

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present on behalf of residents concerned about the deteriorating highway conditions and the need to increase spending on highways. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to finally show a serious commitment to roads and highways in Saskatchewan by urging it to increase its highway and road construction and maintenance budget by \$300 million over the next five years as called for in the Saskatchewan Party's election platform.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the signatures to this petition come from the city of Regina and the community of White City.

I so present.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to present today on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to have the Workers' Compensation Board Act amended whereby benefits and pensions are reinstated to disenfranchised widows and whereby all revoked pensions are reimbursed to them retroactively with interest to April 17, 1985.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitions come from the Regina area, Mr. Speaker.

I so present.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition to present today. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to demand that the federal government work with Saskatchewan to put in place a farm aid package that provides real relief to those who need it and the provincial government develop a long-term farm safety net program as it promised to do when it cancelled GRIP against the wishes of farmers.

The signators are from the communities of Langenburg and Churchbridge, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a

petition from concerned citizens about parental rights. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to provide a review process with respect to family intervention to ensure the rights of responsible families are not being violated.

Signatures on this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Melfort, St. Brieux, and Regina.

I so present.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition as well to present to the Assembly this afternoon. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to reduce the royalty taxes on new drilling in Saskatchewan; to stop job loss, and create new employment in this sector.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

This petition comes from the Carnduff area of the province, the southeast part of Saskatchewan.

I'm pleased to present on their behalf.

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition from concerned citizens of the province of Saskatchewan, and their concern is about the rights of responsible parents. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to provide a review process with respect to family intervention to ensure the rights of responsible families are not being violated.

The signatures on this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from St. Brieux and Regina.

I so present.

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My petition prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to call upon provincial and federal governments to immediately take steps to end unfair world subsidies, and provide farmers with prompt relief from declining incomes, and act as watchdogs against rising input costs which are harming the rural economy.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

The good people from Cupar, Dysart, Fort Qu'Appelle, Regina, Indian Head, and Qu'Appelle have signed these petitions. Thank you.

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I present petitions this morning on the issue of highways. And the prayer of relief reads as follows:

Your petitioners are pleased to call on the federal and provincial governments to dedicate a significantly greater portion of fuel tax revenues towards road maintenance and construction so Saskatchewan residents may have a safe highway system that meets their needs.

Your petitioners come from North Battleford, Denzil, Spiritwood, and, as the member for Athabasca used to say when he was presenting petitions, all across the land.

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join with my colleagues in bringing forward petitions. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to call on federal and provincial governments to dedicate a significantly greater portion of fuel tax revenues toward road maintenance and construction so Saskatchewan residents may have a safe highway system that meets their needs.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed these petitions are from Saskatoon, a number from Indian Head, and several from the Kindersley area. And we appreciate those in Kindersley raising these issues with us so we can stand up for them in the legislature.

I so present.

The Speaker: — Now I know the hon. member will recognize that in presenting petitions, hon. members are not to engage in debate and I'm sure that he'll want to avoid doing that in the future.

Mr. Aldridge: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of citizens that are very concerned about the severe financial crisis that our farm families are facing in this province.

The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to call upon provincial and federal governments to immediately take steps to end unfair world subsidies and provide farmers with prompt relief from declining incomes and act as watchdogs against rising input costs which are harming the rural economy.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

The petitioners that I present here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, come from communities of Lipton, Lebreton, Qu'Appelle, Fort Qu'Appelle, Edgeley, and Weyburn.

I so present.

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy today to rise again on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan to present a

petition. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to call on federal and provincial governments to dedicate a significantly greater portion of fuel tax revenues toward road maintenance and construction so that Saskatchewan residents may have a safe highway system that meets their needs.

Mr. Speaker, this petition has been signed by concerned people living in the community of Grenfell.

I so present.

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure once again to rise on behalf of citizens who are concerned with some of the most vulnerable in the province of Saskatchewan, and to read their petition:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to provide essential funding and ensure the delivery of scientifically proven diagnostic assessment and programming for children with learning disabilities in order that they have access to an education that meets their needs and allows them to reach their full potential.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

All of the signatures today are from Pelican Narrows, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have from the rural municipality of Auvergne No. 76, the following petition.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that you Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately start work on the rebuilding of our secondary highway system to provide for safe driving on what are becoming known as pothole roads, to enter into negotiations with SARM and SUMA for a longer-term plan of rural road restitution reflecting the future needs, and to provide safety for all drivers as the new trucking regulations change safety factors on these roads.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these folks of course form the community of Ponteix as well as from Aneroid, and I'm happy to present it on their behalf.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order the petitions presented at the last sitting have been reviewed and found to be in order. Pursuant to rule 12(7) these petitions are hereby received.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 13 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Justice: have the reports recommended by the jury in the Laurie Jean Mathiason coroner's inquest been completed, and if so, will you release them publicly; and if not, when will they be completed and released?

I so present.

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 13 ask the government the following question.

To the Minister of Finance: how much money is lost in revenue for each 1 per cent removed from the PST, from 7 per cent, for example, to 6 per cent; how much money would be lost to RMs and towns if property taxes for education were reduced 10 per cent and capped; if all the education tax on farmland were eliminated, how much would be involved; has there been any recent research into replacing this tax or returning to the 60/40 formula of the past where governments put up 60 per cent of education tax and property tax produced the 40 per cent; have SUMA and SARM offered suggestions of alternatives to replace these taxes; if so, what are they?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 29 men and women of the public service. These men and women, Mr. Speaker, offer us technical advice, provide support and assist with consultations on a public basis, and they respond to questions that members opposite might have.

Mr. Speaker, they are from the departments of Justice, Environment and Resource Management, the ecosystems branch, Women's Secretariat, Finance, the Lieutenant Governor's Office, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs and Protocol, Executive Council, Post-Secondary Education, and Liquor and Gaming Authority.

Mr. Speaker, they will be attending the question period time frame and then going on a tour of the building, but also the Legislative Library and what is offered there, and briefed by the Legislative Assembly and other interesting items on their itinerary this afternoon.

I would ask all members to join me in giving a warm welcome to the men and women of the public service.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a number of acquaintances sitting in your gallery, from three of the educational partners here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Representing the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, the SSTA, I see president Debbie Ward, Craig Melvin, and Ardith Stephanson. From the STF, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Doug Willard and Derwyn Crozier-Smith and Jens Nielson. And also from LEADS, the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents, I see Jim Hopson, president.

I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that I think right at the very beginning of his teaching career the president of the STF, Doug Willard, was on the staff of the same school division that I was. So acquaintances from just a few years ago.

And I also note that the current president of LEADS was also the superintendent of Sturgis school division, then becoming Timberline, and now of course part of Crystal Lake, also in my current constituency.

I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these people to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, I too want to advise the Assembly of my special guests who are sitting in your gallery this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, they're here for two purposes. One is to observe the performance of the members in the House today and to evaluate their behaviour, Mr. Speaker. And secondly, they'll be here as well to participate in the public dialogue on the role of the school which we'll be announcing later today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like for the individual members if they might just rise when I introduce them so that we could on one more occasion recognize their presence here today.

Ms. Deb Ward who is the president of the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association; Mr. Craig Melvin who's the SSTA executive director; and Ardith Stephanson who's the SSTA information and communications officer; and of course, Mr. Doug Willard who's the president of the STF; also Mr. Derwyn Crozier-Smith who's the general secretary; and Mr. Jens Nielson who's the editor with the *Bulletin*; and from the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents, Mr. Jim Hopson.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly on one more occasion to welcome them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly I'd like to introduce two special guests that we have in the gallery, in your gallery today. Mr. Milt Wakefield, if he would stand please. Milt was a grain commissioner with the Canadian Grain Commission and is now the Saskatchewan Party candidate for Lloydminster and soon to be the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly).

Also, Mr. Speaker, in your gallery we have Don McMorris. Don farms in the Lewvan area and is a Saskatchewan Party candidate for the Indian Head-Milestone, and will soon be the MLA in that area. And I'd like everyone to welcome them to this Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too on behalf of the Liberal caucus would like to welcome our friends here that are involved in the educating field looking after many of our young people across the province — which of course are the

next folks that will be sitting in here so I hope that their visit to the legislature today is an enlightening one — and are meeting with the minister.

Also, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet I too would like to welcome the people here that work for the Public Service Commission. Hope that they enjoy the proceedings here today and look forward to meeting with some of them over the next few years. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Scott: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce three guests sitting in your gallery. I also would like to welcome the very hard-working and dedicated SERM (Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management) employees in your Speaker's gallery as well.

We have with us today, and I'll ask them to stand, Amanda Kerluke from Wadena; Jolene Chisholm from Fox Valley; and Lindsay Adam from Eastend. These three young ladies are attending Luther College here in Regina and wanted to come down to see how things are run in the legislature, Mr. Speaker. And I'd ask all members to welcome them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just couldn't let this opportunity go by on behalf of my seat mate and I to say a special welcome to Mr. Jim Hopson, seated in the Speaker's gallery. Jim is currently director of education at Buffalo Plains and we taught together for many, many years. And it's a real pleasure to see him here. Welcome, Jim. Thanks.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce a couple of young men who are future leaders in this province of ours and I'm pleased that they've taken the interest to come and watch the proceedings here in the Assembly. They're seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Shaun McEachern and Chris Shauf. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome them here, our future leaders.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Meeting Regarding Hafford Health Care Centre

Mr. Jess: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like the member from Carrot River Valley, I want to thank the Tories for hosting a meeting last night in my home town of Hafford so that I could discuss the new, improved Hafford primary health care centre with the 70 people who attended.

My Tory opponent in Redberry Lake came over from Rosetown-Biggar constituency to chair the meeting. The drive was so long that he forgot to bring the coffee and doughnuts.

Mr. Hermanson was there trying to explain why he would freeze the health budget and halt improvements in services and facilities as we now have in Hafford. I am sorry he received no

applause for his comments, but I guess people were mad about the doughnuts. He did say that he doesn't understand primary health care. It was explained to him.

I was there, and said once again, that we are committed to improving health services in all of Saskatchewan, urban and rural, and that we have backed the commitment with \$1.7 billion, and then added an additional 69.4 million to hire 200 nurses and improve our other services.

No Liberals were there, Mr. Speaker. Pity.

At the end of the meeting the Tories proposed a motion criticizing the government's management of health care — 10 of 70 voted for that motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Impaired Driving Awareness Week

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise on behalf of the official opposition in recognition of Impaired Driving Awareness Week. Organizations such as Mothers Against Drinking Drivers, MADD, and Students Against Drinking and Driving, SADD, are committed to the ongoing fight and the battle against drunk driving and raising awareness of the dire implications involved when someone under the influence of alcohol gets behind the wheel of a car.

Mr. Speaker, over the years many people have died due to drinking and driving. And in most cases, Mr. Speaker, it is not the drunk driver that is harmed, it is the innocent bystander that is hurt.

Mr. Speaker, it is crucial that we as elected officials get the message out there to our youth that you do not need to drink to have a good time, but if you do, there are designated driver programs in place to keep all of us safe from senseless harm.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tourism Saskatchewan's Awards of Excellence

Mr. Johnson: — Mr. Speaker, in the province of Saskatchewan tourism is big business and expanding every year. Tourism is the fastest growing economic sector in the province. Tourism employs thousands of people throughout the province.

Last Friday, Tourism Saskatchewan hosted its annual awards of excellence banquet and ceremonies at Queensbury Centre in Regina. Nineteen awards were presented; time prevents me from mentioning them individually.

But the important fact is that this evening, Mr. Speaker, is that there were 125 nominees and 54 finalists for the judges to choose from — a daunting task. This many worthy contestants is living proof of the vitality of an importance of tourism to the province of Saskatchewan. As word gets around and as the world's older tourist destinations become more and more stale, tourism in Saskatchewan can only grow.

My congratulations and appreciation to each contestant and each award winner.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Deputy Premier

Mr. Aldridge: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier can't seem to get no satisfaction these days. As time goes by, more and more details emerge about not only his travel but his cultural tastes as well.

We see where the Deputy Premier got six tickets to the Rolling Stones' "Bridges to Babylon" tour from Labatts. Now tell me, did he skip the "Steel Wheels" tour because of our state of our highways in the province?

Well I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if wild horses couldn't drag him away from such an event, but I'm sure he had mixed emotions about missing the world's greatest rock and roll band. After all, at his age, time is not on his side, Mr. Speaker.

In this Chamber the Deputy Premier, Mr. Speaker, has a reputation for being a street-fighting man for his ability to paint it black — such items as flying his family to Alaska for a western governors' conference when it would have been cheaper to fly commercially.

However, when the whip comes down, there's remarkably little difference between the Deputy Premier and his predecessors in the Tories. Meet the new boss, same as the old boss.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

1999 Cadet Honour Band

Mr. Flavel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is two statements for the price of one.

The member from Yorkton and I both have constituents who have been selected as part of the 100 candidates chosen from the 210 sea, army, and air cadets across the Prairies. And they were chosen to be members of the 1999 Cadet Honour Band of the prairie region. I have the honour of announcing both of them.

Brett Wlock from Yorkton plays the trombone and is a member of 17 Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron in Yorkton. His proud parents are Marg and Bernie Wlock.

In my constituency, Salina Perry from Wishart has also been chosen. Salina, who plays flute, is a member of 542 Foam Lake Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron. Her parents are Marie and Lorne Perry.

This Cadet Honour Band of prairie region will give concerts this summer in Calgary, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Thunder Bay, enabling the cadets from Saskatchewan to experience more of this great country.

The member from Yorkton and I congratulate Brett and Salina

and all band members, and wish them a successful and musical summer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Canada Winter Games Gold Medal Winner

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again the town of Biggar has bragging rights to claim yet another champion. You've heard me speak about Sandra Schmirler, the Hanson Buck, and the 1999 Provincial Girls Curling Champions.

Today I'd like to tell you about the most recent addition to this long line of champions. Mr. Speaker, Barry MacDonald is a young man who travelled to this year's Canada Winter Games in Cornerbrook to compete amongst Canada's best pistol shooters. At 17 years of age, he's returned home with a gold medal.

He and teammate Philip Mooney of Regina Coronation Park competed in the team pistol event. Together the pair ignored the pressure of a national spotlight and strove toward winning gold in their event. This is especially remarkable as this was Barry's first national competition after only two years of experience to guide him.

With this impressive showing, Barry might just become Biggar's next Olympic champion, and what a fine addition to this ever-increasing list of greats.

I want to congratulate Barry MacDonald on his gold medal in the team pistol event of the 1999 Canada Winter Games. This is certainly an exciting start to what will certainly become a long, successful career of one of our young champions. Once again, congratulations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Battlefords Health District

Ms. Murrell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health care, Mr. Speaker, is a concern to all of us at some point in our lives. And lately rural areas are often incited to fear by opposition rhetoric. But in the Battlefords, the health district quietly goes about dealing with the needs of area residents.

The Battlefords Health District is home to a number of general practitioners, specialists, and psychiatrists who provide full-time service in the district. In addition, 11 visiting specialists from Saskatoon attend The Battlefords Health District on a regular basis. These 11 specialists help round out the scope of services the district provides.

Health care services are an ongoing priority of The Battlefords Health District, and the district will continue to ensure area residents have access to the services and the specialists that they most need.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Charity Foundations

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier.

Mr. Premier, a number of your past and present NDP (New Democratic Party) MLAs paid their MLA allowances into charity foundations set up to benefit the NDP. They then overcharged taxpayers, they filed unaudited financial statements, and then they disappeared with money in the bank and no record of where that money went.

Mr. Premier, did any of this money ever go to the NDP?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I find it a little surprising, after what's been happening the last five years with these members and the Tory caucus, that they would raise this issue.

But I just want to say, and compare the record if I could, in three main ways.

First of all, in the report he refers to in today's *Leader-Post*, Mark Wyatt says: "There is no suggestion of any politician involved benefited from their allowances."

So I want to make that very clear.

Secondly, as far as we can see from the record, every invoice that members issued and received for office . . . were for real office equipment, for real offices, and real utilities. And, I would add, at fair market price. And I want to say to you, sir, compare that with your former colleagues in the Tory caucus as to what they did and their invoices, because they're publicly documented.

Mr. Speaker, the third main point I want to make is that after almost 20 years this company had accumulated \$500 a year. And what did they do with the money? They gave every penny of it to a scholarship fund.

I say compare that with the thousand dollar bills — the thousand dollar bills that your caucus . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, my question again is for the Premier. For the last four or five years I along with a number of people in Saskatchewan — I'm sure a majority of the people in Saskatchewan — have watched the various trials that have come forward. We've watched the Tory MLAs and we've watched the NDP MLA, for I believe Quill Lakes, found guilty of inappropriate action. And I, as a member of Saskatchewan . . . as a politician in this province, am appalled at the behaviour entrusted in those MLAs.

The question I asked of the minister is, Mr. Speaker: did the

MLA receive . . . did the NDP receive any monies from the trust foundations?

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Before permitting the Deputy Premier to respond to the question, I want to remind all hon. members that question period requires that questions are put to ministers for responsibilities charged to them in their ministerial capacity. And I will allow the Deputy Premier to respond, but I want to caution that the rules for question period must be followed.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate actually the opportunity to answer this question. Because what amazes me is that member was so upset with the Tories, that in the dead of night he crawled across the floor and joined them, and joined them. Amazing disparity in truth. A very ethical move by you, sir, very ethical, that in the dark of night you crawled across the floor and joined the Tories and sit in the front benches and defend them.

If you have any allegations of wrongdoing, any allegations, let me challenge you to this. You know the process better than anyone else, being part of the Tory caucus. You have lots of experience. You know the process. I just tell you, you know the process. Turn around and ask the former leader of the Tories, he's sitting right behind you, what the process is if you have any allegations of wrongdoing.

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the affairs of this province are in the hands of the Premier, and my questions are directed to the Premier. In the ruling against Eric Berntson, Justice Gerein made the following statement about MLA allowances. I quote:

The allowances were three in number and each had a specific purpose. Again, no money was to be spent in the furtherance of a partisan political purpose.

Let me repeat that last statement:

. . . no money was to be spent in the furtherance of a partisan political purpose.

These two foundations were run by the NDP. The membership was open to members of the NDP, and upon dissolution, any surplus was to be turned over to the NDP. That sounds like partisan political purpose to me.

Mr. Premier, do you feel these payments were appropriate? Did any money from NDP MLA allowances ever go to the NDP?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — I say again to the member, and I want to be clear, that as far as we can see from the records, members were properly invoiced for real offices, for real equipment, and for real utilities, and nothing else. And I say again, over a 20-year period, about 20 years, \$500 a year was accumulated on average for a total surplus of about \$10,000 after 20 years.

Now I know you don't understand surplus, being a Tory. You would have expected a deficit. But I can say that all of that surplus was given to a scholarship fund, was given to a scholarship fund to be used by young people.

Compare that with your record, the thousands of dollars, thousand dollar bills being shuffled around at some desk in some backroom . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You weren't there. I understand that. What amazes me though is that you, sir, crawling on the floor at night across the floor, yes, in the dark of night, slithering to join the Tories.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Now I'll want to remind the Deputy Premier that language used in the House should be appropriate to parliamentary debate and I think his last reference goes beyond those bounds and I'll ask him to withdraw that remark.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the remarks that were offensive to the member.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, the problem is we have a number of different stories. The member for Churchill Downs says there was no surplus. The foundation treasurer who works for the NDP says, there was a surplus but she doesn't know how much it was. The articles of incorporation say the surplus was supposed to go to the NDP and the Clerk of the Assembly says there wasn't supposed to be a surplus in the first place. So did Justice Gerein.

But there's a very simple solution, Mr. Premier. Open the books. Your member for Churchill Downs is sitting right there. The foundation treasurer works in the NDP office. Will you ask them to open the books of this NDP charity foundation so taxpayers can see if any illegal payments went to the NDP?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — I say again to the member opposite, if you have any suggestion or allegation that there's any impropriety here, none of which has been shown in the report in today's *Leader-Post*; in fact quite the opposite — I quote again Mr. Mark Wyatt saying: "There's no suggestion any of the politicians involved benefited from their allowances."

I say to the member opposite, every year the statements were filed by the company and on dissolution, the final disposition of the money is there for the public to see. The \$10,000 and some change went, every penny of it, to a scholarship fund to help young people.

I say, compare that to the record — and I understand why you want to throw mud around, it's election time — but what surprises me is that you're the individual who chooses to defend Berntson and company today here in the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, we have some conflicting stories out of other NDP charity foundations. Mr. Tchorzewski says there were no illegal surpluses; but the foundation's own financial statements say that there were. Mr. Tchorzewski also says the foundation made donations on his behalf; but he can't remember who received those donations.

Who got those donations, Mr. Premier? Was it the NDP? Mr. Premier, the NDP member for Coronation Park was part of that until he bailed out and took \$1,400 of the illegal surplus with

him. Will you ask him to open the books so taxpayers can see if any of the money went to the NDP?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, there's not a shred of evidence, not a shred of evidence that the member is putting out here that's there's any wrongdoing by any member at this time. There is no evidence. What surprises me a little bit — maybe shouldn't — is that these people, in doing what they're doing today, dealing with and defending the accounts of the former Tories are admitting that they're not doing well as we approach the next election.

This is the hockey team that's five points behind with two minutes left to play. The gloves come off, they can't win. Let's get on the ice and see if we can make them sore and bitter when they go home. We can't win the game but let's see how much damage we can do to them before we lose the game. Well you're going to lose the game.

And I advise you that talking of accounts of former Tories, if that's your strategy for the next election, go ahead and talk about it. But I tell you one thing that, if you have allegations, you have members in your caucus who have lots of experience of what to do with that information.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has obtained a copy of the North Broad Community Foundation's financial returns. The statements show that from 1985 to 1988 the corporation filed unaudited financial statements. This NDP charity foundation collected more than \$100,000 in taxpayers' money from NDP MLA expense accounts. And they didn't think it was necessary to do an audit.

Mr. Premier, is that appropriate? Will you clear the air by asking your members to open the books and table all the financial records?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — I must say on behalf of my members and my friends who have been in the caucus, I have no trouble saying to you very clearly that they will defend their record. The documents are clear on the way their money was appropriated.

What I don't understand is how you who have to defend former Tories are going to be able to carry out that task. I think I'd choose mine far quicker than yours because there isn't a shred of evidence — isn't a shred of evidence — of wrongdoing that I have or anyone in this caucus has. And if you have any evidence, you obviously have the experience to know what to do.

I have here a clipping from the *Leader-Post* of August 12, '97 — "Sask Party names interim leader" — and there's a smiling face of the individual who's asking the questions. In it he says: "meanwhile Krawetz said he welcomes the endorsement of people like former premier Grant Devine and former cabinet minister, Grant Schmidt", and you might as well have gone on to say former deputy premier, Berntson, and the rest of the Tory

crew.

I can tell you, sir, that the people who have been involved in these companies that rented office and office equipment are . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the records also show some of that hundred thousand dollars was spent on some very questionable expenses. Over \$15,000 went to sundry; nearly \$10,000 went to miscellaneous; another \$8,000 went to travel; that . . . on top of \$2,300 that went to donations.

Mr. Premier, sundry, miscellaneous, travel, and donations were not allowable expenses under the MLA office allowance. And over \$35,000 went into these categories.

Mr. Premier, where exactly did this money go? Did any of it go to the NDP? Will you clear the air and release all the financial records of these NDP charity foundations?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Let me say to the member opposite, again, that all of the processes that were followed were accurate and followed the rules of the Legislative Assembly.

At that time everyone admits, and we all admit that when the McDowell committee and commission was set up to improve the reporting, that changes were made in order to make the issues more accountable and make the accounting more principled and we're all involved in that.

But I say to the member opposite, again, there isn't any evidence that any wrongdoing or any allegations of wrongdoing at this time or any other time. Even the *Leader-Post*, even the Black newspaper, admits and says very clearly that there are no allegations of wrongdoing.

To the member opposite I want to say to you very clearly, seems a little strange when you're defending the record of Mr. Berntson and other people who you need to defend, that you would cast aspersions here in the Assembly and not outside the Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Staffing in Health Care Sector

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year the Health minister declared herself surprised when the nursing shortage forced the closure of 64 hospital beds in Regina. However this government could have avoided this situation by opening up 36 spots for practical nursing students at SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) Wascana Campus for people on waiting lists, and 12 spots for nursing education programs of Saskatchewan for people on waiting lists for that program.

This government, Mr. Speaker, has shown since 1991 that there would be a nursing shortage and has done everything to

encourage it, including shutting off access to nursing programs and laying off nurses.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister immediately open up access to those programs for those students waiting to take those courses, and help to alleviate the nursing shortage which is of the government's own doing?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What's happening now is that we are preparing a long-term strategy to address the issues of recruitment and retention in the health sector that includes nurses, licensed practical nurses, therapists, and all the other health providers that we are going to look at in our health strategy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLane: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this associate minister was the Vice-Chair of the province's Health Human Resource Committee, and she was talking about the impending nurse shortage.

This very person, Mr. Speaker, knew about it and now she's talking about a long-term strategy, and that was seven years ago. Why then, when the associate minister knew about this, why does the government continue to allow nursing students to while away on yet another NDP waiting list, when you can open up these spots and let those people get the education to fill the jobs that we so desperately need in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said before, what we're doing is looking at a long-term strategy that we can address all the needs in the health sector which definitely were identified with the Health Human Resources Provider Committee that I was Vice-Chair of.

And this is something that takes long-term planning. You can't throw money at it. You have to actually have sustainable programs and strategies to address these large issues.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLane: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we need the nurses now. You talk about a long-term strategy, Mr. Speaker, let's hear about it. Will the Minister commit today that she's going to open up those positions to fill the vacancies that we need in the nursing shortage in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What has happened last year in the nursing program is there were spots added to address the people that were interested in the program. So we have added spots.

We will continue to look at what we need in this province to address all our health needs in all the provider groups.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Expenditures by Department of Agriculture

Mr. Aldridge: — Mr. Speaker, my question's for the Minister of Agriculture. Apparently the minister likes to do a lot of flying by the seat of his pants when it comes to dealing with the best interests of Saskatchewan farmers.

I'm wondering why the minister rang up a total out of province flying bill of over \$68,000 in '97-98; and in the latest year, he's already rung up an air travel bill of over \$45,000.

In his travels to places such as Brazil, Mr. Speaker, Chile, Mexico, Indianapolis, China, and points in between, there's usually a group of hacks and flacks to carry his bags through those busy airports, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, why is the Minister of Agriculture worried about falling behind the Deputy Premier in cabinet's frequent flyer race instead of trying to do his best to save the money to provide for the priorities of Saskatchewan people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Bradley: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think in response to that, we know that we've got extremely productive producers and farmers in this province; that we have a Minister of Agriculture that is certainly going to do his job whether it be in Ottawa, but in other places also. We've got export markets that are extremely important to the producers of this province and that is what our Minister of Agriculture is doing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Aldridge: — Mr. Speaker, the flavour of the month in Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food seems to be pork. But we're not talking about the four-legged variety. It appears the operating costs of the communications branch of the Department of Agriculture for the last two years has gone up from 1.2 million in '96-97 to 1.3 million in '97-98 — those are the last two available years for which we have the figures.

Mr. Speaker, how can this minister reconcile his government's promise to slash government advertising and communications eight years ago while doing his very best to increase them? Aren't there any farmers out there that you could help with that almost \$100,000 increase in propaganda?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Bradley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I first want to say that a number of the trips that the Minister of Agriculture has taken has been at the invitation of the federal government in order to promote agriculture in our province.

But also, it seems interesting to me that when we get the opposition saying if we're putting dollars into agriculture — that's what we are doing. We spend five times as much per capita as any other province or the federal government on agriculture programs. Certainly the producers need to know about those programs in which we feel we have to communicate those to the farmers of this province. We have over 60,000 farmers; it certainly is a priority for our government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SaskEnergy Policy Regarding Termination of Service

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions this afternoon are for the minister responsible for SaskEnergy.

Mr. Minister, a few days ago, 39-year-old Mr. Richard Wayne Bird died in a house fire in Regina. SaskEnergy had cut off the natural gas to Mr. Bird's house because he hadn't paid his bill. To stay warm, Mr. Bird apparently turned on the stove and the oven and went to bed. Firefighters believe the heat from the stove started the fire that killed Mr. Bird.

Mr. Minister, what is the policy of SaskEnergy when it comes to cutting off natural gas supplies to customers for nonpayment in the middle of the winter?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member opposite that the difficult situation that he refers to, and I want to extend sympathy to any members of Mr. Bird's family. But obviously it's a serious issue when the utility companies deal with billing and the issue of collection.

I want to say as well that the tragic loss here, I think the member does not want to make the step of assuming that this is the responsibility or cause of a utility bill not being paid because obviously there are many, many grey areas when it comes to the issue of billing and companies, and only as a last resort do SaskEnergy cut off members of the public and only after many, many other approaches are taken to collect.

Now I'm not sure if the member is saying that in this case there should have been a different approach but what I would ask him is that we allow the process to go forward in this case. There is a review going on at the present time and I want to be very, very clear to members opposite that the utilities in this province are second to none by comparison with lenience as it would relate to cutting off . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Next question.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, in Saskatchewan we have from time to time some very harsh winters. And everyone recognizes that shelter is extremely important and heat supplies, electricity, natural gas are important in Saskatchewan, perhaps more important than anywhere in western Canada, or as important certainly.

What we are asking for is from SaskEnergy and from you as minister responsible, is what the policy is with regard to this. Is it for non-payment the utility is just simply cut off or is there an extended period or is it the policy to not turn off supplies unless payment is rendered within a certain period of time?

We're simply asking what the policy is so that the people of Saskatchewan are well aware of the extent that they can expect services from the utilities of this province.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I don't want to get into the details of the situation as the member will obviously understand, because I think it's important to know that there is

an issue of privacy. But the concerns that he raises here are obviously legitimate ones.

But the fact of the matter is that the corporations that we own in this province, when compared against any other corporations, have policy as it would relate to disconnect, that are very, very lenient. And it's only as a last resort, and after all other avenues are explored, that the energy source would be shut off.

In the case of SaskPower of course, the energy source to run furnaces at no time during the winter period will be shut off. There's in effect a policy that would allow enough power to run the furnace and other appliances in the house.

But I want to say to the member opposite that I think it's important to know that the corporations that we manage and operate and own in this province are particularly lenient as it would relate to cutting off services.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Role of Schools in Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to rise in the House this afternoon in my capacity as the Minister of Education.

Together with our partners in education who I introduced a few moments ago, we're announcing a public dialogue on our society's changing expectations about the role of the school.

For more than a century now our schools in Saskatchewan have served us very well and continue to serve us very well, but the role of the school has in fact changed. Teachers and boards of education are increasingly being challenged to meet society's growing expectations for our schools. This afternoon, Mr. Speaker, one-fifth of the province's population is at school. That is where they are, that is where they should be, and that is where their education needs to be best met.

But many students are in school hungry, neglected, or abused in some way and that makes learning very difficult. Our schools must now deal with many special challenges. Children that are living in poverty, teenage pregnancy, and young offenders in our school to name a few.

We're also challenged to respond to the unique cultural needs of a rapidly increasing number of Indian and Metis students in our schools. All of these youngsters have the right to a high-quality education and the future of our province depends on us fulfilling their potential in becoming contributing citizens.

Mr. Speaker, very much good work has already been initiated like Saskatchewan's action plan for children, like our community schools program in intercity neighbourhoods and northern community schools, and like our integrated services project such as the one I've been able to visit at the Nutana Collegiate in Saskatoon.

But more needs to be done. First, we need to engage the public and other stakeholders in a meaningful dialogue about society's

changing expectations of our schools.

Second, we must develop shared understanding about how best to meet the needs of Saskatchewan children in a coordinated way.

And third, we need to seek a broad consensus of what we can reasonably expect from our schools and what they can expect from our communities and our families and other human service sectors.

Mr. Speaker, in the future I will be appointing a committee of five to nine members to undertake this task. The committee will be asked to prepare an interim report by June of the year 2000. It will then engage in further public discussion on the basis of an interim report in order to submit its final report by December 31 of the year 2000.

In conclusion, let me make one point very clear. While it is true that we have increasing, complex social problems presenting themselves in our classrooms across the province, the school alone cannot solve these problems. Just as it takes a whole village to educate a child, so too does it take a whole community to support a school. The education system by itself cannot resolve these issues nor can the government alone dictate shared responsibility or legislative consensus.

What we can do, however, is provide the necessary leadership and support so that we can address and resolve these issues together. I ask, Mr. Speaker, all members of the House to support this initiative to help improve a world-class education to be the best not only in Saskatchewan but to allow our students to participate in global opportunities in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to commend the partners in education for this initiative. I know that the problems that teachers and trustees and school boards face is not one that has just surfaced. It is one that has been around for a while, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to read to you one quotation, and it says this. It says:

Schools and other agencies that serve youth must find new ways to work together. Some of these new ways might occur within existing organizational structures, others might require shifting or elimination of organizational boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, that quotation is from a document called the *Integrated School-Based Services* back from 1992. And another comment in the . . . a document from that very same period of time says:

Schools aren't structured to deal with all the diverse needs of children.

And if there's one thing I've heard from teachers across this province, Mr. Speaker, is that schools are expected to do more. So many more students come into the school and have very, very diverse needs and it is the school that must handle those

problems.

And I wish that the project that has been put forward today by the minister, I wish this project tremendous success. But you know, Mr. Speaker, I look at the time line that the minister has put in place, and I note that the final report is not going to occur until December 31, 2000. That's almost two years away.

Schools need help now. And they don't just need verbal commitment, the commitments that we saw from government agencies back in 1991-92, and then we saw a non-financial support of school divisions. We need to ensure that school divisions receive the financial support to put in place, to put in place, all of those kinds of recommendations that will be for the betterment of students.

I want to congratulate the minister on this initiative. I think it's an initiative that all people — parents, students, teachers, trustees — look forward to and I hope that this project can be moved forward rather than into the new millennium.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would too congratulate the Department of Education and the minister and the educational partners here today and those other ones that will be involved in the process. We certainly know that any initiative that will turn the course of events that have happened across the province in education to better reflect the needs of the students are a welcome one.

I will caution the minister, and I guess I will challenge him that given his government's background, his government's history in making commitments to hear what people have to say and then in the final result totally ignoring them, certainly I hope that this is not the case here.

(1430)

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that the minister ensure, and I know the educational partners will certainly see that the process is adhered to, and a meaningful one, but in the end it will be upon the government's shoulders to implement the recommendations of the people of the province that are involved in education. And I challenge the minister, and we will be watching to see that that does happen, and hopefully for the sake of our kids that are in school today and tomorrow and next year, that this process will have some meaningful results in the end. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, in the tradition established by this government to return written questions in a timely and accurate fashion, I'm pleased to submit question no. 1, and with leave of the Assembly to also submit simultaneously the answers to written questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, all

the way to 13, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

The Speaker: — The responses to all of the questions 1 through 13 are provided.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Mr. Kasperski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to resume my participation in this Throne Speech debate. As members will recall yesterday at the end of the day, I was talking a little bit about the makeup and composition of my constituency, Regina Sherwood, and the areas that are in my constituency those being the Dieppe Community Association, Rosemont-Mount Royal, Prairieview, Normanview West, Normanview, Sherwood Estates, McCarthy Park and Walsh Acres.

And I talked a little bit yesterday, Mr. Speaker, as well about the strong community spirit and volunteer ethic we have in my area. And this is very much exemplified by the strong participation in our local community associations.

I talked a little bit as well about the volunteer wall of fame in the Normanview Shopping Centre in my area and the annual activities and nominations that take place surrounding that.

I did neglect, and I'd like to take just a second to congratulate two young members of my constituency. They are Tracey Mucha and Amanda Snell. Mr. Speaker, these young women were on the bronze medal winning team of the Saskatchewan Ringette team at the recent Canada Games and certainly all of us are very proud that the team did so well.

Ringette, in the northwest part of the city, has been an active sports association for a number of years and there is no doubt why a team with representatives on it from my area of the city could have done well because this association has a long history in our area.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn next to a little bit broader view in my remarks and talk somewhat now about the city of Regina. Members will recall that yesterday I gave a member's statement on a breakfast meeting that took place on Monday morning of this week, sponsored by the Regina regional economic development authority.

And this breakfast meeting had representatives of the Canada Conference Board, who provided a very interesting and informative presentation on the economic outlook, not only of the city of Regina but also of the province and of global trends.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to maybe get back to some of those remarks and expand upon the remarks that I started in my member's statement on this. Mr. Speaker, I'd first of all maybe

like to quote and read from a press release issued by the Regina Regional Economic Development Authority yesterday about this breakfast meeting on Monday.

And it says . . . it goes under the title, Mr. Speaker, "Regina's economy hot", March 22, 1999 and I quote:

"1998 was a stellar year for Regina with the city recording its best economic growth in over a decade," said Marty Klyne, president and chief operating officer of the Regina Regional Economic Development Authority.

According to Louis Theriault, senior research associate and author of The Conference Board of Canada's, *Metropolitan Outlook*, and I quote again:

The strong activity in construction, commercial services, and wholesale and retail sales pushed Regina into second place in the nation in terms of best overall gross domestic product, that is GDP, just behind Calgary and just ahead of Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Winnipeg, and Edmonton.

And quoting more from the press release, Mr. Speaker:

Regina and Calgary shared top spot for employment and growth in the country in 1998. Nearly 6,000 new jobs were created in Regina, an increase of 5.6 per cent from 1997. The strong job growth was led by new jobs in management, administrative and other support, health care, social assistance and the professional, scientific, and technical service sectors.

Housing starts, Mr. Speaker, increased by nearly 5 per cent with the largest increase coming from single detached homes which recorded growth of 26 per cent, second only to Calgary.

Retail sales continued their upward swing with a 6 per cent increase in 1998 over 1997. Regina's retail sales growth was second highest in western Canada and fourth highest in the country.

Latest figures, Mr. Speaker, from The Conference Board of Canada point to another good year in 1999 for the Regina region with continued growth in GDP, employment, and retail sales.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to go into detail in the press release and this breakfast from the other day . . . presentation by The Conference Board of Canada, to counteract some statements that have been coming from members opposite talking about the dismal behaviour of our economy and the mistaken impression many of our citizens that might get their . . . out there might get about the statistics that members opposite are bringing up. I trust much more the judgement and expertise of the professionals of the Canada Conference Board more than I do about members opposite when it comes to interpreting economic statistics.

Mr. Speaker, talking a little bit more about this breakfast I was at — and I would like to point out that there were a number of us from the government side who were at this breakfast luncheon: my colleagues, the hon. member representing Coronation Park, also Regina South, the minister responsible

for Sask Liquor and Gaming and the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, and the Minister of Labour were all in attendance at this very informative luncheon, as well as many civic leaders from Regina and surrounding municipalities and communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to maybe at this point talk a little bit about the Regina economic development authority. As a sub-share of our government caucus we have a group . . . we have a Regina caucus that meets on a regular basis, and for the last year and a half or so it's been my honour and privilege to be the Chair of the Regina caucus. And it's also my privilege to point out to our listeners out there, our viewers, that here in Regina, of the 11 constituencies, we are all represented on the government side of the House here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — And we have very close and regular contact with a variety of organizations at the municipal level, one being the Regina Regional Economic Development Authority.

Mr. Speaker, this is a group that just a year ago was still known as REDA, that is Regina economic development authority. About a year ago the RM (rural municipality) of Sherwood joined together into the organization and they expanded the name to what we call RREDa or Regina Regional Economic Development Authority. And Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that since that took place a few months back, that the RMs of Lumsden, Edenwold, and McKillop, and also the towns and villages of Grand Coulee, Lumsden, Pilot Butte, Regina Beach, Southey, Strasbourg, on to White City, have all joined together and are part of the Regina Regional Economic Development Authority.

And I'd like to first of all on behalf of all my colleagues, commend the work and effort of RREDa as we call it, and what they do here in the city for economic — city and area — for economic development, and certainly for the breakfasts and other activities they sponsor, the most recent being this one we attended with the Canada Conference Board on Monday morning of this week.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also maybe like to go into some of the details that were brought to our attention by The Conference Board of Canada at this breakfast. The presentations which took place revolved around three major areas. The presentations talked about global and national trends and their effect on Saskatchewan; the presentation talked about the provincial economy and basic provincial trends; and then there was a specific section on the city of Regina or the metropolitan outlook for the city of Regina.

And this point I'd maybe like to talk about some of the provincial trends that were talked about in this presentation. And, Mr. Speaker, it was very interesting and I pointed out I talked a little bit earlier about what this seminar pointed out for The Conference Board of Canada as opposed to some of the statistics that have been coming to us on economic activity here in the province from members opposite. And one of the first things that came out of this was a chart and graph, Mr. Speaker, on real disposable income growth in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in 1996 real disposable income growth in Saskatchewan grew by 11 per cent, a huge increase by any standards considering that it was 2 or 3 per cent the year before. That was the year in 1996. In any economic terms, this would be considered a spike up, Mr. Speaker. That was 1996.

In 1997, there was a decrease of 11 per cent in real disposable income growth in Saskatchewan. Again, in economic terms, that would be considered a very large spike and this time a spike down. Mr. Speaker, this is totally due to the payments under the western grain transportation transition payment which came into the economy in Saskatchewan's year in 1996 but were out of the economy in 1997. This resulted in a year-to-year difference of a change of 22 per cent.

All the statistics that have been raised by members opposite in talking about the economic trends in the performance of Saskatchewan take this spike, that is the difference where we have a 11 per cent increase in one year with a 11 per cent decrease the next. When that filtered through to the next year, 1997, they have taken an isolated, their statistics, to point out what they claim to be the dismal economic performance of this province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's just not true. There has still been real growth year after year here in Saskatchewan. The fact that you can take this spike caused totally by this western grain transportation transition payment which is no longer in the system, we are now back to a situation where we are on a trend of moderate growth. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it's pointed out that for the year 1999 and 2000 real disposable income in Saskatchewan should grow modestly, albeit, at 1.5 and 2 per cent.

But this cause of this spike that I talked about with the removal of the Crow rate and the payments that were taken out, this did cause some wild gyrations in our economic performance.

And I'd like to talk next about employment growth in the province. Mr. Speaker. Employment growth in Saskatchewan was up 2 per cent in 1995, it was up 1 per cent in 1996, up two and a half per cent in 1997, but only up 1 per cent in 1998. Again this is a direct cause of this change in real disposable income that I talked about earlier.

But employment growth is projected to be by the Conference Board to continue to grow at one to one and a half per cent in each of the next two years.

Mr. Speaker, it's still important to realize that this is always, and continues to be, growth upon growth. There has never been a negative growth in employment in Saskatchewan since the year 1992. And we can't forget that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — Who was in office before then?

Mr. Kasperski: — Yes, good question.

Mr. Speaker, this also shows up in retail sales and real GDP growth here in Saskatchewan. Retail sales in Saskatchewan in 1995 were up 5 per cent; in 1996, they were up 8 per cent;

1997, up 8 per cent; in 1998 in the province, they were up 1 per cent. Again, this was attributable by the payment of the Crow coming in and then going out.

Next year the retail sales are projected by the Conference Board to reach two and a half per cent in 1999 and an increase of almost 4 per cent in 2000. That is back to a situation of even, good growth — but still growth, Mr. Speaker. And again, there has been no decrease from one year to the next in retail sales in Saskatchewan . . . or drop in retail sales since the year 1991 in this case.

An Hon. Member: — And who was in office in '91 and before?

Mr. Kasperski: — Good question.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk one last area in this, and that is real GDP growth. Real GDP grew almost 4 per cent in Saskatchewan in 1996, 6 per cent in 1997, but only 1.9 per cent in 1998. Again, and I go back again, this is all attributable to that Crow rate benefit payment coming in and then not being in, in the year 1997.

So, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take a couple of minutes to explain to the members opposite and certainly clarify to our viewers and to my constituents and to the people of Saskatchewan that the statistics being used by the members — Statistics Canada — are very isolated. They take a worst case scenario in a very isolated window and use these to judge our performance by.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to point out that even many other institutions in this province do support this view, not only the Conference Board. I think many of us have heard of the Fraser Institute. This is not exactly an institute that is known to be a bastion of central or left-of-centre economics. But even the Fraser Institute today, as I understand, ranks us third in the province behind . . . or third in the country behind Alberta and behind Ontario in terms of economic performance and the way we handle our fiscal affairs.

So, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take a couple of minutes and explain to my constituents and to the people of the province a little bit about what . . . to rate this as a province to what I'm now going to focus in onto, that is, the performance here in the city of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, I chair the Regina caucus; it's a group that I'm very happy to . . . that we work to keep . . . maintain closer working relationships with municipal officials, and one of those organizations for sure being the Regina regional economic development authority. And out of this breakfast on Monday morning of this week, I have a number of highlights that were part of the report on the outlook for metropolitan Regina. And, Mr. Speaker, the activity going on here in the city of Regina will take me quite a long time to go through and I will ask members to bear with me a little bit because it is a great economic story, what's been taking place here.

The report divides the economic highlights into a general section first — highlights. I'll then go into new developments in the city of Regina, expansions, major events, future

developments, and infrastructure improvements. So, Mr. Speaker, with your kind forbearance and those of my colleagues here . . . It's a long list, and I hope you'll bear with me.

Mr. Speaker, the city of Regina removed 20 per cent of its business tax in 1998, another 40 per cent will be eliminated in 1999, and the remainder will be eliminated in the year 2000.

Regina recorded the best employment growth in over a decade in 1998. Total employment was up 5.6 per cent over 1997, or 5,700 new jobs. Regina and Calgary, as I said, shared the top spot for employment growth in the country in 1998. Regina's robust employment and growth was led by new jobs in business services; the category of other services, which includes amusement and recreation and tourism; and personal and household services; public administration; and health and social services.

Retail sales increased by 6 per cent in Regina in 1998 over the previous year — the second-highest growth in major prairie cities, second only to Calgary.

The value, Mr. Speaker, of building permits reached \$140 million in 1998, down from the near record levels achieved in 1997 at \$154 million but significantly higher than 1996. These levels have not been seen since the record levels of the mid-1980s. The city of Regina forecasts that the value of building permits in 1999 could set an all-time record, that is, exceeding \$200 million.

The value of building permits . . . Oh, sorry. Total housing starts in Regina were up nearly 5 per cent in 1998 over the previous year, with the largest increase coming from single detached homes which recorded a growth of 26 per cent.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that with the sale of each home there is on average approximately 13,000 in ancillary consumer expenditures such as moving costs, legal fees, improvements, etc.

The average residential selling price in Regina in 1998 increased to \$85,400 from 82,600 in 1997; an increase, Mr. Speaker, of 3.4 per cent. Real domestic product, that is GDP in Regina grew by 5.7 per cent in 1998 over 1997.

Regina experienced the second largest growth rate in 1998 of major prairie cities, slightly behind Calgary's 5.9 per cent.

Regina led the country in real GDP growth on a per capita basis in 1998 at 5.5 per cent over the previous year. Mr. Speaker, they led the country in that category.

Regina's labour force grew by 4.4 per cent in 1998, the second highest of the major prairie cities, and only slightly below that of Calgary at 4.8 per cent. Regina recorded the lowest unemployment rate of all major prairie cities, at 5.2 per cent in 1998, down from 6.2 per cent in 1997.

An Hon. Member: — Why is this happening?

Mr. Kasperski: — Somebody asks why this is happening. It's a very good question. We'll get at this a little later.

In July 1998, the Canadian Bond Rating Service reaffirmed Regina's AA-plus rating and ranked it among the seven most financially stable cities in Canada.

Regina had the second highest real personal disposable income per capita in 1998 of the major prairie cities, at \$18,468, compared to 19,400 in Calgary.

Mr. Speaker, in the categories of new developments here in the city of Regina, first there's Capital City Square. In April 1998, Home Depot officially opened its 130,000 square foot \$10 million location at the Capital City Square on Victoria Avenue East. Home Depot employs 200 full-time and part-time employees in Regina.

In October 1998, the Bank of Montreal opened up a 4,000 square foot new branch at Capital City Square. This branch, one of seven in Regina, will provide a full range of up-to-date banking services including a drive-through service and two automated teller machines. The Bank of Montreal employs approximately 100 employees here in the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker.

Also in the Capital City Square mall development, there is a Kelsey's, Grainfields, and A&W restaurants all open in that area in 1998.

Close to the Capital City Square there is the West Landing Mall, Mr. Speaker. Completed in 1998, this 40,000 square foot West Landing Mall in east Regina became home to retailers such as Rogers Video, The Wine Mine, 7-Eleven, Shoe Warehouse, Little Caesars Pizza, and the Sherwood Credit Union's newest location.

Plans for a new IGA store in the West Landing Mall were announced in January of 1998, and the proposed 3.5 million, 40,000 square foot building is scheduled to open February 25, 1999. The outlet will employ approximately 222 people.

An Hon. Member: — Where the MLA is.

Mr. Kasperski: — Well represented by the MLA of Regina Victoria.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — Mr. Speaker, at the Southland Mall in November of 1998, Jersey City opened a 4,300 square foot facility. Other developments at the Southland Mall included a Kelseys, Montana Steak House, Chapters, and Starbucks. And you know the old saying: you're not a city if you don't have a Starbucks — somebody told us that at a meeting the other day.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, other developments in this area . . . also other significant developments were \$45 million being spent by the Saskatchewan film industry in 1998 compared to 23.9 million spent in 1997.

Under the area of expansions here in the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker, we have in March 1998, the CIBC (Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce) announcing it had expanded the Regina telephone banking centre by 175 jobs since November 1997. It will add . . . CIBC plans to add 100 more positions . . . it added

100 more in the fall of 1998 to the extent that there are currently 400 full- and part-time employees at the CIBC Telephone Banking Centre here in the city.

In May of last year the Canadian Tire store in south Regina officially opened after completing a \$3.4 million renovation, expanding the store to 73,500 square feet. As a result of this expansion the Canadian Tire south added 40 employees bringing the total employment to about 135.

In September of last year, Mr. Speaker, Con-Force Structures Ltd. opened their new \$1 million dry-cast operation in their Regina plant. Con-Force has offices and manufacturing plants in Regina, Vancouver, Calgary, and Winnipeg. The Regina region's reputation for innovation and its central location to markets tip the scale in face of . . . having this expansion take place in the city of Regina.

As well, Mr. Speaker, in October 1998, the Northgate Mall officially reopened following a \$13.6 million expansion project. The project which had begun in April of 1997 made room for a new major hallway in the mall, also for a food court, 11 retail stores ranging in size from 400 to 5,000 square feet. In late 1997, the Safeway store also opened its \$12.049 million . . . square foot operation in the mall. This expansion alone, Mr. Speaker, created 43 new jobs.

In May of 1998, Winners opened a retail outlet in Regina's Victoria Square Mall. Winners is Canada's largest off-price retailer employing 75 full-time and part-time employees in its new 24,000 square foot Regina location.

An Hon. Member: — And the MLA there is . . .

Mr. Kasperski: — And the MLA is the member for Regina Victoria.

In December in 1998, Sport Chek opened its first location in Regina in the Victoria Square Mall. The 18,000 square foot location offers athletic apparel for men, women, and children.

Earl's Restaurant also relocated to a larger premises and the old Earl's was taken over by a new restaurant.

Mr. Speaker, all these new and expanded opportunities have contributed very greatly to the hot economy that I've talked about earlier here in the city of Regina.

In the area of major events or signature events as we could call them, nearly 12,000 people attended the opening ceremonies of the 1998 CanAm Police-Fire Games held here in Regina in June. Over 3,000 athletes and their families attended these games.

Also in June of 1998 more than 20,000 people attended the four sold-out shows of the RCMP Tattoo which was held at the Regina Exhibition Grounds.

In November of 1998, approximately 150,000 spectators attended Canadian Western Agribition, an annual event here. The International Business Centre set a record with 440 guests from 46 countries that were registered during last year's Canadian Western Agribition.

Mr. Speaker, the Royal Red Arabian Horse Show has signed a new agreement with Regina Exhibition Park and Regina will continue to host this significant event for another three years at least.

And finally, who can talk about major events without talking a little bit about the Saskatchewan Roughriders. The Riders, Mr. Speaker, contribute 35 million both directly and indirectly to our local economy on an annual basis.

In the area of future developments, we have the following planned activities. In February of 1998, Holiday Inn Hotels announced plans to build a new 109 room, \$8 million hotel in east Regina. The project will create about 8,000 person-hours of employment in the construction phase and an annual payroll, Mr. Speaker, in excess of 300,000 after opening.

In February 1998, as well, IMC Global announced long-term capacity expansions of the IMC Kalium Belle Plaine solution mine and the Colonsay shaft mine over the next three to five years.

The Belle Plaine operation, the world's lowest cost potash mine, produces a high purity white potash primarily for industrial markets and will be expanded from its current annual capacity of 2.4 million short tons to 3.2 million short tons.

The expansions will generate approximately 80 permanent jobs in the Belle Plaine and Colonsay areas, and about 1,940 person-years of employment during the construction phase. In addition, Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that about 2,160 jobs will be created in secondary industries. IMC Kalium employs approximately 350 people right now at its Belle Plaine mine.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in April 1998, Regina-based Minds Eye Pictures announced that it will film a \$42-million screen version of the novel, *The Englishman's Boy*. Minds Eye competed with 45 other companies before winning the film rights to the book by Saskatchewan author Guy Vanderhaeghe.

(1500)

In May of last year, Regina-based Crown Life Insurance announced plans to sell its insurance business to Canada Life. Crown Life, however, will continue to exist as a Regina-based investment management company with \$1.5 billion in assets, mainly real estate, mortgages, and US (United States) insurance policies. Canada Life, on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, is Canada's eighth-largest insurance company and will make Regina its western Canadian headquarters and maintain 700 Crown Life employees.

In May of 1998, Central Park Lodges Ltd. of Toronto announced plans to construct a four-storey, 135-unit seniors' facility in Regina. This 6.9 million facility will have restaurant-style dining, a beauty salon, exercise room, and health office. The building will also offer independent living suites to residents, and nursing care for seniors who will require it. The project will generate 50 jobs . . . pardon me, 80 jobs during the one-year construction phase. Once complete, it would create 24 full-time and 52 part-time jobs.

In May 1998, Mr. Speaker, SaskTel, our Crown corporation,

announced that it would be spending 100 million on system improvements throughout Saskatchewan. Improvements will be made to the core network system, including replacing obsolete technology, increasing capacity, and improving service coverage.

In August of last year, Mr. Speaker, IPSCO announced that it will produce 400,000 tonne order of large diameter natural gas transmission pipe for the Alliance Pipeline project. Shaw Pipe protection will coat the pipe.

According to Regina-based IPSCO, the company's large diameter pipe facilities are fully booked until the year February, 2000. And this is, Mr. Speaker, great news as IPSCO is on the northern fringe of the city, and in my riding, I have quite a few . . . quite a number of employees and members of the United Steelworkers who are employed at IPSCO.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in August, 1998 the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations signed a multi-million dollar deal with Regina-based IPSCO and the Alliance project, pipeline project, to transport steel pipe for Alliance's transcontinental pipeline. Various First Nations will haul more than 700 kilometres of 90-centimetre pipe beginning in the fall of 1998. Of the 1,200 workers on the project, Calgary-based Alliance has agreed to hire a minimum of 150 Aboriginal workers. The \$4 million pipeline will run through Saskatchewan from Fort St. John, BC (British Columbia) to Chicago, Illinois.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in November, 1998, Days Inn of Canada announced signing an agreement with Dimension 3 Hospitality to build 96 . . . to build 96-room hotels in Regina and in Yorkton. The Regina hotel will also be built on Victoria Avenue East across from Eastgate Drive.

In December of last year, the National Energy Board approved plans for two pipelines across Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan portion of Alliance Energy is a 3.7 billion 3,000 kilometre natural gas pipeline; and also to Saskatchewan's benefit, Mr. Speaker, there will . . . approval was given on TransCanada pipelines work that is ongoing and continuing here in the province.

Mr. Speaker, there's a lot more here to go. I hope you'll bear with me. I would like to turn now also to some of the infrastructure improvements that has been taking place here in the city of Regina.

In February of 1998, the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation announced plans to invest 15 million in a new \$100,000 square foot information technology building in support of research and development here in the city. The project is expected to result in approximate 165 jobs during construction, and the building will be occupied by tenants who will employ an approximately 300 employees.

An Hon. Member: — Where is it located?

Mr. Kasperski: — University of Regina is the location of it . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We won't go into that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . All the city of Regina.

In April of 1998 the Canada Saskatchewan Agri-Food

Innovation Fund, Mr. Speaker, announced 1.7 million in funding for the Canadian Western Agribition. The fund will be used to develop approximately 80,000 square feet of facilities through new construction and upgrading on the Regina Exhibition grounds. Also a new 34,000 foot link will be constructed between the commercial cattle barn and the stadium which will undergo extensive renovations in preparation for this year's 1999 Canadian Western Agribition.

In 1998 the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College announced a \$10 million federal government contribution for the construction of a new SIFC (Saskatchewan Indian Federated College) building on the campus of the University of Regina. SIFC has already raised 3 million from private sources and will need to raise another 3 million for the project to proceed.

In April 1998, SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology), Mr. Speaker, announced that it would consolidate the Wascana campus's eight centres into the former Plains hospital complex. This \$28.8 million renovation began in the fall of 1998 and students will begin moving into the newly renovated area in the fall of 1999 with full occupancy scheduled for the fall of the year 2001.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in the fall of 1998, the Regina Airport Authority and Transport Canada reached an agreement for the transfer of Regina Airport. The Regina Airport is one of 26 airports across the country to be transferred under National Airports' Policy by the year 2000.

The Regina Airport employs approximately 31 staff. And in November 1998, the Regina Airport Authority board of directors announced that it had decided to take over the management of airport operations.

The authority, Mr. Speaker, will take over operations of the Regina Airport in May 1 of this year. This will result in enhanced services for southern Saskatchewan's air travellers, Mr. Speaker.

Also in the fall of last year the new Petroleum Technology Research Centre for Regina's research park was also announced. Construction of this \$11 million, 55,000 square foot building will begin in 1999, and it's scheduled to open early in the year 2000. The facility will be using C2000 energy efficiency standards for public buildings and will be one of just a dozen buildings in Canada that meets this new standard for energy efficiency.

The latest figures also from this report indicate that nearly \$740 million worth of capital projects were just completed or are currently under way in the Regina region, covering the period 1995 to the year 2003.

Mr. Speaker, these are significant developments and as you can see from the long list of projects that I've read from, this has contributed greatly to the growth in our economy here in the city of Regina. A growth that we continue to, although it will slow down somewhat, we continue . . . the Conference Board does project this growth to continue in the area of 2 to 4 per cent in the next two years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it was with great pleasure I had a chance to go into

some detail with, and share with members, certainly with members opposite, the economic activity taking place here in the city of Regina that we — myself and my colleagues — participate in.

And I think during the Throne Speech debate I'll get a chance to maybe go into some of the other aspects of what we're going to try to do. I will conclude though, my remarks in this budget speech debate — sorry, Throne Speech debate — by saying that my constituents in Regina Sherwood I am confident support the initiatives that this Throne Speech has outlined in jobs and economy and fiscal management in health and in education.

And I look forward to supporting and voting with this Throne Speech, the mover . . . moved so eloquently by my colleague, the member for Redberry Lake, and also seconded by my colleague, the member from Battleford-Cut Knife.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those remarks I'll conclude my participation in this Throne Speech debate and look forward to getting back and talking during the budget speech in the days ahead. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to take a moment before I enter into the reply to the Throne Speech to welcome you back to the legislature, and certainly to welcome the new pages, and once again to thank all of the Legislative Assembly staff for their support and services during this legislative session.

I'd also take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to remember our families and our friends out there, our support staff in our constituency offices, and all the good people of the province that contribute to giving us an overview of their understanding and their concerns that they have in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour and a privilege always to reply to the Throne Speech on behalf of the people of the Humboldt constituency because they are such a creative and energetic and innovative community. These people strive always towards self-reliance. And they strive to foster their belief in free enterprise through their efforts in creating businesses and maintaining their agriculture base and their family farms.

Mr. Speaker, they are a people, in Humboldt, who measure prosperity and success by the quality of people's lives. And they are also, Mr. Speaker, a people who hold a very strong belief in free enterprise and they cherish also the freedom to identify their needs, to decide how to meet their needs, and the right to exercise those decisions.

But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, many of them in the Humboldt constituency, as well as people throughout the province, over the past eight years, have been telling me how very dismayed they are under the present governance of the NDP. They feel that in the last eight years the NDP government in this province have been cheating them of exercising those freedoms to a large degree.

The socialist NDP government now decides what those

communities need. The NDP government decides whether they need a hospital or a school, and what form these are to take. They say the NDP government with their heavy-handed government arm, controls and stifles people's individual lives and the way communities will function.

And, Mr. Speaker, repressive and regressive taxation policies have taken their toll. Unnecessary and intrusive regulations have stifled growth and also box in people's creative efforts to the point where people flee the province just so they can enjoy and use the abilities they have to work where they can reap some financial rewards for their efforts.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, because they cherish their freedom as much and more than socialists cherish government control, many of them have done the only thing they can do that offers them hope. Thousands of young have left Saskatchewan to seek meaningful opportunities elsewhere. And now, Mr. Speaker, hundreds of seniors, frightened by the inability to access and receive the health services they need, are becoming part of the new exodus.

They all know, all of the citizens of Saskatchewan know, and is saying what is so obvious — NDP Saskatchewan is in major crisis in every area and corner of this province. Every aspect of health care is in crisis; education is in crisis.

As the second highest taxed province in Canada, businesses cannot make a decent profit. Retail sales are down; taxes and high utility rates are killing jobs.

Highways are crumbling, and the farm economy, Mr. Speaker, is on the verge of collapse.

RM councillors and school boards and health board members are at a loss as to how they can provide services needed for those that they are attempting to serve, due to unfair cutbacks under this NDP government.

And why, Mr. Minister, why is this all happening? Because this government's vision is one only of gaining power and control with the end result of robbing people of their rights and responsibilities to create their own destiny.

We see this in the health board structure where there are government appointed people who ensure government's agenda is followed; that agenda targeted at squeezing funding and manipulating the system so that only their NDP government's idea of what health services are needed are in place. And the sad thing about this is there is no consideration for the unique needs of a particular health district.

And to propel that NDP agenda the government sees that bureaucrats and government people from Regina are present at health board meetings just in case the appointed board members are not exerting enough control. Saskatchewan Health makes sure their hacks are present at meetings.

(1515)

Mr. Speaker, people are saying that state ownership of our lives and communities is taking place, and every person in this province is feeling the negative effects of it and they are now

alerting their families and their friends about this. And they will speak clearly of this disdain towards such a system when they cast their ballots in the next provincial election.

Mr. Speaker, another area of NDP's intrusion on people's lives is in the area of education. I have had people calling me saying that they have chosen home schooling and they have had Social Services on their doorstep like state police giving them the fifth degree as to whether their own children are receiving the best form of education. That is an invasion on personal freedom and family rights.

Mr. Speaker, people have experienced tactics of intimidation, coercion, manipulation, and threats, and these seem to be the order of the day under this NDP rule. They'll get what they want in order to control so that they can remain in power. That is the sole reason for being here. That is the NDP vision.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what would benefit the people of Saskatchewan greatly is a government whose attitude and philosophy is one of belief that individual initiative should be substantially rewarded, a government whose members actually know what good governance is about.

Good government is meant to serve people, to facilitate an environment that encourages and stimulates growth, and to devise policies that will lead to and enhance the well-being of people. Policies based on common sense principles such as individual freedom and equality of opportunity for all citizens. Principles that promote economic growth and job creation through the private sector not government as the engine of the economy — smaller, less intrusive, more efficient government.

Policies that promote steady, gradual reduction in government spending and taxation while maintaining a firm commitment to balance budgets; a high quality health care system for all Saskatchewan people regardless of where they live within the province; a strong social safety net which protects those who truly need support while encouraging individuals to become self-sufficient; and democratic reform to make government more responsive to the people it serves.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be part of the Saskatchewan Party. I am proud that this party will bring about the prosperity I have just spoken of.

Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite who are muzzled and unable to speak according to their constituents' wishes, I am encouraged to speak out for my own beliefs and the beliefs of my constituents with the Saskatchewan Party.

I think that we all saw, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the constraints put on the members opposite during the inquiry into the Channel Lake fiasco. The government members on the committee were presented with a report written by the Premier's number one man and were told to accept it or walk away. That's what passes for democracy in the NDP government of the day, Mr. Speaker — no thinking required or encouraged because their thinking is done for them.

Where they believe in strict party discipline handed down from the hierarchy above, the Saskatchewan Party believes in the freedom of MLAs to speak their mind and to represent their

constituents. And if the constituents don't like how we're representing them, we believe they should have the right to recall us. That, ladies and gentlemen, is respect for constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party opposition has spoken for the people who have been forgotten and abandoned by the members opposite. Every day of every week of the last four years our constituency office have received calls from NDP constituencies, members, and their constituents asking for assistance and help because the NDP offices would give them none.

We have watched as this government has grown more and more politically driven with every decision it makes. Those people who do not appear to support the government, as is their right in a democracy, have learned that they cannot expect much from this government either.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, with their cynical eye on the polls and their desperate attempt to maintain power at any cost, has left our province more divided than ever before.

There are many examples of this government's attempts to divide the people. The latest example was the spectacle of the Minister of Finance blaming the farmers of this province for the fact that the budget surplus had disappeared. This was the headline in the two major dailies and on the evening newscasts: "Finance Minister Blames Farmers." I know members on this side of the House immediately began receiving many phone calls from those in the farming community outraged that they were being tarred as if they were second-class citizens and branded as villains in the eyes of those in the cities.

The fact is, that not a single penny of the farm aid money had to come out of the current year's budget, let alone the whole shot. The fact is, that the government had already overspent by hundreds of millions of dollars, far in excess of the amount in the farm aid package.

But none of this mattered. What mattered to the NDP government was to further divide those in rural Saskatchewan from those in urban.

And I think it's sad, Mr. Speaker, when a government and any government in this province uses such a political tactic. Instead of showing leadership by telling all Saskatchewan residents how we are all affected by a severe downturn in the farm economy, the NDP sought not to bring people together but push them further apart. And I think this is so unfortunate.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne was probably the weakest I have heard since joining this legislature. It held absolutely no vision of where this government or this Premier wants to take the province. It's got to be one of the first times in the history of the legislature, or perhaps parliamentary democracy, that a Throne Speech was used to respond to the election platform of the official opposition.

This Throne Speech was not a blueprint of the government's plans, but simply one political party which is desperately trying to maintain power, snipping at another party which dares to put forward an alternative for the people of Saskatchewan; an alternative vision which I'll be very happy to outline for the

members opposite.

We even see the government trotting out what appears to be an election slogan: The Saskatchewan Way, The Saskatchewan Way. Is that the Saskatchewan way as they see it or the rest of us in the province see it? Well let's look at the so-called Saskatchewan way, Mr. Speaker, as proposed by the NDP over the course of the last eight years.

According to the NDP, the Saskatchewan way is to increase taxes to the people of Saskatchewan by a cool \$1 billion a year. Tax and spend, tax and spend to expand the bureaucracy, mismanagement of Crowns, and pay for their incompetence. They give themselves such accolades for being such sound, financial managers, Mr. Speaker.

Well I can only figure out how the good books of farmers would look today if they could simply increase the price they get for their grain, whenever they wanted, in order to meet their bills. Because that's essentially what's happening here, Mr. Speaker, and what's the net result?

Well, Mr. Speaker, they like to talk a lot about the debt of this province — do they ever. But you know what, Mr. Speaker, something very interesting has happened since 1991, a time when the members opposite state they performed a financial miracle in Saskatchewan. In fact the total debt of this province has actually increased since 1991, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite can actually see it for themselves if they read various reports from the Provincial Auditor, or have these reports read to them. According to volume 1 of the Provincial Auditor's *1998 Fall Report*, the debt of this province in 1991 was \$17.5 billion. Way too high, Mr. Speaker, way too high; there's absolutely no arguing that point.

But the really interesting part is, Mr. Speaker, that after all the backslapping we've heard from that side of the House all these years for their supposed management skills, the total debt of Saskatchewan today stands at 18.9 billion. That's an increase of \$1.4 billion, Mr. Speaker. If you'd like, you can read it for yourselves on page 13.

And these are figures the people of Saskatchewan can trust, Mr. Speaker. They include the total debt of this province including unfunded pension liabilities — that dirty little secret that the members opposite do not like to talk about.

Since 1991 these unfunded pension liabilities have increased from \$2.7 billion to nearly \$3.7 billion. This is a bill that will surely come due, and we have not heard the government put forward a single word about how they plan to deal with it. We hear them talk about the numbers they want to talk about, but the truth of the matter is they have increased the debt over the last eight years.

After \$1 billion in tax increases, our province's finances are worse off than when the NDP came to power. Now that's not something I would want to boast about, Mr. Speaker. If I were a new resident of this province, after hearing this I would probably think, well at least the services people are provided with must have improved over the one . . . after getting this extra \$1 billion. But sadly that's not the case.

Over the course of the last few days my colleagues have gone to great lengths to show that this isn't the case. Not the case at all.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — In fact in eight key areas Saskatchewan now ranks at the bottom or near the bottom of any province in Canada. And I think that this is really worth repeating, Mr. Speaker, because the government members should have to hear as often as possible the result of their destructive and short-sighted policies. Job creation — the worst record in the country. In the period of 1991, 1992 — pardon me, not 1991 — '92, 1993, 1994, '95, '96, there was zero job growth and over 4,000 businesses filed for bankruptcy. Last year Saskatchewan was the only province to lose jobs — the only one, Mr. Speaker — 4,900 of them, in fact. And with every job that disappears, another of our young disappears with it.

And we hear the members opposite say that this is an anomaly because of the downturn in the agriculture and oil sectors. Well the last time I checked, the grain and oil prices were the same in Alberta as they are in Saskatchewan. So one would figure they should see a similar decline in jobs over there. But that's not the case. In fact, it's not nearly the case, Mr. Speaker.

Last year while our government's high tax policy was killing jobs, 38,600 were being created in Alberta. And as far as I know, Manitoba has been hit hard by the farm crisis as well. So what's happened there — 11,300 new jobs created, 15,000 more than in Saskatchewan.

Let's go far afield and look at Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, a province which has been devastated by the closure of the fisheries — 6,100 new jobs created there, Mr. Speaker, 10,000 more than in Saskatchewan. And they are Statistics Canada figures, Mr. Speaker, not the concocted numbers that we get from the NDP government. The government isn't simply content to shade the truth any more; the numbers that they are using are outright fantasies.

The Throne Speech, for instance, congratulates the government for creating 30,000 jobs. Well they must be counting Manitoba's figures too because 30,000 jobs have most certainly not been created in Saskatchewan. Far, far from it, Mr. Speaker.

This is a record that should make the NDP government members hide their heads in shame. It's a shameful record that can be attributed directly to their high tax policy. And how high are the taxes? Let's go into that. Like I've said, they've gone up one billion since 1991. That's a billion dollars that is taken directly from consumers' pockets, money that they'd otherwise use to take care of their families.

We now have the second highest taxes in Canada. Only Quebec has higher taxes. And this doesn't even include the huge increases imposed on people here by the monopoly utilities. Massive increases in power and energy and telephone rates.

Mr. Speaker, Humboldt constituency residents and all residents of Saskatchewan have to work over half the year simply to meet their tax obligations. What a disincentive to set up shop in Saskatchewan.

And even when the government doesn't appear to be increasing taxes, it is. Government policy has caused a huge increase in property taxes in Saskatchewan. The government's lack of commitment to municipal and education funding has meant property owners of this province have had to pick up the tab for their province's failures. And the average property tax, Mr. Speaker, the average property tax bill for \$100,000 of value is higher in Saskatchewan than anywhere else in the country — an average of \$1,920 a year.

(1530)

In Alberta, the average residential property tax bill is 1,460. And in NDP BC, it's only 1,130, where even Glen Clark with all the time he spent cooking the books, has managed to lessen the tax load for taxpayers.

Once property taxes paid by business is worked into the whole equation, the average bill in Saskatchewan comes out to \$4,650 a year — nearly \$1,000 a year higher than the second highest, Manitoba's.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP's taxation policies are proving ruinous to our province. These stifling policies have also led to population stagnancy in Saskatchewan — no growth. We have the second lowest growth in Canada. In this area, we actually squeak by Newfoundland but as we can see, if you want a job, Newfoundland holds more hope than Saskatchewan. So we might even fall into the last place in this category, Mr. Speaker.

Businesses are not coming here, and existing businesses are closing down or relocating to the US or other provinces. And those highly skilled workers we lack in certain areas are choosing to locate elsewhere.

Currently, the NDP is out there trying to recruit nurses after the former president of SUN (Saskatchewan Union of Nurses), now the Associate Minister of Health, discovered to her shock that there was a nursing shortage. Well how easy is it going to be, Mr. Speaker, to be able to recruit those nurses when they look at their tax bill here compared to other parts of Canada or even the States, and when they hear about the horrific stress nurses and health care providers are trying to deal with in NDP Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the shortage of nurses is only one of the things in bad repair in our health care system.

NDP mismanagement and incompetence has meant that even though the provincial health budget is higher than ever before, the system itself has never been in worse shape. Vast quantities of money are being spent and no one seems to know on what. We have fewer hospitals, fewer nurses and doctors, fewer beds, and longer waiting lists.

Home care is inadequate to meet the needs of our elderly sick. Mental health services are far from adequate. Crisis intervention is often lacking. Social workers are drained of energy trying to keep up with all of their caseloads.

So where is this money going, Mr. Speaker? We have the longest waiting lists in Canada and we have the highest infant mortality rate in Canada. And according to the Associate

Minister of Health we're going to still have fewer hospitals in the unlikely event that the NDP is re-elected. And for all of this we simply spend more and more and more.

So what are we getting in return? No one knows. And one thing is sure, people have lost confidence and trust in the existing NDP administration. And we have to get to the bottom of where this money is going, Mr. Speaker, because it's obviously not going to front line services or services that people need to provide for their well-being.

It's the system that is rotten, Mr. Speaker, the NDP system they so proudly trumpeted in 1993. Simply put, the whole thing has been a disaster. There's absolutely no denying that, Mr. Speaker. Everyone in this province knows it.

The NDP is a party which portrays itself as the only defender of medicare in the country. They are not being up front with the people of this province. Why don't they just say what they're doing? Why don't they just simply say they're pushing for privatization? Let the people know. The sanctimony that comes out of their mouths is overwhelming, Mr. Speaker, but equally and dismaying . . . so dismaying is the NDP hypocrisy on this issue.

Just as the NDP always does when it finds itself in political hot water, they start lashing out at their opponents, and when that doesn't work they simply begin distorting the truth. Lately the government members have taken to spinning a tale that the Saskatchewan Party is opposed to the Canada Health Act. In fact the truth is the Saskatchewan Party passed a resolution at its founding convention in full support of the five principles of the Canada Health Act.

But let's look at the NDP's support of this same Act. Mr. Speaker, one of these five principles is that of accessibility. Does anybody on that side of the House recall that word, because over the last seven years health care for many in this province has become less and less accessible. They have watched as their hospitals have closed and their services have disappeared. And people are being forced to pay for more and more health services. And they have heard the member from Saskatoon Eastview tell them that they will probably be losing some more of their services especially in the area of acute care.

Mr. Speaker, we have a situation in this province where some people have to drive several hundreds of miles out of province, some of them every week, to receive necessary treatment. Of course the money for these travel costs comes out of their own pockets, Mr. Speaker.

This is the NDP's idea of accessibility. And I call it two-tiered medicine. You're treated one way if you live in one part of this province and you're treated another way if you happen to live away from one of our larger centres.

So the NDP has no lessons to teach anybody about the defence of health care because their defence has been a sham from the start.

And there are other areas too where the NDP has dragged us to the bottom of the barrel, Mr. Speaker: in highways, in retail sales, in crime, and in welfare numbers. We have more people

on welfare in this province than we have farms in Saskatchewan.

I want to say a word about crime, Mr. Speaker, in particular the crime against children on the streets. Mr. Speaker, since being elected to this legislature, I have taken a special interest into the well-being of the children of our province. In particular, I have raised the issue of the growing problem of child abuse through the child sex trade in this legislature countless times since 1996. And since 1996 I have been greeted with blank stares of disinterest and contempt and outrage for even mentioning this problem by the members opposite, especially from the Premier and Deputy Premier who ironically represent constituencies where the problem is so prevalent.

For the past three years the NDP has taken virtually zero interest in this issue. Now suddenly two months before an election, they trot out a weak Bill in order to look like they are taking the problem seriously. And I hope they are, Mr. Speaker.

But where have they been for the past three years? Where have they been as hundreds of our youth were suffering and being abused, sexually, physically, psychologically, and emotionally abused through the child prostitution trade? They've been nowhere, that's where.

And I bet a dollar that they decided to write this Bill when their own polls showed them that people were concerned. Just like they decided the problem of youth crime was an issue after all, after years of making excuses for inaction, years of saying that it's overblown by the media.

Mr. Speaker, I'll have much more to say on the NDP's feeble attempt to address this problem that they have through changes to an existing Bill, and I'll do that at the appropriate time, because I believe the issue of child sexual abuse deserves a lot of discussion in this legislature. And it deserves to be treated with more than a pathetic patch job like we see with the amendment to The Child and Family Services Act.

Mr. Speaker, there is simply so many issues facing the province and I have little or no confidence that the members opposite have any idea of how to handle them. They seem to be drifting aimlessly and they certainly have no vision for the future, offering no hope for the people of our province.

The people of this province and the Humboldt constituency deserve much better, Mr. Speaker. They deserve a government that believes that Saskatchewan doesn't have to be on the bottom rung of the ladder. They deserve a government that believes that more of the people's hard-earned money is better left in their own pockets. And they deserve a government that hasn't been consumed with its own arrogance, cynicism, and cronyism. They deserve a government that truly empowers people in our communities to decide and put into action what they know is best for them.

Simply put, the people of this province deserve better than what they're getting. And under the NDP administration we have seen no new ideas, no inspiration, and no leadership. We have had absolutely no indication from the Speech from the Throne that there is any hope of seeing, and ever again seeing anything from the crew opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it's time to settle this. I believe it's time that the members opposite put their record on the line and let the people decide. I believe it's time that the Premier dissolves this legislature and calls an election so we can finally free ourselves to start revitalizing our lives and engage in the wonderful work of recreating Saskatchewan under a Saskatchewan Party government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. McLane: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to be able to get up today to represent my constituency of Arm River, the people that sent me here. It's nice to see you back and I hope that each one of your ewes has twins this spring for you so that that helps subsidize your income here.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to make welcome today the folks at Central Butte, if there's anyone listening. They've come on stream this spring, onto this network. So hopefully if anybody's listening out there, and I know there'll be a few, welcome on board, and hope that they're happy in hearing what we have to say in the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech that we heard on March 15 leaves a lot to be desired, Mr. Speaker, and it's really a sad day in this province when a Throne Speech has such a lack of vision as this one does. The Premier likes to call this the Saskatchewan way and I can't count the number of times that I had in this House and other places, Mr. Speaker, heard the Premier say but in Alberta they have more of this or more of that, we should do like they do in Alberta, or in Ontario. Did you know that we have three times as many something or others as they do in Ontario. But when it chooses him . . . when it pleases him, Mr. Speaker, then he talks about the Saskatchewan way.

Mr. Speaker, as we look through this Throne Speech from the Premier and from this government it is interesting to note — and we'll kind of go through it part by part I think, Mr. Speaker, and then we'll talk about all the things that aren't in this speech — but the first area that the Premier points to are jobs and growth. And the very most interesting part of this thing is the fact that he immediately goes to the agriculture community. From a government and a Premier and an Ag minister that doesn't give two cents about rural Saskatchewan and agriculture, he wants to talk about all the things that he's done for rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And he starts and he likes to toot his own horn quite a bit, and he talks about, earlier this year, my government acted to help farm producers affected by these events — referring to economic overseas wars, drought, and all those type of things. The Premier and the Ag minister went kicking and screaming. They were dragged to the table to talk about a program for farmers and for agriculture producers in this province — not like they wanted to go there.

The next day when he makes . . . is my government brought in a bridge support program at a critical time to assist our hog producers. Now here's a government that pushed hogs in this province. Told everybody that's the end all and be all to agriculture in this province. It's going to save rural Saskatchewan. It's going to save agriculture, Mr. Speaker. And now the first thing they have to do within a year they have to come in with a bridge support program to try and prop up their own program that they started, Mr. Speaker.

The one part that, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier doesn't mention is the potato industry. The second part of the plan that the Ag minister and the Premier and the government brought in to save agriculture in rural Saskatchewan is the potatoes. And now we're hearing and getting calls from potato producers across this province that the market has fallen out of potatoes. And so the guys that were in it, the individual producers, the private producers, Mr. Speaker, in this province are now finding it tough. And they end up going broke as a result of what the province tried to do.

And certainly the minister that lives across the water from me who was the driving force behind that as well; Sask Water.

The Premier goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, and my government also announced an \$85 million top up for NISA (Net Income Stabilization Account) accounts. Now we all know in the province that the NISA account is a good program. Where else can you put your dollar in and have it matched?

However at the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention, Mr. Speaker — and many of the members across the floor were at it — the Premier stood up that morning on his soapbox and said: and my Ag minister right now, the member from Watrous, is out announcing an \$85 million top up for the NISA program.

Well funny, the headlines in the *Star-Phoenix* the next day was "Province puts in \$10 million." Ten million dollars is what the province puts in. And the Premier tried to lead the SARM people, the SARM delegates that they were putting in \$10 million. How can you do that? And here he goes and tries . . . and he's trying, Mr. Speaker, to mislead the public again by saying they announced a \$85 million top up to NISA.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that isn't mentioned in here is that the agricultural crisis is over. The Minister of Agriculture says: well, we think the crisis is over; hogs have gone up, price of grain is going up, everything is going up. The only thing that's going up are the balloons, Mr. Speaker.

But just so that the minister may be aware that the agricultural crisis is not over, I'd just like to quote a couple of things from some bills that some farmers have brought into my office, Mr. Speaker.

Here's a farmer here that wasn't able to pay his input bill last fall at a multinational grain company elevator. He's trying to pay it, but couldn't. He went in and he made a down payment of \$1,000 on a \$10,000 bill. He said I'll pay you the rest as I can — this farmer still had some grain. Now two days later, Mr. Speaker, he gets a notice and it's a final notice. And it says that if this account isn't taken care of within 20 days, then we're going to turn your account over to a collection agency.

(1545)

Mr. Speaker, another farmer comes in with a bill that he has to a lending institution for a land payment. And the letter starts as: I thank you for your payment of \$6,000 which we received in the mail recently. Well that's all great, Mr. Speaker, he tried to make the bill. Here's a lending institution that two days later comes along and says if this bill isn't paid, total bill isn't paid

within 30 days, we will take action.

Now if that's the result of what the Ag minister has done in this province, in saying the crisis is over, why isn't he going to these multinational grain companies and the banks and saying, hold on we need help. We got some help coming.

An Hon. Member: — He promised he would.

Mr. McLane: — He promised he would, and he hasn't done it. Instead he says the crisis is over. So these people are thinking, well maybe it is. So why don't we foreclose on these guys? Call in their loans. And who's going to farm the land, Mr. Speaker? Not the Agriculture minister in this province, I can guarantee you that.

Mr. Speaker, the next part in the Throne Speech — the "Saskatchewan Way" — they talk about education. The Premier's dedicated about a page and a half to education.

I had occasion yesterday to talk to a couple of students in this province who wanted my opinion on the Throne Speech in terms of what was said in the education section. And so I pointed out that there was a lot of fluff, a lot of nice things said. And much the same as the announcement that the Minister of Education made in the House earlier today, that they're going to look into it over the next couple of years and see what needs to be done.

There's problems out there now, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, in rural Saskatchewan in particular, with our schools and our students, with lack of opportunities to receive the education that they're entitled to. And certainly with the closures we're seeing kids having to ride buses much further than they should.

So nothing in education but a bunch of fluff, Mr. Speaker. And if you want to single out post-secondary education, in the words of a university student yesterday that I talked to, there's absolutely nothing in there to give him any sense of security that he's going to be able to finish his education and come out of there with a job.

Now the next section, Mr. Speaker, is health care. And I guess . . . I don't think we'd have to say a word about health care, Mr. Speaker, because the people in this province know exactly what's happened with health care in Saskatchewan — or the lack of it. There isn't any. From massive waiting lists, Mr. Speaker, to closures to layoffs of nurses, now trying to get them back — there's nothing there, there's nothing left, Mr. Speaker. It's almost to the point of no repair.

But anyway I'd like to talk about a couple of the comments that the Premier makes, Mr. Speaker, in the health care section. He's talking about reorganizing 400 local health administrations into just 32 regional administrations, just 32. He forgot — when he booted out the 400 small health boards without so much as a thank you, the former minister of Health — he forgot that most of them were volunteers, Mr. Speaker. Farmers, schoolteachers, nurses, RM administrators . . . (inaudible) . . . you name it — these are people on these volunteer boards that ran our health system for nothing and did a wonderful job of it. But he consolidated them into just 32 regional administrations. And I think that's a good term — regional administrations — because

that's what we've got, a bunch of administrators out there.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've heard the Premier, we've heard the Premier say, at SARM as a matter of fact, in one instance, that he's going to make sure that the federal money, the new federal funding for health is going to go to front-line workers.

Well, I think, Mr. Speaker, the Premier should maybe start doing something about it because if he watched the papers at all — and I'm sure most of you do — you see lots of advertisements like this one: Regina Health District advertising for a manager of special projects; we're seeing the Living Sky Health District advertising for a community administrative coordinator; here again we see the Regina Health District, an access team manager, administration. We can go on. They're advertising for five utilization coordinators, Mr. Speaker.

That's not what the province needs, that's not what the health system needs. We need nurses, we need support staff to make sure that the people that need services are going to get them and when they do that there's somebody there to look after them.

The Premier goes on to say, Mr. Speaker:

... and by investing in the latest miracles of modern technology, additional MRIs (magnetic resonance imaging), and state of the art nuclear medicine facilities in our major hospitals.

Well, the second MRI that came to this province, Mr. Speaker, was bought by the people, not by the government. It was paid for by donations; it was paid for by the private industry, by private people that bought tickets in Regina. That's how the second MRI came to this province, Mr. Speaker.

It had nothing to do with this government, it had nothing to do with the Minister of Health — any one of the five or six that we've seen here in the last five years. It had everything to do with people wanting some services. And they're the ones that had to provide it. So here again, the Premier is saying well yes, maybe we're going to have all these MRIs, but somebody else is going to buy them and he's trying to take credit for it.

He talks about satellite renal dialysis in Tisdale and Yorkton, Mr. Speaker. I know a little bit about dialysis because I have a brother-in-law in Saskatoon at this point that's on it. And he talks to people that are driving in from Tisdale, from Star City, the other side of Tisdale, Mr. Speaker — they're driving from everywhere. And he's bragging about having these renal dialysis units in those communities.

Well they're there, but there's nobody to run them. They won't give them the money to run them, Mr. Speaker. And these people got to drive for hours. They're driving from North Battleford. I know a man from North Battleford, Mr. Speaker, not much ... a little bit younger than me, Mr. Speaker, he drives from North Battleford after he works eight hours. Can you imagine driving to Saskatoon three times a week for that kind of treatment when you're working? Amazing, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely amazing.

One of the parts that really concerns me in this section, Mr. Speaker, is where the Premier talks about mistakes have been

made. You bet mistakes have been made. You can't count them on a hundred hands, Mr. Speaker, the mistakes that this government in health care have made.

And he talks about well, they introduced "measures designed to tackle some (tackle some) of the key priorities still facing our health care system." Some! Wouldn't you think that the Premier would be thinking we got to tackle all the problems that are facing our health care system and the priorities. No. He says "some." And I'd like to know which ones the "some" are going to be.

Is he going to tackle the waiting lists or what's he going to tackle? Or is he going to tackle the nursing shortage? I'm not sure what he means by some, but it sounds like a lack of commitment to me.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier goes on to say:

... and my government is going to reduce that spending even more by working with health districts to further economize on health administration.

Well I think I pointed out earlier, Mr. Speaker, how he's a little bit late. They're hiring administrators daily in this province and a lot of that money is going to be wasted long before the Premier and this NDP government get around to figuring out what's happening.

And for four years, provinces have tried to cope with deep federal cutbacks to health care and other social services.

That's a quote from the Premier in this document. Well again, at SARM, as the Premier and the bear-pit session was taking place, I sat at a table with a group of fellows and ladies. And one of the guys at the end — and I think actually it was maybe from the Minister of Agriculture's own constituency, I'm not sure, I didn't know the man personally — had a little card, Mr. Speaker. And on that card before the Premier started speaking he had written: pass the buck.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? When the Premier was done and the bear-pit session was over, that card that that gentleman had was full of ticks. Every time they passed the buck to the federal government, to the municipality did something wrong, to the former Tory government, he'd put a tick on it. And the sheet was completely filled when the bear-pit session was over.

And, Mr. Speaker, if you don't think that that table didn't have a good laugh about that, guess again.

So we've seen what the NDP have done to health care in this province, and it's not something that I'm very proud of or would ever want to have been part of.

The next part, Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech document talks about justice, Mr. Speaker. And I guess all I can say about justice really is that ... (inaudible) ... from people that have had break-ins, that have had their cars stolen not once, not twice, not three times, and not by three different people, but by the same young offenders in many cases or other criminals because of lack of policing in our rural areas.

Now the other interesting thing is the government talks about in the . . . I will make mention of it . . . is they support the initiatives that the federal government introduced in reforming the Young Offenders Act.

Now it was very interesting that the day that that was announced the provincial Justice minister was scrambling around trying to find out what it was all about. And yet they're trying to tell us that they were down in Ottawa trying to frame something into this Act that would help us in Saskatchewan. I think it's a lot of hot wind again, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier is trying to let us believe that he actually was trying to do something there.

Well, Mr. Speaker, by now, we've come to the back of the document, to the end of it. And you know what was missing,? One of the glaring mistakes that was missing, that the Premier missed, was that he forgot to talk about transportation. Can you imagine? In a province that lives and dies on transportation, everything we do we have to drive for it.

We've got to drive. Our agriculture products are trucked and drugged by rail. Our kids are transported over these roads daily in school buses. We have to get in the car to go get the mail from the farm. So how could he forget about it and why would he leave it out?

I can tell you why, Mr. Speaker. Because he doesn't care 2 cents about rural Saskatchewan or about the transportation in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, — not 2 cents.

I'll tell you a little story, Mr. Speaker, that over the weekend I had occasion to go visit a grid road because there was people driving on it and said they were having to use their four-wheel drive to get down this grid road and all that. So I went and saw it.

And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it was despicable, absolutely despicable what had happened to that grid road. And you know the reason it was in that shape? The reason it's in that shape is because nobody will drive on the provincial highways any more.

Four miles from this road, there's a highway, runs parallel to it, it's called No. 15 Highway, Mr. Speaker. I drove on that highway as I went to Carrot River on Monday to attend a health meeting. As I turned onto that highway, there's a big red sign, NDP sign. It says the next 31 kilometres, road holes, broken pavement — 31 kilometres, Mr. Speaker. Can you imagine a sign that said 31 kilometres? I can't imagine that in this country in this day and age.

But I can imagine it when I look across the floor here and see what they've got here for NDP members. I can understand that. So 31 kilometres of broken pavement, nobody's using it. The trucks sure aren't using it. I used it, but I came home a different way, I can guarantee you that. Nobody's using it. So where are they going? They're going four miles farther south to cross the grid road, and that's why it's chewed up. Ruts this deep.

And you know what they told me this morning? And this is in the Minister of Agriculture's constituency, the constituency of Watrous — it's not even mine. People come to me this morning

and says, we're now having to leave our cars in Simpson because we can't get to the farm with them. They're either taking the truck or the tractor to get to town so they can go somewhere with the car if they have to go to the doctor or whatever. Can you imagine? That's what this has come to. That's what these guys, these people across the floor, have done to rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And this document has no vision as to how they're going to solve it or fix it. In fact, they don't even want to talk about it. Transportation isn't even mentioned in this document, Mr. Speaker.

Let's go across country a ways, Mr. Speaker. And the member . . . a neighbouring member is in the House today across the floor that represents the constituency across the water from me, where the potato industry is. The Department of Highways has entered into agreement with the municipalities over there to use the grid road to haul the potatoes out.

Now wouldn't you have thought, Mr. Speaker, that when a government want to embark on a program of a product . . . of growing potatoes in this province, they'd have said, okay, well, number one, how are we going to grow them? Where are we going to grow them? And how are we going to get them to the market and where's that market going to be? You'd have thought they'd have sat down and looked at it, and developed some type of infrastructure to meet all those needs.

No, they went in and they bought up a bunch of acres of land and paid farmers to grow potatoes. And now they got no place to ship the potatoes, Mr. Speaker — absolutely no place for those potatoes to go. The highway is shot. No. 19 Highway is shot. Don't care where you want to drive on it, from No. 1 North it's gone. It's this wide; it's as wide as a cow trail, Mr. Speaker.

And so now they entered into agreement with these municipalities to haul potatoes on the road — on the gravel road, on the rural municipality road. Well the RMs entered into the agreement, much to the chagrin of many of the local taxpayers because it happens to go right by their farms.

(1600)

Now how would you like trucks — semi after semi after semi — hundreds of thousands of tons of potatoes, every day, going by your farm? Well they don't like it. But they said, we've got to get the potatoes out, and I agree. We've got to get the potatoes out. So they've come up with an agreement, and it's probably going to . . . it's probably going to work. The RM may make a little money off it.

But what they should be doing, they should be building the highway. Why don't they build the highway? Why wouldn't they say, we're going to build No. 19 Highway last year to haul these potatoes out, instead of worrying about it now? When the potatoes need to be hauled, they've got to use the municipal road. It makes absolutely no sense. That tells you how much planning went into government . . . that there isn't any. No common sense at all, not an ounce of common sense. So any of their decisions that they try and solve a problem . . . not a minute.

Mr. Speaker, the last thing I'd like to talk about would be in transportation is the short-lines in this province. And I notice today — and I was remiss I didn't bring it with me — there was a news release put out by the Minister of Transportation today announcing that a deal had been struck with the rail company and a short-line on the Red Coat Trail. And I'm happy that they did.

But the interesting part, I had occasion last Friday by accident, I bumped into a couple of these fellows that were on this committee, and one of the things that they told me, yes, we've got a deal. We think we're going to do it. One of the real problems that we've got is the grant money. The 16 per cent money that was to be put in by the province and the 16 per cent money that was to be put in by the federal government.

An Hon. Member: — What happened to it?

Mr. McLane: — And the first thing that happened to it was that the provincial government said, yes, it's going to be a grant. We're going to give you 16 per cent. You can use it as equity and that will help get you off the ground. Wonderful, wonderful. What's happened now? Now the provincial government says no, we're going to take that . . . we're going to call that 16 per cent money back, 16 per cent of the net salary. We're going to call that back from you.

But we're good fellows, but we're real good fellows. We're going to give you 15 years to pay it back — 15 years. Now that's reasonable but it does nothing to help get the rail line off the ground and established — not a thing, Mr. Speaker. The bank looks at this as a debt and not as equity, and so when they go, when these short-line companies go to the bank and they say what about the 32 per cent, they say it's debt, Mr. Speaker, that's what the lending institutions say, it's debt. And that's what these gentlemen from the Red Coat Trail told me, Mr. Speaker. That was the real problem and keep fighting for it.

And another reason I'm fighting for it because it's the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker, but also we have a short-line company at home trying to buy a short piece of line without any help from the provincial government I can tell you that.

Now the second part of this, Mr. Speaker, I'm not done yet with this 16 per cent. What's happened now is the provincial government is saying not only we're going to call the 16 per cent back, the provincial share, we're going to call back the 16 per cent federal grant as well, and they want to vote that way. They're going to call the federal grant back.

And Mr. Speaker, I just talked to the Minister of Transportation in Ottawa's office today and they're going to send a letter saying that's wrong, that they want their 16 per cent to be a grant and I'm hoping what they'll say here is that the province should come along and give their 16 per cent back as well. That's what I want, Mr. Speaker, and that's the problem.

So don't ever let the Minister of Transportation in this House say that this is a wonderful agreement with the Red Coat Trail and all the things the government has done, the provincial government has done, when they haven't — they haven't done nothing, Mr. Speaker, haven't done nothing, Mr. Speaker.

So all I can say, Mr. Speaker, with a vision like this government's got and a lack of vision that's in this document, I can tell you there's no question in my mind why the province is in the shape it's in. And I sure will not be supporting this document, Mr. Speaker, and I urge all the members opposite to join me in doing that. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it gives me . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to enter into the Throne Speech debate and speak on behalf of the positive future of this province. It should not be a surprise to anyone, Mr. Speaker, why the members opposite are going to be a long time finding the way to government. They cannot see the benefits that are staring them in the face. These people with their amendment that talked about darkness and their speeches that talk about darkness forget that Saskatchewan has led Canada's economic growth for the last five years.

I think they want Saskatchewan to fail. I don't think they believe in Saskatchewan. They talk about it as if they do and then they speak about how awful it is. I think they should express a little pride in this province because this province has a lot to be proud of.

And that's what I want to talk about today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to talk about the strength of Saskatchewan which is built on the rural economy and the rural communities which believe in caring and community and compassion and hard work to find our way to a better future, a better future that began with the foundation of the province — in fact it began before that — and that will continue to build as long as people of vision are allowed to govern this province.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan does have a rich, rich history beginning with the Aboriginal people who occupied this land and cared for it for many thousands of years. And we have a rich time of transition when the explorers found their way to this land, already occupied, and in this spirit of caring and co-operation, the two groups, the immigrants — the explorers — and the native people of this land established an economy that was a very, very strong economy. People of Saskatchewan experiencing change co-operatively.

So northern Saskatchewan became the centre of the Saskatchewan economy; and it became the centre of Saskatchewan economy because people traded in beaver pelts and they traded in food that came from the buffalo herds which were plentiful in the south. They created an economy where everybody was equal and everybody was strong.

And that economy over time changed yet one more time when settlement came to Saskatchewan in larger numbers and we had to start working out some other challenges. Nine hundred thousand people moved to this province between the years 1900 and 1930 and created an entirely new economy.

Once again, change occurred co-operatively where the southern communities built and they created an economy built on

working with your neighbours. And they worked out arrangements with the Aboriginal people of the day, some of which have created some historical conflicts which have not yet been resolved, but they created treaties which allowed the development of much of Saskatchewan's rich agricultural land and created other lands for Aboriginal people. Again, a huge change, but the spirit of caring and co-operation and compassion predominated it.

The reason I want to focus on that spirit is because listening to the members of the opposition, they want to focus on the differences between us and poke holes between the relationships of the Saskatchewan people. They want to destroy the spirit that built this province. They want to separate rural from urban. They want to separate Aboriginal from non-Aboriginal. They want to create differences between the north and the south.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that is not the spirit of any Saskatchewan person — never was, not 10,000 years ago, not a hundred years ago, and not today. And we will never bend to the kind of division that the members of the opposition continue to want to place in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — We have built this province and when it's become the best place on earth in which to live because people care about each other, because people believe in their neighbours, because people want . . . because people know that things change and that in order to create change, you have to work co-operatively.

So those people who built this nation and those people who built this province in the 1900s have now built structures, the co-operatives of this province, the Crown corporations of this province, and the private institutions of this province that have made this the fastest growing economy in Canada for five years running. An economy based in rural Saskatchewan because we are the most rural of all. An economy based on the strengths of community and the strength of caring and the strength of compassion and the strength of hard work that no Saskatchewan person shirks from. And we have built a great province. We experienced the darkness of a few years ago, the darkness that the members opposite want to talk about in their speeches. I actually have some sympathy for people who listen and wonder how while they live in the best province in the world, some members can only see darkness.

We came to a period of darkness in the last 10 years leading into the '90s, that where we created a debt and a deficit and a division between the people of this province. And the people of Saskatchewan said no, there has to be a better way. And as the Throne Speech says, "There is no spring though all the world is greening, unless you see through eyes renewed with hope." And with those words, if there are any words that define the challenge and the opportunity of today, they are those words.

The words that we know we will continue to face challenges, there's nobody in Saskatchewan knows better today the challenges that face them than the farmers of this province. But that with the hope and optimism that working together we will get through the tough times, they continue to put their shoulders

to wheel and build this economy, and build it to be the best one in the world.

I want to speak about the emergence from that dark period from which we just came and why we now have a new world in which to live, and a new hope and a new sense of determination. And I want to speak from it from two perspectives. First the work that I do in my department and secondly, the opportunity I have to represent my constituents and the example they are to Saskatchewan and to the world, about how the world should work.

In my department I have the privilege of representing a number of major issues of importance to Saskatchewan and they include the economic relationships of this province with those outside our province and our country. They include the relationship between Aboriginal people and all of the people of this province within the province and within Canada.

They include the relationship of this province to the country constitutionally and legislatively. And they include the relationship of the people of Saskatchewan to the compassionate institutions of the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation and the other matters that we carry on with respect to caring about other people in the world.

So it's a privilege to represent this part of the work of the government in the goings on and in the carrying out of the vision of this government and of the people in Saskatchewan expressed in this Throne Speech.

I want to say that one of the most important things to Saskatchewan and to Canada is trade. And we have, Saskatchewan has, increased its trade virtually double in the last five years and we are beginning to see some of the tensions that grow from trade relationships growing across the border. Another time of change.

Now there are two ways of approaching the kind of conflict that we see that results from our economy exporting more to the United States. Half of Saskatchewan's trade goes north and south. There's actually as much goes north and south as east and west right now.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of ways of approaching that, and we've seen from the tensions in the American side that some of the people on the United States side of the border have chosen to approach this issue from a position of conflict. I know the tensions of American farmers because they are like the tensions of ours; they are like the tensions of the farmers in Herschel, Saskatchewan, and every other small town and every other community in Saskatchewan.

But we want to take a different kind of approach. We want to take an approach of building relationships with those with whom we trade to create an understanding of the issues that we need to address to improve trade and to try and create a stronger regional economy that builds on the strength of Saskatchewan and shares it with the strengths of the States and the northern States that deal with us.

And in the interest of that, I had the privilege last December to travel to the United States to speak to the congress of state

governments there to talk about the border relationships. And in speaking about those border relationships, when you sit down and talk you quickly realize that fighting is not the answer. And that finding the reasons why there are different rules on each side of the border and why there are barriers to trade; why those need to be addressed.

And I want to say I was very, very encouraged by the spirit of co-operation that this gathering of all 52 states expressed when we spoke in the international panel about building that relationship. I had the chance, and I'm going to continue building this relationship, to meet the Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota and the Lieutenant Governor of Montana to talk about those issues on a cross border, neighbourly basis.

And I want to say again that while they are aware of the tensions that are there with their agricultural community, whether it's about wheat or durum or beef or hogs or any other issue, they realize that it's in our common interest to address those issues that divide us and create a strong regional economy. Because we have an awful lot in common. We're all people of the prairies. We're all people based in agricultural. We're all people quite a ways away from our national capitals. We have much in common to deal with.

And I want to say that I was encouraged by the building of that relationship, not the division that the members opposite would talk about. Let's fight. No. Let's co-operate and build a stronger country, but build a stronger relationship with our trading partners as well.

(1615)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, I also have the privilege of dealing with the Aboriginal Affairs in this province. And one of the great learning experiences for me, who's lived most of his life on the farm at Herschel with my family and my community, is to have gotten to know Aboriginal people in my daily life through my work here and getting to know some of the strengths of their accomplishments which I did not know before, strengths of their accomplishments which they are quite aware of but we don't see.

Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan have had, in some ways, the disadvantage of not seeing each other in their daily lives. As I've often said in speeches, we've lived too long apart. We don't understand the culture and the work that's going on in the Aboriginal communities and they often do not understand all the elements of our economy and our construct and our social structures.

One of the emphases that I've placed in the work of my department is to start to build those relationships, to start to work with the federal government to help build those relationships to create an economy which is fair and strong for everybody.

And I want to say that there is much that has already been done that's positive that started long before this government came to power. Back in the 1940s, a relationship was established with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations to give them a

structure from which they could work, a structure from which they can relate to the rest of the province, a structure through which their First Nations can speak in order to build their economy and their social structures and their future.

I want to say that, without dwelling too long on it, that there are some tremendous positive signs of the work that has been done over the last 50 years now becoming apparent. It is very, very encouraging to see at the recent National Aboriginal Achievement Awards, five Saskatchewan Aboriginal people, Indian and Metis, — from a 17-year-old university student who won a national award to the artistry of Allen Sapp to the business excellence of others — winning national awards for their contribution to our culture and our economy, to the mix, the grand mix of life and culture that we have the privilege to experience here.

But it's also encouraging to see a Harry Cook from the La Ronge First Nation win a national business award. And it's very encouraging to see the Meadow Lake Tribal Council running one of the best forestry operations in the world from a business standpoint and from an environmental standpoint.

We have begun to see the results of strong leadership in the Aboriginal community building elements of a strong economy. Not enough, not enough, to end the poverty that exists in many communities, but certainly a strong start, an example of what can be done. And building on that, there is the opportunity which has built through education in their communities, where Aboriginal students now are roughly representative in their numbers in the technical schools and in the universities of this province, so that they can go on to build their careers, their families, and their communities from a stronger base of education and from a stronger base of success.

There's one other fact I want to reflect about this, and that is that Aboriginal youth today — who are one of our great strengths; we often hear about the large numbers of Aboriginal youth in our province — are establishing businesses at two and a half times the rate of the rest of us. What a wonderful, wonderful sign of hope that we are beginning to see a critical mass of success emerge. And what a wonderful indication to all of us that if we continue to work together, one of the challenges which faces Canada will be confronted first in Saskatchewan because here again we have worked to join and unite and to co-operate in order to achieve success with all of our citizens. And I'm proud that I have a small place to play in the development of that relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege this year also to work briefly at the national scene on building the social union of Canada. One of the things that we know from the recent past is that this country cannot work when it does not work together, and the federal government removed \$6 billion out of the coffers of this province . . . of this country for social services, and the Premier of this province started a battle to respond.

The end of that battle was the signing of the Social Union Agreement when there was an agreement to replace some of that money and to build a future where there was co-operative federalism and not fighting. So again we've had a chance to create a country a little more caring, a little more compassionate, and a little more co-operative. And for that, I

think we can thank the spirit of Saskatchewan for leading them.

The other place that I would like to speak about that happens to fit into my responsibility is the compassion of our province. We know through things like the Telemiracle, and the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation, and the Ukrainian Advisory Committee that seeks to find co-operative relationships to help build the economy and social structures in the Ukraine, and from the Canada foodgrains bank which had a start here that people in Saskatchewan know the need of neighbourliness.

They know that none of us live by our own strength. They know that we need each other. So including building the economy we believe that about ourselves, our neighbours in Saskatchewan, and our neighbours in the world, and that is a spirit that comes from this province more strongly than anywhere else in the world. And these are the reasons why this is the best province in the world in which to live. And these are the reasons why this province has created such an influence on Canada and made Canada a more caring and compassionate place.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud that the department that I now have the privilege to lead has responsibility for these matters that I've had a chance to learn and work in this environment.

But I want to before I close, Mr. Speaker, speak to the elements that are at work in my constituency that are a reflection of this same spirit and the same determination to succeed.

In my constituency our farmers, like farmers across the province, have led the world in creating new crops, new opportunities, new products from which to establish farm-based businesses and processing. And in the years since we have changed the agricultural policy of this province, we have seen farmers respond as we've created an environment healthy for growth and for business success. We've seen farmers go from 16 million acres of wheat in this province to nine million acres of wheat . . . mean seven million acres are in new crops which provide new opportunities for processing.

And without telling all the stories — whether it's in the pulse crops or small fruits or potatoes or pork or beef or any of the others, the spices and the speciality oils that are created in this province — we have created a base here in Saskatchewan, the farm community, for a successful economy. And there is every reason for optimism as we face the future in spite of the difficult days our farmers are facing now.

And I want to say that the farmers of this province are up to the task, and if we continue to work co-operatively, we'll find our way through these days for continued success in the near future.

But I want to speak about co-operation from another standpoint, Mr. Speaker. Because the member opposite from Arm River was speaking negatively about one of the real signs of co-operation in this province.

We know that the debt that the members opposite left the people of the province . . . Michael Walker from the Fraser Institute today was in the paper saying what a shame it was that Saskatchewan's economy was burdened by the awful management of the members opposite. We know that's a

challenge we face, and we try to face, we try to find answers co-operatively.

One of those arrangements is a co-operative relationship between municipalities and the Department of Highways to set up road maintenance agreements where municipalities happily make their grid roads available because they can be maintained and where the Department of Highways, where the Department of Highways pays these RMs to help that out.

Mr. Speaker, these members know that a co-operative relationship of practical measures is how this province has always succeeded and will always succeed in the future. Now the members opposite, they holler from their seats because they do not . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Now all hon. members will recognize that the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is located not far from the Speaker's chair and even the Chair is having difficulty being able to hear the minister and I'll ask for the co-operation of all, of all the members on both sides of the House. Order.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite hate hearing about co-operation and practical arrangements that try to save money, but I'm telling you that's how this province was built in the pioneer days and that's how the future will be built. And that's why it's such a privilege for me to represent people that work with that spirit who make the kind of arrangements the member opposite attacks.

The West Central Road and Rail in my constituency has had the distinct honour of leading one of the most progressive ventures in trying to save the railroad the members opposite are abandoning, that the Tories and the Liberals abandon and that will continue to abandon. West Central Road and Rail has demonstrated the willingness to run a local business with local support, on business principles.

The members opposite rant and rave about all the things wrong with the arrangement. You know what? West Central Road and Rail likes the arrangement that the province made with the federal government and with them in order to facilitate the development of the railroad. And you know what the member from Arm River needs to know is that banks also respect the relationship. Maybe the members opposite should learn to talk to banks and banking principles because they don't understand them.

Now I want to say as well, we've seen the model of the development of hog barns which the member opposite attacks. I want to use an example. The Quadra model at home is local farmers — 10 and 15 of them — gathering together to create a new technology, a new barn that contributes to our economy. We will see thousands of jobs in this province in packing and in food processing resulting from this growth in the industry. Why? Because community groups, farmers co-operate to build a new enterprise.

This is the story of Saskatchewan. This is the story of how we have become the best place in the world to live. Not because we were born with golden spoons in our mouths but because we were born with determination and the will to work and the commitment to work and to work in the interests of our

communities. That's what's happening, that's what this Throne Speech is about, and that's what the future of Saskatchewan is about.

And I want to speak just briefly about another element of compassion seeing that's a theme of this Throne Speech. With respect to compassion, this constituency is a leader amongst all the compassionate people of Saskatchewan in achieving some things. Now one of the biggest elements of compassion in Canada is the health care system. Now the members opposite love to get up and hammer at the health care system. They think it's good politics.

Well interestingly the leader of this ragtag crowd of malcontents and disloyal elected members that's across, he was at a meeting in Hafford last night. He said he did not understand primary care. Amazingly, the Leader the of Opposition party lives where primary health care was begun. Amazingly, later in the meeting, he says we get excellent health care in Beechy.

Now give me a break. Maybe he hasn't been home for a while. But that primary health care model that was set up in Beechy and is an example to Canada, is an example of using practical measures to deliver co-operatively good care in the community. And the member opposite while he crows about the system, acknowledges that it's excellent.

Meanwhile the member from Rosthern is at Hafford last night too. And he's saying what an awful system, except when I needed appendix surgery I got excellent care in the system. Now here they go — awful system in which they get excellent care. You know it doesn't add up.

These guys don't know what health care's about. They don't know what budget's about. They don't know what loyalty to a constituency is about. They do not understand the privilege of representing their people in this legislature. They do not understand the privilege that we have as elected members to speak for the most compassionate people in the world and try to build an economy based on co-operation and not division.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, in closing, that that is why I voted against the dark, critical, no-vision amendment of the members opposite yesterday and why I will be very, very proud in a number of seconds to stand here to support this Throne Speech.

Because in this province the spirit of co-operation and compassion and hard work is what will drive it. And the deceptive traits of the members opposite and hiding from their own past will not get Saskatchewan anywhere.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1630)

The Speaker: — Order. Order. It now being . . . Order, order. It now being 30 minutes before the time of adjournment and the sixth day of debate in the response to the Speech from the Throne, pursuant to rule 14(4) the question shall now be put.

The division bells rang from 4:34 p.m. until 4:36 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 34

Flavel	Calvert	Wiens
MacKinnon	Lingenfelter	Shillington
Upshall	Atkinson	Goulet
Johnson	Whitmore	Serby
Lautermilch	Cline	Kowalsky
Crofford	Van Mulligen	Bradley
Koenker	Trew	Renaud
Scott	Nilson	Langford
Murray	Hamilton	Junor
Stanger	Jess	Kasperski
Ward	Belanger	Murrell
Thomson		

Nays — 8

Krawetz	Toth	Bjornerud
Gantefoer	Julé	Aldridge
McLane	McPherson	

MOTIONS

Address be Engrossed and Presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Prince Albert Carleton:

That the said address be engrossed and presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor by such members of the Assembly as are of the Executive Council.

Motion agreed to.

Ways and Means

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Prince Albert Carleton:

That this Assembly, pursuant to rule 92, hereby appoints the Committee of Finance to consider the supply to be granted to Her Majesty, and to consider the ways and means of raising the supply.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

