have to answer. And when we come to draw our conclusions from, have we done enough, are we going in the proper direction, I guess that many of us will draw some conclusions as to how we should vote in the next election. And that's a very serious task that the electorate have.

I am simply trying to point out with respect to labour legislation, on every single item we've got the Liberal leader, the Liberal Party, opposed to increasing the minimum wage, opposed to changes in the Workers' Compensation Board, opposed to The Occupational Health and Safety Act amendments that improved it, greatly opposed to The Labour Standards Act amendments, opposed to The Trade Union Act, and opposed when we tried and succeeded in seeing that union collective agreements and workers' rights stayed intact as the health districts were set up — six major items where we have the Liberal Party on record saying we're heading in the wrong direction, we being the NDP government. We're heading in the wrong direction.

So, Mr. Speaker, for people who work for a living, for people who have family who work for a living, I think it's pretty crystal clear what their choices are. I've gone about pointing out some of the things in terms of making it meaningful to individuals. I will have more to say on that at a later time, but for now I will be thanking the legislature for their attention through this speech, and I want to thank my constituents, those of Regina Albert North.

I want to close by saying what an honour it has been and continues to be for me to represent those constituents, to try and speak out on their behalf, and try and make Saskatchewan a province with a real future, a Saskatchewan of hope and opportunity. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it certainly is a pleasure to again take a moment to stand in this Assembly

and make a few comments in reply to the Speech from the Throne delivered by His Honour on Monday, this Monday past.

As we indicated last year and we've certainly indicated this year, our caucus will not take a lot of time just trying to stall or hold up the proceedings of this Assembly by long-winded exhortations regarding the Speech from the Throne. But we intend to indeed confine our remarks, make them brief, bringing out some of the points that we would like to raise, some of the concerns, and some of the lack of content that the speech basically had.

It seems to me that, Mr. Speaker, as we look at this Assembly and how it operates, the time frames or the cost on a daily basis of the operation of the Assembly are something that maybe we should look at as politicians in addressing the costs of running the government of this province and making the House and this Assembly and the members of this Assembly more accountable to the public, in view of the fact that many, many people around this province certainly would raise these same concerns with us on a daily basis.

I think just getting on with the House business is a simple thing that we all can do as members to make government cheaper and more efficient for the people of the province. However, possibly our discussions even in the Assembly today, in light of most of the public, may not really mean a lot in view of the fact the last few days the media have been making comments — well, our politicians are back at work, they're back in the Legislative Assembly, and they're back so we know that we're actually getting some benefit out of the . . . and some value for the dollar that we're paying them.

Which leads me to believe that a lot of people may think that the only job of a politician revolves around this Assembly, or the job of an individual elected to serve as a MLA revolves around this Assembly. I can assure you that there's more to my responsibilities or the responsibilities of MLAs in this institution, that reach far beyond the Legislative Assembly that sits here in the capital of the province, the city of Regina.

But allow me just to take a few moments just to mention a few areas that as an opposition we would like to raise, would like to bring to the attention of the government, certainly to the people of the province, in view of the concerns and matters that have been raised with us over the past number of months.

Financial accountability. Mr. Speaker. If imitation is the greatest form of flattery, surely the government has flattered the official opposition with its remarks on this subject.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, we're all aware of the fact that people are looking for a balanced budget, and over the past number of years, the government has played a balanced budget legislation and played on . . . Their record has basically been a repeat of a balanced budget and how they're going to achieve it. As we hear in the Speech from the Throne, the government is saying that they're going to balance it this year rather than in 1996 when they had originally pinpointed a time period when they were hoping to balance it.

One would have to ask, well was that achieved through solid, sound practices by this government? Or as we all know, the achieving of a balanced budget this year is related directly to the fact that there has been somewhat of a turnaround in the agricultural sector and, certainly, the resource sector and the over \$1 million that were passed on to government coffers through land sales in the energy sector this year.

And the thing is, Mr. Speaker, in view of that fact, I think it's presumptuous for the government to all of a sudden jump to the tune of, well we've balanced the budget. But what happens next year? We may not have that resource revenue. We may not have the revenue from agriculture. Where is the government going to find . . . or what plans has the government made or are they making today to address those concerns?

And of course, Mr. Speaker, the government is not running out to tell the national press how they have taxed the people of the province to death rather than touching the bureaucracy and other government . . . the over . . . the largeness of government that are the root of the major problems, not only in this province but in this nation. It seems to me on many occasions we have heard the government try to vilify the Alberta model as slash and burn, while this government seems to have no aversion to the rob and pillage method that they have chosen to use.

After years of ignoring our calls for balanced budget and MLA accountability legislation, it is reassuring to note, Mr. Speaker, and to see that the government is finally starting to listen to us even though it is in a half-hearted manner.

If the government members truly want meaningful balanced budget legislation, I would encourage them to support our Bill which will give teeth to the concept of balanced budget legislation. The fact that no other jurisdiction with balanced budget legislation has done this is no excuse. The people are demanding more from us and we must be prepared to lead the way in reforming government. And that's why the party I represent is proposing and bringing forward Bills to address a number of these issues and specifically balanced budget legislation.

Likewise this Assembly must be prepared to lead the way in extending the accountability of Crown corporations and other mechanisms of government. For this reason we will once again be introducing legislation proposing a legislative utilities review commission to protect the public from the predatory actions of the Crown monopolies. And we were certainly pleased yesterday to hear the Minister of Energy reducing by six and a half per cent the fees that SaskEnergy has been charging on the utility fees in SaskEnergy. However that's for this year; one has to wonder what it will be next year.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about that, nobody disputes the fact that SaskEnergy must run and be able to manage its accounts and manage its affairs and operate with a balanced budget as a department. But at the same time, should they gouge from the public of Saskatchewan so that they can take from their large millions of dollars of revenue, net revenue at the end of the year, to pour it into a fund that the government then can draw on at will? And those are some of the questions

we continue to ask and that's why we suggest that there is a place for a utilities review commission.

We will also be asking the members' support for all-party committee to review major government appointments. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is something that the public would really appreciate. If the members of this Assembly are serious about rebuilding public trust and credibility, they should put partisanship aside and consider the merits of these pieces of legislation.

Regarding jobs, Mr. Speaker, another theme explored at length in the throne speech is that of job creation. And it's something that we've heard for the previous three throne speeches and certainly again is brought to the forefront.

It is astonishing or astounding that the government has the gall to bring this topic up in view of the fact that year in and year out the government says job creation is its top priority yet year in and year out job growth falls drastically short of the projections of the government. Maybe it's time the government, instead of talking about jobs, talk about ways of creating jobs rather than talking about the few extra jobs that are created through student summer employment.

The government started in the fall claiming to have created 12,000 jobs. When StatsCanada said they had lost jobs, they still maintained that they were right. Now they are parading around as though it is a tremendous victory that their job creation projections were only 10,000 short of what they really projected; but they had created a few jobs.

Well one would question where the jobs came from. And I think, Mr. Speaker, as we look back over the period of this government, it's interesting to note that we don't have to go that far back, three years ago, when the former minister of Finance was building all his hopes on the very projects that the previous government, through some very difficult economic times, had initiated. And the only job creation was from those projects, and that's what the government was crowing about. Have they done anything to create jobs? No, they haven't.

You can even look at my constituency, a number of small businesses that have closed the doors because of the problems they find with the increase in utility rates that have cut into their profits. And certainly the difference in taxation even between the province of Saskatchewan and Manitoba has knocked businesses out of my community . . . many of my communities. And those businesses, Mr. Speaker, with them have taken jobs, anywhere from 2 to 20 individuals. So I find it interesting that this government talks about jobs while at the same time it is killing the very businesses that create and have been the economic stimulant in our province.

It's worth noticing that the government used to promise dramatic changes to the job picture by the year 2000, and in this speech that date seems to be pushed back to the year 2005. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day I'm not exactly sure if the public of Saskatchewan will even allow this government to be . . . or this party to form the government to be able to achieve hopefully their job numbers by the year 2005. Whether

it's in the upcoming election or the following election, I think the people of Saskatchewan will speak as they see what the long-term problems that are going to be projected by decisions this government has made over the last three years.

Over the years the government has had an endless series of excuses regarding job creation. Last year the Minister of Economic Development maintained that the job loss figures of the past four years were due to the winding down of megaprojects in '92 and '93. This year they can point the finger at conflicting figures coming out of StatsCanada and other places.

Mr. Speaker, I don't really think the public is interested in any more excuses. They want jobs. And it's high time that the government admitted that their job creation strategy is a sham. It is high time that they abandoned their welfare mentality of ignoring the unemployment problem so that they can boost federal transfers.

Even in the throne speech, beyond their usual hollow words about job creation, their only concrete proposals are a pair of dodges. On the one hand, they want to dump responsibility for economic development onto the regional communities through the use of regional economic development authorities. And on the other hand they set themselves up for federal infrastructure grants with the transportation partnerships program. (1630)

And coming back to the regional economic development authorities, one group of individuals indicated to me today that their community bond program has had a commitment from people in their community, and has dollars sitting in the fund, but they're probably going to be looking at giving the money back to the people because the taxation and the policies of the government in this province have interfered with anyone looking at coming to the province and establishing a business. And I think those are some of the things that this government is going to have to take a serious look at if it intends to make some of the job projections that they're putting forward.

The government should be ashamed of the way that they have scurried and hidden away from the challenges of economic development and employment in the province.

Regarding agriculture. It is perhaps the most telling part of this throne speech that it hardly mentions agriculture. Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, is the backbone of this province. It is the economic drive behind the economy of this province. And yet this province continually ignores agriculture. Is it because this government, with the redistribution of seats, is not really all that concerned about rural Saskatchewan any more because basically there are enough seats in the two major centres and a couple of small centres around for the NDP Party of this province to continue to form government for a long time. Is that what one of the problems is?

After destroying GRIP (gross revenue insurance program), eliminating the ADF (Agriculture Development Fund), raising input costs, and attacking rural Saskatchewan in numerous other ways, the paltry few programs offered up in this speech

are merely band-aids for wounds which the government itself has inflicted on Saskatchewan's most important industry.

In general, indeed much of the throne speech can be seen as an attempt by the government to cover its tracks on its tax on the Saskatchewan way of life. They are hoping that serving up warmed over versions of old programs will be enough to make people forget about four years of high taxes and declining services.

From the sounds of it, JobStart is nothing but a resurrection of the student summer employment program. Their supposed commitment to sustainable resource development amounts to nothing but another bunch of government studies. Mr. Speaker, absolutely nothing new is being done for health care. The little said about it in the throne speech just confirms that the government is going ahead with the same disastrous policy it has followed for years. And as we saw earlier this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, that is why communities are looking at alternative methods of providing good, sound, solid health care for their residents.

And then this anniversary . . . we don't seem to have money to help the people of this province, whether they be seniors or students. And it seems, Mr. Speaker, we've got money to put into a lavish birthday program. In the midst of this poverty of ideas, poverty of policies, and poverty of overtaxed citizens, the government wants to throw a party.

Mr. Speaker, I would think that this government, if it was really concerned about the citizens of this province, would be looking at ways in which they could really help the residents of our province, whether they be seniors, whether they be students, whether they be the unemployed. And, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I didn't see a lot in the throne speech that would give a lot of people any reason or any hope at looking at either staying in the province of Saskatchewan or moving into this province.

Mr. Speaker, I believe as we go through this session, you will see that my colleagues and I will take and make every effort we can to point out to the present government, to this NDP government and to the Premier, that there are some alternatives that they maybe should look at. There are alternative methods of addressing some of the problems we have in health care and education, the problems we have as far as . . . And my colleague from Thunder Creek raised the question of one of the highways in his area. And certainly I have highways in my area that need some work on them, that need to be looked at.

And, Mr. Speaker, we must find ways in which we can provide the essential services that are needed, rather than throwing bad money and band-aid solutions. And all I saw in this throne speech was band-aid solutions rather than a long-term, serious commitment to benefit and to build this province and to encourage people to look at coming and making this province their home.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think at the end of the day, what people will be looking for is credibility, credit ability in their elected representatives. And it is our job as MLAs, and certainly the

caucus I represent, my colleagues and I, will make every effort to show that we can be a credible opposition; that we can provide a credible alternative and that we can give the people of this province something to believe in and something to look forward to with hope for tomorrow.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the debate that will continue to take place and offering alternatives and solutions to many of the problems that face us. I thank you for your time.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Murray:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is as always, a great privilege for me to stand in this House and represent the people of Qu'Appelle-Lumsden.

I'm very pleased to be back here in this Assembly with my colleagues and with you, Mr. Speaker. As in past sessions, we look to you for fair judgements and wise counsel in our deliberations. We know you will ensure that this House will run with the decorum the people of Saskatchewan expect and deserve.

I treasure the freedom that allows all of us to stand and speak in this House. If I may, a few words about my constituency, Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, and the people who have chosen to live there. It is surely the most beautiful in the province, although my good friend, the member from Meadow Lake, will contest that. From the picturesque Qu'Appelle valley in the north to the plains of Wilcox and Gray in the south, it reflects Saskatchewan with its farms, small rural communities, and larger centres.

In the past three and a half years, I have travelled throughout this constituency, met the people, and discussed with them their plans, their dreams and their concerns. I have also visited with many groups, businesses, and organizations such as RM (rural municipality) and town councils to ensure that government at all levels works cooperatively. I am always aware of what a privilege it is to represent these people.

I also want to compliment my good friends and colleagues, the member from Bengough-Milestone, for moving the Speech from the Throne and the member from Saltcoats for seconding it. We all appreciate what an honour it is to be asked, and they have acquitted themselves admirably. Well-spoken, indeed.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I want to single out from an exemplary group, the ministers of this government, two special people — the member from Regina Hillsdale, the former minister of Health, and the member from Swift Current, the former Associate Minister of Finance.

Under the leadership of the member from Regina Hillsdale, this government has implemented some of the most innovative and impressive reforms ever in health care. With her guidance, we have preserved medicare; we have guaranteed its future. This has not been easy. But with the support and the understanding of the people of Saskatchewan, we are well on the way to ensuring sustainable community-based health care.

We have integrated and coordinated all the health services in the community and this fall we will be electing representatives to the district health boards — a Saskatchewan first. This achievement is greatly to the credit of the member for Regina Hillsdale whose responsibility it was.

And now the member from Swift Current — what a very special person. In his renegotiation of the contracts for the Co-op upgrader in Regina, the Husky upgrader in Lloydminster, and in his work generally as an associate minister, he took a leadership role and worked tirelessly for the betterment of all of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I can honestly say that I have never heard one critical comment spoken of this man. This is one colleague we shall all be particularly sorry to see leave public life. His integrity and honesty set an example for us all.

I would also like to congratulate the member from Kindersley for his election as Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party at what is clearly a very critical and challenging time.

I also extend a warm welcome to our new Clerk Assistant, Meta Woods, and to our pages.

Mr. Speaker, a few days before this session began I found myself in a lively discussion with a constituent, not a supporter of this government by any means. I found myself in this discussion reminding him what the people of this province and its government have achieved in the last three and a half years.

Now there isn't time in my brief remarks to relate the entire conversation nor would you want to hear it. But I'd like to touch on a few of those achievements we talked about.

Besides the reform to the delivery of health care to which I have already alluded, the major accomplishment is returning this province through sound management to financial stability, to financial freedom.

The leaders of Canadian finance know and recognize this. But I sometimes wonder if Saskatchewan people — people like my constituent — really appreciate the scope of this achievement, which now allows us in our Speech from the Throne to speak not of deficits but of sustained balanced budgets. This is something that this province has not seen since 1982 — 1982; that's 13 years. And this has happened because we have had a plan — a balanced budget plan that has taken this province from a deficit of \$842 million to zero. And we have done it with compassion and fairness. And I'm proud of that, as we all are.

Mr. Speaker, this constituent, bless his heart, is a retired farmer, and in our continuing discussion he agreed that not since the '70s has the agricultural outlook been as positive. Net farm income is up, way up, as is the net value of each farm and ranch in the province. There has been a dramatic increase in the growing of specialty crops — canola, lentils, flax — an increase in fact of 119 per cent.

We have a new farm safety net. We have changed our approach to agriculture as laid out in our Ag 2000 policy. We are encouraging diversification and more value added production. Agriculture is beginning to look good, very good, in Saskatchewan once again, which, I am hopeful, will encourage young men and women to live on and earn their living from the land.

As our conversation continued, he told me about his two granddaughters of whom he is justifiably proud, and of his hopes for their future in this province. So I was able to talk to him about our *Partnership for Renewal* paper — this government's economic plan. This plan was created in consultation with business, labour, the aboriginal community, financial institutions, and other organizations with a vested interest in our economy. And it's working.

I was pleased to be able to tell him about our increased retail sales — the highest on the Prairies. About the increased activity in the oil and gas sector, the tourism industry, the manufacturing industry — especially in the manufacturing of farm machinery. Right in our own community of Pilot Butte we have a very successful business, Dutch Industries, which is expanding, creating jobs, and leading the way in conservation farming and wind energy application throughout the world.

In communities like Fort Qu'Appelle, White City, and McLean, new business have been started and are thriving. In Lumsden, Ken Kelln of Ken's Consulting has created new jobs and is currently in Ghana, bringing solar energy to a new community there. This economic renewal means jobs for young Saskatchewan people — people like his granddaughters who want to stay in this province. It was wonderful to be able to tell him that this economic renewal meant small and medium-sized businesses were creating new jobs in Qu'Appelle-Lumsden and in this province — 7,000 of them since 1992.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we discussed in our usual lively way many other initiatives of this government — the child action plan, Future Skills, democratic reform, and the accountability of elected officials. My colleagues before me have spoken eloquently of many of them, and I know those speaking after me will do the same.

(1645)

I enjoyed my telephone debate with this constituent, and I look forward to the budget which our Minister of Finance will introduce next week, because I know he will call again and I know I will have even more good news to share with him then.

Mr. Speaker, it's been my pleasure to speak briefly in this debate. The throne speech has set out the vision and the task before us, and I'm very proud to support it. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to enter into this throne speech debate in this fifth session of the twenty-second legislature.

Mr. Speaker, in preparing my remarks for this debate . . . and I acknowledge that the member from Shaunavon is eagerly waiting to hear what those remarks are and I advise him to just be patient, Mr. Speaker, because we will get to them shortly. But before . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And he is expressing a great deal of desire, Mr. Speaker, to hear the mouseland fable, which I know is one of his favourite stories. Having been an individual who has a hard time figuring out whether he's a black cat, a white cat, or in fact a mouse, Mr. Speaker, I can understand why he would have great interest in that. But I hate to disappoint the member from Shaunavon, Mr. Speaker; I did not intend to get into the mouseland fable just this year.

However, Mr. Speaker, before getting into some of the substantial debate, I would like it first of all, Mr. Speaker, to extend my congratulations to the member for Bengough-Milestone and the member for Saltcoats for their very fine addresses in this Assembly as they outlined their views from their own constituency of what I think has been a very fine Speech from the Throne. And I extend my congratulations to them for both the honour and having carried the honour remarkably well.

I also, Mr. Speaker, do want to again commend you for your ongoing task, bringing order to what at times has the potential to be a disorderly exercise in this place, and I wish you a very orderly session in this sitting of the House.

In addition to that, I do want to acknowledge and say welcome to Ms. Meta Woods. Meta was someone that we came to get to know and develop a great deal of respect, both for her skills as well as her motivation in coming to this House, when she served as one of the Clerks to the Select Committee on Driving Safety that I'll want to make some remarks about in just a few moments. So a special welcome to Ms. Woods as well as to the pages.

And also my congratulations to the Leader of the Official Opposition, coming to the House for the first time in that capacity. And also my congratulations to the former leader and the member from Thunder Creek, my good friend the member from Thunder Creek, for having served with dignity in his period as the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, having recognized some very important people and their role in this Assembly, I'd like to address some comments then about the thrust, the main thrust of the Speech from the Throne as I understand it. When I listened to that Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, the thing that stood out in my mind was that it is the beginning of the end, or in fact it is the beginning of a new beginning, Mr. Speaker.

What was announced in the Speech from the Throne is that we will hear, we will hear next week when the Minister of Finance takes her place in this Legislative Assembly to bring the budget for the Government of Saskatchewan for 1995-96, we will see in this House for the first time in 13 years a balanced budget for the government and the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — And, Mr. Speaker, in recognizing that accomplishment I want to say thank you, not just to the Minister of Finance and the members of the Assembly who have been a part of providing the leadership to bring us to this point, but particularly to the people of Saskatchewan who have accepted the challenge that has been put forward to them over the past three and a half years, and contributing to Saskatchewan's fiscal responsibility that puts us in the position now in 1995 where realistically we can start to look at new beginnings. Putting money, Mr. Speaker, spending money, to prevent hurts instead of only being able to spend money bandaiding hurts that are felt.

Mr. Speaker, there will be a number of announcements I know in the area of social services and health and employment that will come about as a result of the new-found freedom for the Government of Saskatchewan to respond to the desires of Saskatchewan people because of the sacrifice that all of Saskatchewan people have made, and I want to say thank you for that.

I also want to, Mr. Speaker, say how proud I am to be a member of a government that is going to introduce in this session the requirement for balanced budgets into the future through balanced budget legislation that will put into law the requirement to do what has been happening for the last three and a half years, that will put into law the requirement to have responsible fiscal management in the long-term, best interests of the province, that the people of Saskatchewan from this day forward will be able to look forward to responsible fiscal management and never, ever, ever again will be subjected to the consequences of the irresponsible fiscal management that we have seen for the previous nine years before the New Democrat government took office in late 1991.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm encouraged by the promise of a balanced budget, by the commitment to legislative requirements to balance budgets in the future. I am encouraged by the consequences of changes in the approach to employment and the management of the economy that we have seen just within the last couple of days, pointing out that here in the province of Saskatchewan over the past three years we have seen a growth in employment in this province, Mr. Speaker, of 7,000 new jobs — 7,000 new jobs, taking into account, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a decline of 9,000 jobs in the agricultural sector. In other words, Mr. Speaker, in the non-agricultural sector an increase of 16,000 jobs — well on the way to the target of 30,000 new jobs by the end of the decade, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to acknowledge that there has been an increase of 3,000 jobs for the young people of Saskatchewan. And along with that, Mr. Speaker, along with that the indications in the Speech from the Throne that there will be some additional programs, some new programs, to help make that link from training to employment,

from real training to real jobs for real people in the province of Saskatchewan, and I look forward to that as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't take the few moments that I have available to me to acknowledge the hard work that has been taking place by eight members of this Assembly over the last two and three months, being in touch with the people of Saskatchewan, listening to the people of Saskatchewan about their concerns in a very important area, and that will be part of the legislative agenda that we will all be dealing with in the course of this sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be the first to admit that I am pleasantly — I don't know if it's even fair to say surprised — but I am very pleased to be able to report to this House that there has been a fine non-partisan effort in the interest of traffic safety that has been taking place with five members of the government, two members of the official opposition, and one member from the third party who have been part of a tour, Mr. Speaker, who got onto a bus in the second week of December, the third week of December, and again in the second week of January, toured around the province of Saskatchewan and listened to Saskatchewan people tell us what their recommendations were and their advice was regarding dealing with some driving problems. And most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the unfortunate reality of fatalities that is our history here in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the realities are this: that we have a challenge, all of us. That we'll have a chance to work on them this session when the Select Committee on Driving Safety reports to the legislature. And the important task that we're going to try to remedy has to do with the fact that in recent years here in the province of Saskatchewan, that we have been losing a teenager on our roads in Saskatchewan, on average about once every 10 days. Also the sad reality, Mr. Speaker, that here in Saskatchewan, the reality is that over recent years every two weeks we lose an average of 3 people on our roads in an accident that involve a drinking driver. Mr. Speaker, we are not proud of those statistics or of the fact that we rank among the worst in the nation in that area.

And I'm so proud to say that, in the finest of democratic parliamentary tradition, this House had the wisdom, and I believe will successfully conclude the work of members of all three political parties represented in this House who have chosen to set aside our partisan differences to deal with a subject that doesn't have any partisanship about it — the saving of human lives on the roads of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in the tour of the Driving Safety Committee we heard from nearly 4,000 people. And what they said is that we need to get tougher with impaired driving, and we also need to deal very realistically with the problems experienced by new and impaired drivers in order to save lives.

And I think one of the really pleasant spin-offs of the whole exercise that none of us had anticipated, Mr. Speaker, was the involvement of Saskatchewan's teens. We heard from nearly 3,500 teenagers in the province of Saskatchewan, many of whom may very well be directly affected by some changes that

will come forward as a result of the study, and bring to this House the report and the government's response to that.

And what we found is going on in Saskatchewan today, Mr. Speaker, is something that we came to refer to as reverse role modelling. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, we were all pleased and proud to discover that here in the province of Saskatchewan there are a good number of teenagers who are not only talking about, but doing responsible things when it comes to separating the act of drinking from the act of driving and talking about and doing things that many in their parents' generation find hard to accept. And as we listened to Saskatchewan's teens give reasoned reflection and advice to legislative proposals, many of which can be interpreted as being more restrictive to them, what we found is that they were very, very responsible.

All of us came away as a result of this, Mr. Speaker, I believe, thinking that there is a good, solid reason for optimism about the future of Saskatchewan based on the kinds of thinking and the kind of spirit that we saw in the young people of Saskatchewan.

I think all of us come away as well feeling that there is room for Saskatchewan to show leadership through the introduction of a process that I came to refer to as wellness on the highway; where we begin to develop a link between our traffic safety system in this province and the health of the people of our province and to use those two systems together to bring about the shaping of a better, a healthier, a safer world for all of our citizens, young and old.

Mr. Speaker, that was an exciting prospect for all of us to have been a part of, and I look forward to the conclusion of the work of the Driving Safety Committee, which will be meeting again this evening to continue to do our work in our deliberations, having listened to the people of Saskatchewan, to bring our best recommendations to this House next month; recommending what we think will be good pieces of legislation; legislation that will be fair and reasonable; that will be seen to be fair and reasonable, and that will be enforceable; and most importantly, that will lead to the saving of lives on the roads of Saskatchewan.

All of that, Mr. Speaker, because we got together believing in the finest of the traditions of parliamentary democracy and that politicians are capable of setting aside their partisan differences to work on tasks and solve them together.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is with a lot of enthusiasm about what I see for the future of Saskatchewan and a great deal of enthusiasm about some of the things that I think we're going to see during this session — some legislative moves, some program moves, some balanced budget, some guarantee for the future of balanced budget for the province and the people of Saskatchewan. And so, Mr. Speaker, it is without a doubt in my mind, and on behalf of the very fine constituents of Moose Jaw Palliser, that I am proud to say as I take my seat in my debate on the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, that I will be voting in favour of the Speech from the Throne.

February 9, 1995

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**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 5 p.m.