

The Assembly met at 10:00.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with the province's tobacco legislation. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately amend tobacco legislation that would make it illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to be in possession of any tobacco products; and furthermore, anyone found guilty of such an offence would be subject to a fine of not more than \$100.

As is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And this petition is signed by individuals from the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw.

I so present.

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to work with the federal government, First Nations representatives, and with other provincial governments to bring about a resolution in the Lake of the Prairies situation and to ensure that our natural resources as a whole are used in a responsible manner by all people in the future.

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Sturgis, Yorkton, Melville, and Saltcoats.

I so present.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a petition to present on behalf of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan. This petition, the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to make the necessary repairs to Highway 35 in the Indian Head-Milestone constituency in order to prevent injury and loss of lives and to prevent the loss of economic opportunity in the area.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people in Indian Head, Vibank, Davin, and Odessa area.

I so present.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again on behalf of concerned residents from my hometown of Swift Current. Mr. Speaker, they're concerned about tobacco control legislation. And the prayer of their petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately amend tobacco legislation that would make it illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to be in possession of any tobacco products.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners today do come from the city of Swift Current.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been received and are hereby read:

A petition concerning implementation of 34 recommendations of the final report of the Special Committee to Prevent the Abuse and Exploitation of Children Through the Sex Trade;

A petition concerning amendments to tobacco legislation;

A petition concerning repairs to Highway 35;

A petition concerning guidelines for deductibles on vehicles damaged as a result of attempted car thefts;

A petition concerning the resolutions in the Lake of the Prairies situation; and finally

A petition concerning repairs to Highway No. 339.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Wiberg: — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 12 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation: how many square feet does SPMC lease at 1084 Central Avenue in Prince Albert on behalf of Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management; and further to that, what does SPMC pay for this lease on a square foot basis?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning as seated in your gallery are two gentlemen from Saskatoon: Mr. Craig Dockstader of the Prairie Centre Policy Institute, and also Mr. Ken Dillen who was a former MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from the province of Manitoba.

I'd ask all members to kindly join me in welcoming them this morning.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — . . . much, Mr. Speaker. I want to draw your attention to a group of men and women sitting in your

gallery. They are here to meet with me this afternoon regarding the Rosemount Grazing Co-op. And present here today is Mr. Ray Hawkins who's the president of the co-op. He farms and ranches in the Landis area. And next to him is Don and Bonnie Suchan who are farmers and ranchers in Leipzig area. And Wes Garrett who is a farmer and rancher from the Landis area.

So I want to ask all members of the Assembly to join with me today in welcoming them to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could introduce to you and to all the members . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I can, thank you, three people sitting in the gallery here, friends and hard workers for First Nations people in this province: Rod Gopher from Saulteaux First Nation, Patrina Friedle who's from the Association of Aboriginal Coordinator Results Program 2002 from Cowessess First Nation, and Ken Finlayson is with them too.

Please join me in welcoming them, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, I'd take a few minutes to also join my colleague from the Battleford area to welcome Mr. Ken Dillen. Ken and I have known each other for many years and I remember the conversations we had at JLM, and just on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan I want to welcome Ken to the Assembly today.

Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs in welcoming our First Nations friends to the Assembly today. We do hope that you enjoy the proceedings and enjoy your time in Regina.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of myself and the member from Regina South I would like to welcome two young men who are here to observe our session. They are both grade 12 students at Campbell Collegiate in Regina South: Matthew Paslowski and Colin Black, and they are both considering taking political science at university so we wish them the best there. So I would ask others to join me in welcoming them.

And I also would like to join my colleague, the Minister of Justice, in welcoming Ken Finlayson who I've known since I was a young man. We used to be in the same 4-H light horse club together. So welcome to him as well.

So if you'd join me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

World Water Day

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in this Assembly to bring to members' attention the importance of this day, which is World Water Day. The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution in 1993 declaring March 22 be proclaimed World Day for Water, a day that brings to the attention of government and individuals world-wide the importance of safe drinking water supplies.

The theme this year, Mr. Speaker, is water development. We all recognize the importance of developing new freshwater supplies in places less fortunate than Canada. But we must also remain committed to developing new freshwater resources right here in Saskatchewan. We must focus even more on funding critical water testing and water infrastructure and improvement and replacement.

We must take the steps necessary to conserve our freshwater resources, to ensure them in the future for the benefit of the people who have placed their trust in safe water.

Mr. Speaker, it's hoped by members on this side of the House that by declaring today World Water Day we see the provincial government take water safety of water infrastructure in towns and villages more serious.

And considering the drought this year . . . or the past year, Mr. Speaker, it is also hoped that they use the money for such serious things instead of wasting the money on shaky schemes like dot-coms in Atlanta, Georgia.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Launch of Saskatchewan Writer's Book

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday we were visited by our Poet Laureate and other Saskatchewan poets. Today I'd like to bring to the attention of the Assembly a young author born and raised in my constituency and currently teaching at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.

Tuesday night at the Book and Briar Patch here in Regina, Warren Cariou gave a talk and reading from his new book *Lake of the Prairies*, published by Doubleday Canada. Warren and the poets mentioned by the Minister of Health yesterday are testament to the depth and the variety of the arts in Saskatchewan. We are better and richer for it.

In fact, during his talk, Warren gave credit both to the people of Saskatchewan and to their institutions like the Arts Board which have nurtured his now realized dream of becoming a writer.

Lake of the Prairies is a funny, moving and very personal memoir of his childhood, and the eternal children's question: where do I come from? Warren comes from the town of Meadow Lake, and more significantly, he comes from the complex social and cultural mix that is Meadow Lake and practically every other town in our province.

Mr. Speaker, some very respected Canadians have praised *Lake*

of the Prairies. I recommend all members to do both themselves and Saskatchewan literature a favour by buying and reading this fine book and to learn more about this Meadow Lake writer.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Support for Local Soldier

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Lt. Derek Prohar was deployed to Afghanistan on Tuesday, February 5, 2002 from the Edmonton garrison as part of the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battle Troup, Operation APOLLO.

Derek was born and raised in Avonlea and after graduating from Athol Murray College of Notre Dame in 1994, he attended McGill University in Montreal for four years. Upon graduation he applied to the Canadian Armed Forces and was accepted September, 1999.

I'm sure that all members will join me in wishing Derek all possible success in carrying out the duties of Operation APOLLO and to thank him for his courageous and selfless service to his country, his province and his community, and to pray for his safety until he gets back home.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Flicks Film Festival

Ms. Atkinson: — Well it's that season again. Film festivals are gearing up in our province. The first one, and I would argue the best, begins today at the Broadway Theatre, right in the heart of my constituency, Saskatoon Nutana.

Just a quick comment, Mr. Speaker. The Broadway Theatre is one of the last independent theatres anywhere, and it's a tribute to our community that it survives and prospers in this era of chains and franchises.

All weekend the Broadway will host the seventh annual "Flicks: Saskatchewan International Film Festival for Young People." Flicks will present three days of the best children's cinema, featuring 16 films from eight countries. This is a film festival. It's also a celebration of multiculturalism and international creativity. It is only appropriate that this festival be part of the attractions in Canada's very best small city.

There will be films for kids and parents, workshops for teachers, students, and budding filmmakers, on film animation, screen writing, and other aspects of filmmaking.

I'm happy to say that one of the films to be shown, *The Impossible Elephant*, was filmed in Saskatoon. Another, *Christmas at Wapos Bay*, is about family life on a trapline in northern Saskatchewan.

I'm pleased that our very own Governor-General award winner, Guy Vanderhaeghe, will be a special guest for a teen screen series.

Mr. Speaker, if I read the program right, the films are all free at all of our Saskatoon public libraries, and along Broadway Avenue. Well worth the price of admission.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Recognition of the Sherry Anderson Curling Team

Mr. Wiberg: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I am bringing further recognition to a sports team that continues to keep Saskatchewan women at the forefront in national, and at times, international competition.

Mr. Speaker, that team is led by a long-time family friend, Sherry Anderson from Delisle. Sherry's curling expertise began in my home community of Northside, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and grew incredibly as her love of the game increased.

Today, Mr. Speaker, Sherry Anderson and her team of Kim Hodson, Sandra Mulroney, and Donna Gignac are without a doubt in the handful of women's curling teams that are amongst the best in the world.

An aside to this, Mr. Speaker. Donna Gignac is from my hometown of Paddockwood, Saskatchewan. Thus two young ladies who have climbed the ladder to international curling recognition are long-time acquaintances of mine.

It appears that Sherry Anderson may have had a hard-luck season, first losing to Kelly Law in the Canadian Olympic trials, and then losing to Colleen Jones in the Scott Tournament of Heart finals. There is a silver lining to all of this though, Mr. Speaker. In the Saskatchewan curling women's scene, Sherry Anderson is recognized as one of the elite women curlers in the world.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, to succeed locally, regionally, provincially, or nationally, the road to the top is cluttered with the Sherry Anderson foursome.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and all members of our Assembly join me in congratulating Sherry Anderson, Kim Hodson, Sandra Mulroney, and Dawn Gignac for all the thrills they have provided us during the curling season.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

New Phosphate Distribution Centre Announced

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to new developments occurring in Belle Plain. CWS Logistics Ltd., a Regina-based logistics company has unveiled a plan to build a new \$1.5 million phosphate distribution centre at IMC Global Solutions potash mine in Belle Plaine, effective immediately.

CWS and IMC Global have entered into a 20-year distribution agreement where CWS will be responsible for the distribution logistics out of the new centre. IMC will be supplying annually approximately \$24 million of phosphate to be distributed in the prairie region.

This project represents an investment in the future of

Saskatchewan agriculture. Mark Bonner of IMC Global said, and I quote, "We're two Saskatchewan companies investing in Saskatchewan, investing in agriculture, and using Saskatchewan funds."

This project demonstrates that companies are willing to invest in our province and achieve great successes with the benefits extending to the community. In addition to the financial commitment, Mr. Speaker, this agreement will also create 15 new jobs for Saskatchewan people, with three or four being employed at the site and the remainder being based in Regina.

I applaud this investment in agriculture and the Saskatchewan economy and hope, Mr. Speaker, that we all recognize this endorsement of our agricultural sector. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

World Water Day

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is World Water Day. Last year the minister celebrated World Water Day by telling us of the government's commitment to safe drinking water. Canada, with 20 per cent of the world's fresh water, should be the last country in the world to have a problem with water.

However, this year there are communities all across our province facing crisis. The government has informed us that they have no money for safe water beyond the regular infrastructure program. And that those communities having to haul water can expect nothing more than sympathy and friendly advice from their government.

When the Premier called the North Battleford water inquiry, he said I wasn't much in favour of it. He was right. The inquiry has cost millions of dollars and the government says that it has millions to study the problem, but none to fix it. Mr. Speaker, today is also the annual spring bull sale in North Battleford. I ask, what can we expect: safe water or more bull?

New Cultural Centre in Moose Jaw

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More good news from Moose Jaw. Moose Jaw, famous for being the home of the Snow Birds, the spa, Al Capone's tunnels, the birthplace of the Premier, can now add cultural mecca to its claim to fame.

On Wednesday, an important public event took place in Moose Jaw as we launched the community fundraising campaign for the Moose Jaw Cultural Centre.

The project has had \$1,750,000 committed from the provincial government, which along with the federal, municipal and local donors have committed \$6.8 million towards the \$7.4 million project.

Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no doubt that the people and local businesses of Moose Jaw and the surrounding area will rise to the occasion and raise the remaining \$684,000 that will finish the project. As members know, the people of Moose Jaw feel good about their city, they are proud to be Moose Javians, and they are confident about the city's future.

The new centre will be a first-class facility for the performing and visual arts. It will be a venue for the city's people to come for concerts, live theatre, and art exhibitions. Students from over 30 schools in Moose Jaw and area will bring youthful enthusiasm to the facility. In addition, it'll bring . . . it'll boost the city's already growing and dynamic downtown.

This is an exciting project for the people of Moose Jaw. The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow and I wish James Tessier, Chair of the public giving campaign, and the volunteers involved in the project all the best and look forward to opening the centre in 2003, the centennial year for the city of Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Possible Effects of Budget on Health Care Costs

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker my question is for the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has received some further information about next week's budget. We understand the NDP (New Democratic Party) government is planning to increase the monthly charges to seniors who live in long-term care homes.

Mr. Speaker, the question is simple. Is the NDP government planning to increase the monthly charges to seniors in long-term care homes?

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll be pleased to rise in the Legislature on March 27 to deliver the budget and then the budget will become clear to the opposition and the people of the province.

But while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, and speaking of budgets, let me say that it appears the cat is out of the bag when it comes to the opposition's plans, because on February 27, Mr. Speaker, the member from Lloydminster had this to say on CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) radio. He said, with respect to our income tax reductions that we've done in this province — over their opposition, I might add — the member from Lloydminster had this to say. He said, with the financial strain facing the province, the Saskatchewan Party can no longer promise to maintain income tax cuts. That's what he said, Mr. Speaker.

And then, then the Leader of the Opposition had to come out and rescue him, Mr. Speaker, and . . . But there's a lot of confusion over there; but there's no confusion over here, Mr. Speaker. We're going to . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would be very interesting if the Finance minister or the Health minister or someone over on that side would actually deal with the questions that we put forward.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday it became pretty

obvious that this government is going to increase the deductible for the prescription drug plan. Today, Mr. Speaker, it also seems equally obvious that there is a plan by this government to further put onto the backs of the ill and the elderly the extra cost for long-term care homes.

Mr. Speaker, is this government prepared to put the cost of their mismanagement on the backs of the ill and the elderly in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, in the last four or five years this government has increased spending on health care by approximately 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And we have not done it, as their cousins in Alberta and their cousins in BC (British Columbia) have done it, by raising taxes as they want to do, Mr. Speaker. Because they want to pull a BC: be all things to all people; promise tax cuts before the election; and if they ever got elected — which won't happen — then raise taxes, which is their real policy, Mr. Speaker.

But when it comes to health care, we've increased health care spending. And I don't think it would be a surprise if health care spending increased in the next budget. Contrary to what they said in the last election they would do, Mr. Speaker, which was to do what?

An Hon. Member: — Freeze.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — To freeze health care spending so that eventually they could privatize health care, which is their real agenda, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Financial Support for Farmers

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker . . . Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, unfortunately, unfortunately we may be faced with a continued drought problem here this year in Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister . . . Mr. Speaker, Alberta has implemented a drought-relief strategy to assist their farmers.

Mr. Minister, what steps are you taking to protect Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — I'm sorry. Sorry. Would the member repeat his question through the Chair, please?

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, what . . . Mr. Speaker, what steps is the Government of Saskatchewan, Minister of Agriculture taking to protect our farmers in Saskatchewan from the possibility of a continued drought?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — . . . question that the Agriculture critic asked me because I've now responded to the critic on three or four occasions indicating and highlighting to him what we're

wanting to do in Saskatchewan and what we've done in Saskatchewan.

I have written him a letter earlier in February and said to the member — or January — and said to the member opposite, could you please tell me what it is that you're planning on doing because you tell me, you tell me, sir, in a radio interview that he had in the GX radio in Yorkton, that he's got a plan — that he's got a plan.

He tells me that he has a plan. And today, Mr. Speaker, I still wait to hear from the member from Kindersley about what he's prepared to do and support us. And I have not had one piece of correspondence or return of a phone call from the member for Kindersley. Not one, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, here is what this government is prepared to do to assist farmers in this province. Farmers now are sitting down to calculate their crop insurance premiums and they are shocked at the huge jump in premiums.

Many farmers heard the Minister of Agriculture say that premiums will go up by about 7 per cent. Mr. Speaker, that's simply not the case. Farmers are discovering increases in their crop insurance premiums of 40, 50 — all right, as high as 60 per cent increases. Huge increases, Mr. Speaker, to pay for reduced coverage at a time when we have every possibility of a province-wide drought here in Saskatchewan. Is this what the Minister of Agriculture believes is standing up for farm families?

Why is the NDP, Mr. Speaker, cutting crop insurance coverage and jacking up insurance premiums to farmers in this province by as much as 60 per cent?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — The member from Kindersley and the Agriculture critic has finally woke up. He finally has woke up. He now finally says, you know what, Saskatchewan farmers? We got a problem here. We got a huge problem, Saskatchewan farmers. We've had a drought.

And finally, we're saying to the . . . We see that the federal government has not put its share of money in. And I have said now for several months and I've said to the member opposite, what we need to do here is we need to get the federal share of what we need to put in the safety net.

And what the member says: we don't need any federal money here at all; we're going to build our own program; we can support a safety net program on our own. And we've been waiting now, Mr. Speaker, to hear from the members opposite about what their farm plan has been for a year and a half. Ours is on the Table, Mr. Speaker. Not heard a word from the members opposite about what their farm plan is.

And then they get in the way and say, they get in the way and say, we don't need any federal money; we're going to do it on our own. And I say, get out of the way, Mr. Member. Get out of the way. You're in the . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I would just ask the member not to play with the rules. The rules are either you maintain the speeches all through the . . . through the Chair, even the last five seconds.

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, the people of this province, and the farmers particularly, are wondering when this minister will be waking up.

The fact of the matter is, is Saskatchewan farm families, Mr. Speaker, will be paying thousands of dollars more for crop insurance coverage this year and getting less coverage from this government.

That's how the NDP is protecting Saskatchewan from a possible drought. NDP is slapping farmers with a huge increase in premiums and at the same time they're reducing coverage by taking away the spot loss hail coverage as well. It's just one more attack, Mr. Speaker, by this government on the farm families of this province.

From the same government, Mr. Speaker, that ripped up the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) contracts, now the minister promises he's going to enhance crop insurance for the farmers of this province.

Mr. Speaker, why is this government jacking up premiums and reducing coverage by . . . to the farm families of this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite still doesn't get it. Still doesn't get it.

The reason for why, Mr. Speaker, that the crop insurance premiums this year are increasing for the producer is because the federal government has not put its share in. It's as clear as it can be on the nose of the face of the member from Kindersley.

That's why crop insurance premiums this year, Mr. Speaker, have been backfilled and insured by the province. We put our money in. We put our money in and added our additional \$14 million, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that that's maintained.

And we've also said, Mr. Speaker, and supported through our farm support revenue committee that's travelled the province, and they said, Mr. Speaker, that we should be doing a couple of things. We should be building an enhanced crop insurance program with support from the federal government, provincial government. We should be enhancing some of our NISA (Net Income Stabilization Account) program in the crop sector.

We're on record, Mr. Speaker. We're on record. Our report has been tabled. And when I look at the Farm Support Review Committee, Mr. Speaker, where they travelled the province, nowhere in here does it appear that one member of the Saskatchewan Party made a submission to what we should be doing. Not one, Mr. Speaker.

Not only are they not involved, they're out of touch.

(10:30)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, what is on record here in this province is the Minister of Agriculture going around and telling the farm families of this province that their crop insurance coverage — or the crop insurance premiums rather — will be going up by 7 per cent.

Well let's look at an example, Mr. Speaker. Here's the premium increases for the risk area no. 11. Crop insurance premiums on oats up 30 per cent; canola up 38 per cent; durum up 44 per cent; chickpeas up 45 per cent; barley up 55 per cent; and premiums on lentils, Mr. Speaker, up a whopping 64 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, farmers of this province are stunned by the size of the increases in their premiums and at the same time the NDP is reducing coverage by taking away the spot loss coverage as well.

Mr. Speaker, how can the minister justify these huge premium increases and at the same time cut the coverage levels as well?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, what Saskatchewan farmers and producers are stunned about, they're stunned about the fact about the member opposite from Kindersley, the Agricultural critic says, that we don't need any more federal money — that we don't need any more federal money. Now that's what stuns Saskatchewan farmers and producers across the province, Mr. Speaker.

Because what's happened in this province, Mr. Speaker, is that every farm organization which I meet with — and I meet with them every six or seven weeks — and they say to me, Mr. Speaker, that in Saskatchewan today in order to build a good safety net and to enhance our safety net we need to have federal money.

And we had a committee who travelled the province, Mr. Speaker, we've had a committee who's travelled the province. They were in Saskatchewan, just recently in Swift Current and the member opposite was there, he was there, and we all said we need to enhance the federal share.

But not the member opposite. He says we don't need the money. And every member of that committee from the federal government who travelled the province from the federal members said we need federal money. But not the member opposite. He says we don't need federal money. And we can't build Saskatchewan-Canadian programs unless the federal government puts in their share and they're not, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture knows full well that by increasing the premiums on crop insurance to the farmers there are two people that benefit — two governments that benefit from it.

First of all, the province of Saskatchewan share is reduced. And in addition to that, the federal government's premiums are reduced as well. So who, Mr. Speaker, is taking or sending

money back to the federal government? It certainly isn't the opposition. It's the minister opposite that's sending back money to the federal government for the reduced coverage and the reduced premiums to farmers.

Mr. Speaker, this is all the result of the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture trying to make up a \$20 million shortfall in the program. So the farmers of this province are reduced in their coverage, paying higher premiums to make up for their mismanagement opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, why is the Minister of Agriculture so intent on raising premiums for farmers, reducing coverage, and sending money back to the federal government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I mean it's amazing that the member opposite, now he's calling for us to make sure that no money goes back from Saskatchewan to the federal government. And we don't.

A couple of days ago he said, we don't need the money. Today he's saying, you know what — we should be keeping the federal money.

Well I want to say to the member opposite, he is absolutely and totally out of touch with what's happening on this file and on the . . . (inaudible) . . . has absolutely no idea, Mr. Speaker.

In Saskatchewan today not only have we maintained our premium level for Saskatchewan producers at 35 per cent, we've also enhanced it, Mr. Speaker, by putting additional money in — \$14 million more.

And when you look at what the federal government's premium has been, the federal government's premium has gone down, Mr. Speaker, by 7 per cent. Absolutely right. And who's picking that up, Mr. Speaker? The federal government . . . the producers are picking that up, Mr. Speaker; the producers are picking it up.

And I say to the member opposite, don't help us any more. You helped us get AIDA (Agricultural Income Disaster Assistance) . . . (inaudible) . . . in this province, Mr. Speaker, and you blame the grasshoppers and you blame the drought. And now the farmers have another, another problem. They've got the Saskatchewan Party in the way as well, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Constituency Boundaries Commission

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week I wrote a letter to the Premier regarding the appointment of a new Constituency Boundaries Commission. The commission is to be made up of three members, Mr. Speaker — one, a judge and two others . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the new boundary commission is to be made up of a judge and two members appointed by the Premier.

In the interest of electoral fairness, I asked the Premier in a letter if he would allow the official opposition to nominate one of those two candidates. That way the committee would be made up of a judge, one person appointed by the government, and one person appointed by the official opposition. What could be more fair than that, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has now responded to my letter but he didn't answer the question. So will the Premier agree to appoint one commission member nominated by the official opposition?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the Act is very clear — the arrival of the census figures, the process begins. The process will include an appointment of a judge to head the commission, a judge appointed by the courts of Saskatchewan. The Act is also very clear that government has a responsibility to appoint two other members to that commission.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear today that I will be consulting with the Leader of the Opposition and I will be speaking with independent member of the legislature about those appointees. We will have a fair Boundaries Commission in the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just while I'm on my feet, just while I'm on my feet, I understand why the members want to talk about the Boundaries Commission. They sure don't want to talk about their plan in this legislature any more.

What have we seen, Mr. Speaker, during the course of this week? I ask, what have we seen just in the course of this week? We have seen a government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He wants to talk about the Throne Speech? That's what I'm talking about. In the course of this week we've had announcement about extension of high-speed Internet to 191 communities in this week. We've got a plan for the building of Saskatchewan. We've had announcements about taking on the johns in this province and supporting the victims of crime. Yesterday we released the foundation ethanol plan for this province that would lead the continent, Mr. Speaker.

What have they been talking about? The doom and gloom that we hear. And I tell you again, Mr. Speaker, this government is not . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At least the Premier recognizes that we do have a plan, which is more than he has. The fact is he has to take our plans to implement their ethanol strategy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan Party understands the need to redraw the boundaries based on the latest census data. That redistribution must be done in a fair

way or it can be gerrymandered by . . . to the advantage of the party in power.

Our proposal, Mr. Speaker, ensures fairness. In contrast, if the committee has a majority of NDP appointees, there is the tremendous potential for unfairness. If the Premier truly believes in electoral fairness, will he accept our proposal? One judge, one government appointee, one nominated appointee from the official opposition. What could be more fair?

Mr. Premier, will you agree to this proposal?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the member should do himself a favour and put down those written questions and listen to the answer. I've just committed that we will follow the law of Saskatchewan, which is that the courts will appoint the head of the thing. Government has the responsibility to appoint the commission. I will consult with the Leader of the Opposition, I will consult with the independent member from North Battleford, and we'll form a commission.

Now he began his question by talking about their plan. Well we learned something else this week, Mr. Speaker. In Canada, we've learned something else — how their plan, this so-called plan to grow Saskatchewan, is proven to be a folly. It's a folly, Mr. Speaker.

Where did we learn this? We learned this in the legislature of Alberta, because over there was a plan, a plan which said we can cut all the taxes and we can spend more money and it's all going to balance out. Well we know what happened in Alberta. Now they're raising the taxes. They've forgotten their plans to cut taxes and they're cutting services.

The Leader of the Opposition goes to Calgary, Throne Speech night, what does he say? Our plan is to cut taxes. Every day this week members have said, more spending.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't work. It doesn't add up. The plan is a folly. And I tell you the plan of this government and the work of this government is not going to be stopped by those nabobs of negativity who sit over there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, since the government is taking our ethanol plan, perhaps they can take our plan on electoral reform. I'd like to ask the Premier another question that he didn't answer.

I asked whether or not it was in . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask another question that the Premier didn't answer from the letter. I asked whether it was his intention to contest the next election under the new proposed boundaries or under the current boundaries. That is also a question of electoral fairness. All parties are starting to nominate candidates. All parties need to know whether they should be holding those nominations based on the current boundaries or on the new boundaries. It's unfair that only one party, the NDP, knows the answer to this

question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, barring some unforeseen event like the defeat of the coalition government to a confidence vote, does the Premier plan to contest the next election based on the new boundaries or the current boundaries?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, again I invite the member simply to read the legislation. The process is set out in legislation. The commission will be established. The court will appoint its head. I will consult with opposition. We will appoint the members of the commission. There are time frames set out — 30 to 60 days, three months, or an extension possible of another three months. The work is laid out in the legislation. It's not up to this Premier or this government to change that work.

But again he talks about plans. Well we've learned a lot this week about their plans, Mr. Speaker, we've learned a lot about their plans.

They have a plan which says it's entirely all right — it's entirely all right — for workers from Alberta to come into this province, earn money, and take it home to Alberta, but that's not all right for residents in northern Saskatchewan. They say that's not all right.

They say they want . . . every day, they say they want further Internet coverage in the province, they want cellular coverage in the province, but it's not all right for our telephone corporation to go outside of this province to bring home money to do that work. That's not all right. So we shouldn't invest . . .

But then what do they say? Well then they'll get up in this House and they say, but you can't invest in workers in Saskatchewan either. Strip the equity out of Great Western, they say, so we can shut that down and lose those jobs.

Mr. Speaker, we're learning a lot about their plan this week. Their plan is to bankrupt the corporations, the Crown corporations, to strip the equity. Why? Because they're preparing to sell them off.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Young Offenders in the Courts

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately Saskatchewan leads the country in a bad-news story.

Yesterday, Statistics Canada released a report that indicates Saskatchewan's youth court caseload was more than twice the national average last year — 946 out of every 10,000 kids in this province are facing the court system.

In every other jurisdiction in the country youth caseloads declined, yet the number of youth in the court system in Saskatchewan increased by 7 per cent. Mr. Speaker, this trend is very worrisome. More of our young people are finding themselves in trouble with the law and facing the court system than in any other province.

Will the minister explain why more Saskatchewan kids are ending up in the criminal justice system?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises one of our most serious challenges in this province, the capacity we have to deal with . . . to engage large numbers of socially marginalized youth. We shouldn't underestimate the challenge that this presents.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the member of the kinds of things we've been doing in this House. In fact, I was thinking that I would ask my officials to list all the programs, all the initiatives, all the investments that this government has made in dealing with crime and dealing with safety in our communities, Mr. Speaker. It's such a long list, Mr. Speaker, they're still preparing it.

But let me remind the member — let me remind the member — that we have increased policing in this province funding by \$11 million, to record numbers in this province, Mr. Speaker. We've invested more money in SHOCAP (serious and habitual youth offender comprehensive action program) — the program that deals with the most serious offenders— by four times in this province, Mr. Speaker.

What has the member opposite, and her party, what did they recommend in the last election? Well, Mr. Speaker, they recommended nothing for crime control, nothing for safety and security in our community — nothing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 2 — The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Act

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 2, The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Act be now introduced and read the first time.

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

Bill No. 12 — The Farm Financial Stability Amendment Act, 2002

Hon. Mr. Serby: — I move this Bill be moved for the first time.

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

Bill No. 13 — The Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Amendment Act, 2002

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 13, The Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Amendment Act, 2002 be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be

read a second time at the next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Being an open, honest, and accountable government, we are very, very pleased to table a response to question no. 1.

The Speaker: — Response to no. 1 is tabled.

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of an open, honest and accountable government, we are extremely pleased to table a response to written question no. 2.

The Speaker: — Response to no. 2 is tabled.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I stand on behalf of an open and accountable government to respond to written question no. 3.

The Speaker: — Response to no. 3 is tabled.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I stand to answer, on behalf of an open, honest, and accountable government, written question no. 4.

The Speaker: — Response to no. 4 is tabled.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Prebble, seconded by Mr. Forbes, and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Toth.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I wish to continue with some of the points that have been made in our Throne Speech about the health plan for Saskatchewan.

I was very proud to be in the Legislative Building on December 5 when the Premier and I introduced our action plan on health care. This was the result of much work by many members of this House, including members opposite as they worked on the standing committee last summer. And we ended up coming forward with a plan which allows us to proceed towards the future for health care.

And I think it's important that we all recognize that this is something that we are doing together. This is not something that can be dictated from on high or from . . . down from the bottom. It has to come from everybody.

And I'd like to just quote from a speech that was given not too long ago, about . . . well, last spring actually. And this is a speech given by Dr. Kenneth Shine who was the Robert H. Ebert Memorial lecturer at Harvard Medical School, I think is where it was given. And this was a speech sponsored by the

Milbank Memorial Fund. And this doctor, who was . . . Dr. Shine was a student of Harvard Medical School; and Dr. Robert Ebert who was . . . the lecture given in his favour about . . . in his memorial, was one of his professors.

And what Dr. Shine said was that he wanted to talk about health care quality and how to achieve it. And the point that he made in his speech was that in the 21st century, medicine will no longer be able to foster an aura of infallibility of the system. It has to recognize that there are many pieces to it. And what he did — and this is the point that I want to include in my speech today — is he wanted to contrast the characteristics of the cultures of medical system doctors in the 20th century versus the 21st century.

In the last century much of the system was based on autonomy. In the 21st century it's going to be based on teamwork and systems. In the last century much of medical practice was based on solo practice. In the 21st century it's going to be about group practice.

In the 20th century there was a very strong emphasis on continuous learning. In the 21st century we're going to have that emphasis, but we're also going to have emphasis on continuous improvement in how practice is done — 20th century characteristic was infallibility; the 21st century is multidisciplinary problem solving.

In other words, I can't know everything but I'm going to find the people that need to know that particular issue. I'm going to work with the pharmacists. I'm going to work with the physios. I'm going to work with the nurses. I'm going to work with the . . . with the people who have the special skills that I need.

Another characteristic of the 20th century for doctor was knowledge. It was a sort of I know everything. In the 21st century the key point is going to be change. I use those quotes from that lecture because I think that reflects the kind of attitude and the kind of change that we see in the action plan that we've presented to the people of Saskatchewan.

This is about change at a manageable pace. It's about going to work to improve the system, to improve the kind of services that people receive all over the province. And so the things that are highlighted in that particular plan are things like the recognition that we have a province-wide hospital system that has community hospitals, northern hospitals, district hospitals, regional hospitals, and provincial hospitals.

We're going to have 12 regional health authorities which will replace the 32 health districts, plus we'll have the Athabasca Health Authority in the North.

We're going to be establishing primary health care teams of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, others, other health care providers in the regional health authorities, to ensure that patients have better access to the most suitable health care provider. And these teams will diagnose and treat illness, but they'll also focus on dealing with prevention of health problems and managing existing ones.

We will have a 24-hour toll-free health line to provide convenient, immediate health information and advice. This will

maybe save a few of the late night trips through blizzards or through storms or over long distances, and it will provide a place where people can get information that they need.

We'll also be establishing the first quality council, a group of professionals who will be continually monitoring what we're doing and making sure that we improve what we do and making sure that people get the best service possible.

Our action plan is something that is a continuous process of renewal. We will be listening carefully to what people say because we will have to make sure that the kinds of things that we wish for the plan and for the services that people have, actually accomplish those services.

And so already we have had suggestions come forward that allow us to adjust what we're doing and develop better ways of doing things. And this comes from the people within the system, but also the people outside of the system.

Now I just want to point out a few things that have been highlighted over the last number of months that we've done since we've announced our plan.

In January I had the pleasure to announce that we have a new cervical cancer screening program for women across the province. And this is building on the good work that's been done with the breast cancer screening program. And so this will be another service that is available for women in our province.

We've also announced a number of points around the retention and recruitment of health professionals of all kinds. This includes some of the bursary programs that are available. Last fall we were able to increase the number of seats at the College of Medicine from 55 to 60. And we're continuing to look at that.

We have been working with the registered nurses. Last spring we were able to bring in legislation that allowed for advanced clinical nurses to be part of our total system. And we know that this is something that's important in the country. And we understand now that Alberta is considering doing the same and British Columbia as well.

One of the things that was announced last week was the fact that we have now put in place our board for the Saskatchewan Surgical Care Network. This will be the first system like this in Canada whereby on a province-wide basis we will manage the waiting lists for non-emergent or urgent surgery. And this will allow us to have better information about how the system works, but it will also allow the surgeons to have a better understanding of how they can flow through in the system.

Dr. Peter Glynn has agreed to be the Chair of that committee. And many of our fine surgeons in Saskatchewan as well as administrators are part of the management team in that particular program.

When we look at what we are trying to accomplish in our health plan for Saskatchewan, what we always have to remember is that the patient comes first. It's the people who are getting served that are the people that are the most important. And many times we forget that all of the things that we do in this

legislature around trying to organize the spending of this present year, \$2.2 billion, really is about making sure that a patient has the proper relationship with the health care provider, whether it's a doctor or dentist, nurse, or whatever.

And so one of the things that I'm very pleased about the enthusiasm that I've seen and the enthusiasm that I've heard as I've met with the people who are working with us on our province-wide plan is the fact that they can see where we are going and what our goal is.

And this plan, I think, is a small piece of the kind of plan that the Throne Speech sets out which is a plan for all areas of our economy and our province. And I think just even the headings that are in the Throne Speech around the economy and the environment, around infrastructure, and around providing quality education to our people, and providing healthy and self-reliant families. All of those ones reflect the fact that we have a plan for the coming years and our goal is to work together with people as we develop this particular plan.

Now it's not often that you get a chance to use some poetry in your speech two days in a row, but I know yesterday that we were challenged as legislators by some of our poets to make sure there was at least one poem in the legislature every day. And so yesterday I got in part of one and a full poem.

And today I'm going to close off my little reflection here by quoting another of our Poet Laureate's poems called, "Reflection." And it doesn't totally apply to me, as you'll quickly hear when I read it. But it is, I think, a very good way of summing up what it is when we do planning, and what it is when we look back, and look at what we're doing now, and then look to the future.

So this is one of Glen Sorestad's poems called, "Reflection," from his book *Ancestral Dances*:

Today my grandfather's bones ache.
My father's back is stiff.
And the ghosts of both
look back at me
while I shave.

The point, Mr. Speaker, is that we have the aches and pains of our grandparents, our great-grandparents, as part of the things that we have to deal with as we plan for the future; as we plan for our children and our grandchildren and our great grandchildren.

And what this government is about is making sure that we reflect where we've come from, but we also reflect where we want to go. And I think where we want to go as a government is to build the Saskatchewan community on a strong, solid economy in a way that will allow us to attract people from all over the world, but also to make sure that we who live here and who have built this place are extremely proud of what we do.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I will be voting in favour of the Throne Speech and against the amendment proposed by the opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to stand in this Assembly to speak on behalf of the constituents of Estevan in response to the Throne Speech.

But before I begin, Mr. Speaker, there are a few people that I would like to acknowledge. And first of all I would like to acknowledge my family: my husband Vic; and my son Terry and his wife Marnell; my daughter Trisha; and of course my grandchildren, Beau, Brooke, Bailee, and Shelby and Tristan. And I would also like to thank my mom and dad at this time and also my extended family for all their love, support and prayers, Mr. Speaker.

And I would also be remiss if I did not thank my dedicated and hard-working constituency assistant, Shelley, who always goes beyond the call of duty to get the job done. And last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank the people of my constituency, the constituency of Estevan.

These are very hard-working people, Mr. Speaker, who are the backbone of this province. And I am humbled that they have chosen me to be their representative in this honoured Assembly. And for this I thank them for their support and encouragement.

Now getting back to the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, this speech really contained nothing more than disappointments for the people of my constituency and indeed the people of the entire province. This Throne Speech was just a re-announcement of previous throne speeches, only the date had been changed and sometimes, Mr. Speaker, even that was questionable.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his entourage did their famous bus tour last summer playing hit-and-miss with the communities of this province. I guess if you were fortunate enough — or perhaps unfortunate enough — that they had to refuel or maybe use washroom facilities, they stopped in your constituency. Otherwise they just zipped on through or bypassed you completely.

I certainly wish that their tour would have included parts of my constituency — or any part of my constituency actually, but especially Highway 47 south of Estevan and also on Highway 18 in the Oungre/Lake Alma area. I know that they would have spent a little more time in my constituency as the bus would have needed a wheel alignment and probably a new windshield. But, Mr. Speaker, as I said before, they chose not to come into my constituency at all. And Estevan incidentally wasn't the only constituency they chose to completely ignore.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech contains statistics claiming that we lead the way for high school graduates and university enrolment rates up to the age of 24 years old. Well above the national average it stated. I have seen the graph that gives this information, and I wish the Throne Speech would have stated what happens after they reach the age of 24.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the next group, the age of 25 to 64 years, the age of people in their productive years, the group that pays most of the taxes, spends most of the money, and drives the economy is far below the national average.

Mr. Speaker, these people need to be given a reason to stay

rather than reasons to leave. After they're educated, they leave. They leave rather than stay and invest in our province. They know that the chances of the government competing with their investment, with their own tax dollars, is a great possibility. The government should be initiating programs that encourage business and investment, not implementing programs that compete with them. Mr. Speaker, I ask them, is this fair?

The current government has no plan — no plan for the economy, no plan for health, no plan for how to deal with their deficit, and no plan for agriculture. The Saskatchewan Party does have a plan and it is a workable plan that can be accomplished within a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, as you and all members are aware, the Saskatchewan Party travelled throughout the province to lay out their Grow Saskatchewan plan. This is a bold plan. It is a good plan. At the meetings I attended the people liked our plan. Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have a lot of faith in the people of this province. Mr. Speaker, it is the current government that we have absolutely no faith in.

Mr. Speaker, again this year in the Throne Speech we hear of their commitment to a long-term safety net in agriculture. Now this keeps playing just like an old record that skips — probably a 78 that was popular about 50 years ago because that's the same era that they're stuck in. We have heard these same words in every Throne Speech and every budget since the NDP ripped up the GRIP contracts they had with the farmers of this province. Rehashing the safety net — last year all we heard about this after the budget was that a tersely worded letter had been sent to the feds.

Mr. Speaker, this government has had nine years to come up with a long-term safety net — something that is bankable. We need action and we need it now. Farmers are going broke. Farms that have been in families for generations are going broke. Crop insurance has hiked their premiums, removed spot-loss hail coverage, and removed the variables. This is the new enhanced crop insurance program.

Mr. Speaker, just last week I received a couple of booklets in the mail. These were sent out by local auctioneers advertising the auction sales in the Southeast. Mr. Speaker, in the two booklets I received there were 41 auction sales listed — 41 farm auction sales listed with two auctioneers. And I can think of about four more auctioneers in the area that I haven't even received listings from yet.

Again this year, we are losing farmers left and right while this government sits twiddling their fingers and not doing a simple thing about it except increasing the crop insurance premiums, in passing.

Mr. Speaker, we have continually seen our population drop and how does this government deal with it? Well instead of implementing programs that would attract people, that would grow our population, they choose to grow government. Population shrinks, government grows. It doesn't make any sense. If a private business is facing hard times do they imply . . . do they hire more employees? The answer, Mr. Speaker, is simple; the answer is no.

In the past four years the provincial government employees have increased by 1,100 people. Last week, Mr. Speaker, StatsCanada released their population figures resulting from the 2001 census. We have less than 1 million people in this province; that's the lowest number since 1981.

This shows that the socialist plan, if they have one, is not working. The Throne Speech boasts of reduced social assistance caseloads to the lowest level in 10 years by increasing participation in the labour force. Mr. Speaker, we have no numbers that substantiate this claim. Perhaps the reduction in caseloads is because many of the people have just given up on this province . . . or pardon me, on this government, like so many others, and left the province.

The NDP promised to create 30,000 new jobs but that has turned into another dismal failure. Twelve thousand jobs have been lost in the last two years. And speaking of NDP broken promises, this government promised to hire 500 more health care providers. Their record is that there are almost 1,200 fewer nurses than in 1999. We were also promised that surgical waiting lists would be cut by 30 per cent. Again the record of this government is that surgical waiting lists have increased by 50 per cent.

We continue to have the longest waiting lists in Canada. But, Mr. Speaker, if it is any comfort, you can now visit the Web site and find out just how far you are down on the waiting list. How comforting!

We are also making the move from elected health boards to fully appointed boards. When the health boards were elected, board members were accountable to the people, Mr. Speaker, the people that put them in that position — the electorate, the people of the province. Appointed board members will be accountable to those who put them in that position — the government.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that our province will participate in the national sex offender registry. I am also pleased that action is being taken to prevent the abuse and exploitation of children through the sex trade. And I would like to commend all the members of this committee, but I would really like to commend and thank my colleague, the member from Humboldt, who brought this to the forefront and persevered to bring this legislation into reality.

Mr. Speaker, earlier I touched on the conditions of highways in my constituency and, as you can imagine, I have had many phone calls and letters regarding the state of the highways. In the western area of my constituency, the highways are extremely poor. But the people in that area have another need as well. That is for cellular service.

There is no cell service in the Gladmar, Lake Alma, Minton and Beaubier areas of my constituency. These hard-working, taxpaying citizens deserve cell service. They feel that the government should be investing money in them, rather than Atlanta-based companies like Retx. So I guess perhaps this government just has too much of Georgia on their mind. So I ask the government to be serious, Mr. Speaker, and support them in this regard. After all, these are people who are paying the bills.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would just like to do a little housekeeping regarding speeches delivered . . . the first one by the member from Regina South. Mr. Speaker, that member proceeded to tell me about my constituency. He says he'll take me around.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned before, those government members and their Partridge Family-style bus tour did not come near my constituency. They couldn't be bothered with the people of Estevan.

I have family and friends that own and operate oil and oil-related companies in the Estevan constituency.

So, Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina South can pass on his so-called knowledge to Dwain Lingenfelter and Doug Anguish if they ever return from that dreaded promised province, Alberta. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, they are more likely to be taken in by that member than I or my constituents are. I trust the knowledge and advice of my constituents. I do not trust the knowledge of the member from Regina South or, for that matter, any member on that side.

But, Mr. Speaker, if that member wants to come to Estevan constituency, perhaps he'll accept this list of businesses to visit. The first step he should visit should be River Bend Nursery. And if he's not tarred and feathered there, he can go to the agriculture implement dealers, the car dealers, the oil companies, industrial communications, retail businesses, and the businesses that have to deal with ISC (Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan). And I would also encourage him to stop in and have a chat with the farmers, especially now after we received the notice of this enhanced program.

Then, he'll know what the people of my constituency really think of the NDP. He will see why the NDP came in a very distant third place in the last provincial election.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we are really going to miss the witty but sometimes sarcastic comments of the Regina South member after the next provincial election. As this member knows, he is in serious danger of losing his seat. But we will miss him and his droll attempts at humour.

(11:15)

But perhaps he should consider seeking the nomination in the Regina Elphinstone riding or the Regina Dewdney riding if he wants to continue his life in politics. If he is successful in doing that, he should keep in mind that he will be sitting in the opposition benches after the next election.

But, Mr. Speaker, he'll probably take my advice about as seriously as I take his.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of days ago the member from Regina Centre, in her response to the Throne Speech, made comments regarding the member from Wood River, saying that he had been living off the public purse.

And I asked that member, Mr. Speaker, what was he doing? Mr. Speaker, the member from Wood River was serving in the armed forces. He was defending the freedoms we enjoy today.

And one of them is the opportunity to speak in this legislature. And when we are given that opportunity, we should at least have the decency to stand up and tell the truth.

And perhaps the member from Regina Lake Centre took some lessons in misleading the public from former NDP cabinet member, Eric Upshall. Mr. Speaker, any . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Order. I would ask members in their remarks to be very careful. Keep all their language parliamentary. And there are certain words that are forbidden, and I . . . or not . . . almost forbidden. And I have the book of bad words here. And if the member would refer to pages approximately 140 to 150, you can look them up before you put them into your speeches.

I ask the member to continue, but keep in mind her remarks.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will keep your comments in mind.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that anyone in this Assembly or anywhere who has served in this country, whether it be with the armed forces or the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police), city police, or anyplace, or any job where they have to put their life on the line, I think we should all respect them. And I would never think of them as a burden to society. They have served us and they do serve us and I'm very proud of them all.

And I just really feel, Mr. Speaker, that an apology would be in order to the member from Wood River, and also to the member from Melville who is a former RCMP officer. And any person who serves in these roles, I think they should be apologized to, Mr. Speaker.

And now that I've ended that, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that there isn't anything new in the Throne Speech that will reverse the trend of job loss, population loss, or lost investment, and it is clear that this government does not have a plan. And I cannot support the Throne Speech. However, I do support the amendment put forth by the member from Moosomin.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Lorjé: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm so pleased to be able to rise today in the House and speak to this very excellent Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, I believe this is the ninth or tenth time that I've been fortunate enough to respond to the Throne Speech, and I have to say that each time I just feel more and more proud of the great job that this government is doing.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased with the great job that you are doing. Your even-handed skill and ability to herd cats — or MLAs, as the case may be — is totally astounding. Thank you for the good job that you are doing preserving our traditions of democracy in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, before I launch into my remarks about this very excellent Throne Speech, I want to take just a moment to

congratulate the newest member of this House — the newly minted representative for Saskatoon-Idylwyld. I have watched his enthusiasm, his keen sense of social justice, and very obvious love and caring for his constituents, with a great sense of pride.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Lorjé: — Now I have to admit that I do not know him nearly as well as I do his wife, who is renowned in Saskatoon for the wonderful work she does for the Saskatoon Open Door Society, and who is such a key player in the professional arts community. Whenever I would meet with her — as we discussed our mutual interest in Persephone Theatre and 25th Street Theatre — she would talk lovingly about her schoolteacher husband.

But I did not get a chance to meet our newest MLA till I actually started to work on his campaign. I was immediately impressed with him, and I can confirm Dawn's good taste and judgment of character. Mr. Speaker, the new member for Saskatoon-Idylwyld is but the latest in a hat trick of election victories for the NDP, confirming also the good taste and judgment of the Saskatchewan electorate.

Before I begin my formal remarks, I should like to take this opportunity to once again thank the constituents of Saskatoon Southeast for the trust they have placed in me by electing me to this very privileged position as their representative in the Legislature.

I spoke just the other day with a group of schoolchildren from St. Luke School in my riding and I was struck anew with the verve and brilliance of so many of the people in my riding. They care passionately about this province, about ensuring that government strikes the right balance between public ventures and private enterprise, about the balance between services and taxes, between individual and community responsibilities. By and large, Mr. Speaker, I can report that they think this government has found the correct balance. In short, they feel that we are doing a good job ensuring fiscal prudence with compassionate, common sense programs.

Mr. Speaker, I have been listening with great interest to the speeches of my colleagues on both sides of the House these past few days. I want to acknowledge right off that I feel all of the speeches have been extremely interesting and I have been very impressed with the quality and the passion of the oratory.

It is not an easy matter to stand in this Chamber and to deliver a speech about your personal and political values and to communicate it in a way that is both compelling and intelligible. I want to congratulate members on all sides of the House for their keen and interesting speeches.

Although I will acknowledge a slight bias in endorsing the views of the government coalition members more so than those of the opposition, nevertheless I've learned a great deal listening to all of them about their hopes and dreams for the future of this great province.

And indeed, Mr. Speaker, as I have said before many times in this House, it is time that we moved beyond — as well as we

are capable — the petty politics of old-fashioned notions of left and right, since in many ways the old ideologies do not fit the new challenges of this century.

So I thank all the members for the hard work and dedication, not to mention good old-fashioned confidence, as they expose for all of us and for the television viewers and for the permanent record we call *Hansard* as they expose their priorities and principles as we work together to ensure the democratic rights of Saskatchewan people.

Having acknowledged all the wonderful speeches that preceded mine, I am now about to do what one should never do. I'm going to single out a couple of speeches, simply because they were delivered in such grand style by two fantastic friends of mine.

Mr. Speaker, when we've all individually finished our turn in the legislature; when we retire, either by choice or by the consent of the majority of the voters in our respective ridings; we will take away memories of the great friendships we've made with our colleagues — whether they be on this side of the House or in the opposition.

People are often amazed that we, as legislators, can scrap it up so much during the proceedings, yet emerge from this red Chamber laughing and joking with the very people we were castigating just moments earlier in the thrust of debate. People sometimes have a hard time distinguishing between the passion of the debate and our real feelings.

They find it hard to believe that firm friendships can develop in this heated atmosphere and they do not perfectly understand that when we trade barbs and political jabs, that we still respect and admire each other despite our political differences. But it is so and that is one of the endearing and enduring strengths of our unique Canadian system of democracy.

In the legislature we trade in rhetoric, not bullets, and our country is all the stronger for it. And we do make lasting friendships, Mr. Speaker. At the risk of offending some I want to single out two very impressive men who have shown such wisdom and humour, leadership and patience as they work for legislative and program changes for their constituents. And their speeches this session were top notch.

I refer to the member for Athabasca, the self-styled athlete, whose hockey prowess is only exceeded by his electoral success. And I refer as well to the retiring, though definitely not shy and retiring, member for Cumberland. They have been the source of much wisdom and guidance for me this past year. And I want to acknowledge the tremendous work they are doing to sensitize all members of this Assembly to the unique and special concerns and dreams of the North. Thank you.

And I want to steal a page from their speaking style, Mr. Speaker. I listened in awe to these two gentlemen as they skilfully wove their personal experiences into a tapestry of beliefs, guiding principles, and calls for action. I was especially impressed with the compelling way they related their life experiences with the ambitions and aspirations of their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week there was a radio news clip about a group of students at the University of Saskatchewan who are concerned that too many young women today would deny that they are feminists, yet believe implicitly in the goals and aims of earlier feminists. These young women are organizing a seminar to inform their peers that feminism is not really about bra burning and militancy, that it is about the way of life that many people today take for granted — equal opportunity for all regardless of gender, equal rights and responsibilities for parents, and a workplace where the only limit to your career ambitions is your own imagination.

They want to demonstrate to other students that feminism is not a dirty word, and I applaud their efforts. And I would only add one little homily that I learned early on in my struggles as a woman — and that is that the personal is political. I've consistently found that to be so throughout my life, and the speeches from the members of Athabasca and Cumberland reminded me once again of that basic truth. The personal is political. Our personal life experiences shape and inform our political beliefs, our aspirations, our values, and our principles.

So with that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a bit in this speech not about lofty-sounding principles or high-minded values of which members on this side of the House have many. But rather I want to talk about a few of my life experiences and how they've shaped my beliefs and why they have led me to this point where I will be wholeheartedly endorsing the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, I've spoken in years past in this House about my mother who lives in a nursing home in Moose Jaw. She is extremely well cared for, and I want to publicly acknowledge the tremendous love and patient care that she receives in Extencicare in Moose Jaw. But the simple fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is that she is in the terminal phase of an Alzheimer's-like disease process and, for her, life is what is carrying on long after the thrill of living is gone.

It is a sad fate for her because, as someone remarked to me at a Speaker's tea a couple of years ago, she had such a hard life. And it is so sad that her end-of-life reward would be to lie in a nursing home, a shrunken little woman weighing scarcely 60 pounds, unable to communicate or even to move.

Still, my mother was — and probably still is — a proud woman. For most of her life, the odds were stacked against her, yet she always showed the steely will and steadfast dignity that all her children loved her for.

(11:30)

She taught us a lot — the six brothers and sisters growing up without a father and relying on the public dole for charitable food and shelter. My mother had determination and a gutsy attitude. And I'm sure she wasn't unique. I'm sure most members in this House could tell similar stories about the hardships and deprivations that our parents had to endure, and the can-do, carry-on-regardless attitude that they had.

My mother taught us a lot of things. She always said: work with what you have; the grass isn't greener on the other side of the fence; you get what you pay for; a job worth doing, is worth

doing well; and never ask someone to do something that you're not prepared to do yourself.

So these principles became our mantra, our way ahead as we worked to get out of the welfare trap. And we succeeded because our mother recognized that her children had potential and because she nurtured our imagination and our ambition. And because she challenged us to be more than we thought we could be.

Now I could tell you many stories, Mr. Speaker, not all of them of the Kraft Dinner and Spam variety, let me assure you. But since I am honoured right now to be the Minister of Post-Secondary Education, I'm going to stick to one story only — that of my mother enrolling both my brother and myself in higher learning.

When I was 16, newly graduated from Mortlach Comprehensive High School, Mr. Speaker, I had no idea what I was going to do with my life beyond the fact that I was ecstatic to have a summer job at Joyners department store in Moose Jaw, for the princely sum of \$34.50 a week. That's about 85 cents an hour, Mr. Speaker.

I was going to stay with my aunt in Moose Jaw, and I figured I was really grown up, moving into the big city and all. When I left home, mom told me that I had to work hard and save all my money because I was going to go to university. And why was I going to go to university? Because she was so mad at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

You see, when I was five my father re-enlisted in the air force because he couldn't find a job as a recently demobilized war vet in his hometown of Eastend. The family moved to Calgary to live on the base there, and my father commuted to the airbase at Claresholm, Alberta.

One weekend, hitching a ride home with a fellow flyer, he was thrown from the truck. This was way before the days of seatbelts, let alone mandatory seatbelts. He was killed instantly. And the RCMP came to our home in the middle of the night to tell my mom she was a widow. When she applied for assistance from the RCAF (Royal Canadian Air Force), they told her she didn't qualify for anything because her husband died off the base. However, they would do one thing for her. Her oldest son could have some money in trust so that when he was old enough he could go to university — but nothing for the girls.

This enraged my mother and she fought back the first chance she got. She enrolled me in university and told me that I had to succeed just to show the military that even though they wouldn't support the girls, her daughters were every bit as good as her son.

So I went off to university, the first one in my family to do so. And the next year, my brother — a bit stubborn and independent like my mom — refused to go to university but registered instead at the old Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw. That college, by the way, was the precursor to what we nowadays call the SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) Palliser Campus.

My brother took a two-year electronics course. I took a

seven-year, two-degree course in psychology. And until I was honoured by the current Premier and chosen to go into cabinet, my brother always earned more than me. But that's not the point. The point is that we both earned our way. And that was only possible because we had access — despite our family income or lack of it — to post-secondary schooling.

Without the grit and determination of my mother, without the student loans and the values we learned at home, we would not have succeeded. So in what is sometimes a clumsy and less than elegant manner, I have been trying to repay my debt both to my mother and to post-secondary educational opportunities as I have been Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training.

Doors have been opened for me and experiences and opportunities that I could not have imagined as a scrawny little welfare brat growing up in Caron, Saskatchewan have been possible because of my mother and education. I salute them both.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Lorjé: — Mr. Speaker, I hope that by now I have convinced at least you, if not all members of this House, that I care very passionately about ensuring that post-secondary training opportunities in Saskatchewan are accessible to all, affordable to all, and of the highest quality for all, whether they pursue their learning at a technical or an academic institution.

And I believe that I owe a debt to the people of Saskatchewan for assisting me at first from age 5 to 16 in basic survival, and then during my university years in underwriting a major part of the total actual cost of my education — and to the politicians of the day who had the wisdom and foresight to set up the student loan program and to give me a chance at the various summer and sessional jobs I had in order to finance my way through those seven long years.

I hope in my five months as Minister of Post-Secondary Education that I have been able to shape some public policies, some budget priorities, some program opportunities that can in a small measure help to repay my debt from so many years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I've had a whole lot of personal learning over this past year. And I want to, at this point, thank the Premier for giving me, first, the opportunity to serve as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and now, as Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training.

I also want to thank all my wonderful staff — my eyes and ears, arms and legs — on those many, many days when I needed to be cloned, needed to have eyes in the back of my head, ears the size of elephants, a cranial capacity beyond human capabilities, and organizational skills that I never did possess. To those staff who have moved on to retirement or other opportunities, to Tim, Robbie, Patricia, Ted, and Jaime, — thanks for all the help. And to those of you still coping with my whims and whimsies, to Nadene, Pearl, Virginia, Don, and Michelle, thank you for always being there. Thank you for your patience and guidance, your humour and your wit. You have my gratitude, my respect, and my admiration.

Mr. Speaker, as I want to make abundantly clear in this speech, Saskatchewan has a whole host of wonderful post-secondary institutions — a clear recognition by both the people and the government of this province that lifelong learning, continuing education, training opportunities beyond the K to 12 system are essential for our citizenry to take their rightful place to fulfill their potential and to contribute to the economy of Saskatchewan.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, right now as I speak, there are in excess of 50,000 students of all ages, from all walks of life, from corner to corner, border to border in Saskatchewan taking courses in our post-secondary education system. That's over 5 per cent of the population studying right now; being helped and taught by 10,000 dedicated men and women, almost as many as there are teachers in the K to 12 system. That is a huge undertaking, Mr. Speaker. And if I were to describe the missions and mandates of all of these post-secondary institutions, the SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) campuses, the regional colleges, the private vocational schools, the universities, we could be here all weekend, Mr. Speaker.

So I'll restrain myself and focus instead on one part of the system, one very important part. And harking back to my earlier theme that the personal is political, I want to talk today about the universities in Saskatchewan, since I am myself a graduate of one of them.

There's another reason I want to focus on the universities, Mr. Speaker. And that's because the opposition keeps harping about growing the economy — an ugly and inelegant phrase, but one that seems to have entered the popular lexicon. So I will use it, and use it to illustrate how the economy of Saskatchewan has diversified, become more complex and challenging, and how it is built upon the very taproots of ingenuity and stubborn determination that formed this province.

We all know that the University of Saskatchewan is nearly as old as the province itself. Indeed we hope that in 2007, the 100th birthday of the U of S (University of Saskatchewan), that we will be successful in showing off the U of S to the world, if we are awarded the World Universiade — the international university games that are the equivalent of the Olympics.

What may not be so well known is that the University of Regina, while technically a much younger university has its roots in the second decade of the 20th century, being originally the Regina College, founded by the Methodists in 1911.

So both universities have been central witnesses, and in many cases major players, to the changing economic landscape in the province as we moved from hunters and trappers before European settlement, to pioneer grain farmers, to larger agricultural producers, to miners, manufacturers, and all the other key elements of our successful, modern-day economy.

Throughout the past nine and one-half decades, the universities have been there — training students, doing the research we needed, and providing the inspiration and ingenuity to diversify our economy.

The face of Saskatchewan is changing, Mr. Speaker. We all witness with sadness and nostalgia the disappearance of the

grain elevators. We see the statistics about the changing nature of our workforce. The farms that have to get bigger and bigger, if agricultural producers are to survive while they compete against market-distorting European and American subsidies. At the same time, we see with some pride, the growing mining sector, third largest in all of Canada; the oil and gas sector, second only to Alberta.

Behind all this change is one constant, and that is the contribution that our universities make to make all of this embracing of change possible. We would not have been able to handle all of the changes the past couple of decades have forced on this province nearly so well if it weren't for the innovation and experience we've received from the universities.

To paraphrase the U of R (University of Regina) president, Dr. David Barnard: In the middle ages great states were known by the presence of cathedrals. Today as we deal with growing urbanization and the need to diversify our economy, this province will survive and thrive in large part because of our universities. They are the modern-day equivalent to the Renaissance cathedrals.

People who preceded us in this Chamber had the wisdom and foresight to establish not one but two universities in Saskatchewan. They understood the fundamental, and growing importance of universities to civilization, particularly to western democratic societies. And they understood the important role that universities play in the social, cultural, and economic advancement of our province.

I invite you to think back to 1905, the year the province of Saskatchewan was formed. Who would have thought then that a grade 12 education would become the basic credential for the labour force? Who would have thought that a university degree would become increasingly the minimum requirement for a growing number of jobs? Who would have thought that 23 per cent of Saskatchewan's 18- to 24-year-olds would be enrolled fulltime at university; that well over 10 per cent of university students would be First Nations or Métis? And who would have thought that about 60 per cent of university students would be women?

Our universities help build capacity all across this province. They have educated generations of Saskatchewan's professional people, and more importantly, they have educated generations of thoughtful Saskatchewan citizens.

(11:45)

Saskatchewan's two universities offer many similar programs. It is good that they do so. First of all, Saskatchewan's tradition is one of balancing social, cultural, and economic development. And so a sound liberal arts and science education is foundational to every university program. Regardless of a student's major, it is essential that they receive a well-rounded education. Never has this been more critical than in today's world — with its social, cultural, and economic complexities. We need people with broad perspectives and deep understandings. A solid grounding in the arts and sciences provides that, and so both universities have at their core the arts and sciences.

Secondly, the demand warrants some common programs. Education and administration and commerce are excellent examples.

While Saskatchewan's universities share a common tradition of the liberal arts and sciences, they have evolved though, Mr. Speaker, in separate and complementary ways. They are not replicas of each other.

For example, both universities offer programs in engineering. While students could study many varieties of engineering at either university, the University of Regina's Faculty of Engineering has developed particular expertise in petroleum engineering, and the University of Saskatchewan's College of Engineering has an emphasis on transportation and electrical engineering.

While the University of Saskatchewan houses the College of Agriculture, the College of Law, and the health sciences colleges, the University of Regina has the province's Faculty of Social Work, the School of Human Justice, the Police Studies program, and the School of Journalism. They are different, in separate and complementary ways.

Both universities also serve the broader community outside of Saskatchewan. For example, the University of Saskatchewan hosts the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. The University of Regina's Police Studies program is becoming a resource for all the Prairie provinces. And the Faculty of Social Work is educating social workers in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, as well as in Saskatchewan.

The Petroleum Technology Research Centre at the University of Regina and the Canadian Light Source, the synchrotron at the University of Saskatchewan are international in scope.

The two universities, as I've said, are different and complementary. Their rivalry belongs — quite properly, Mr. Speaker — on the football field and nowhere else. They have important and different mandates. And now more than ever this province needs both universities strong, proud, and working for the future of Saskatchewan.

They have, as I said, different mandates. So let me talk very briefly about those mandates.

The University of Regina takes its role in contributing to the social, cultural, and economic advancement of Saskatchewan very seriously. In discharging this role it recently chose five academic themes to focus on that not only build on the university's strengths but also align with the strengths and the needs of the province.

Those five academic themes are: culture and heritage, energy and the environment, informatics, population health, and social justice. By focusing on those five areas, the University of Regina is mustering the energies of faculty members across the university and attracting partnerships with the private sector, the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, and community groups.

The University of Regina knows that contemporary problems need contemporary solutions while the traditional disciplines

provide the essential foundation. Working across disciplines and across sectors is the way to synergistically find innovative answers to the most difficult and complex challenges of our world.

The University of Regina majors in co-operative and interdisciplinary work and understands that Saskatchewan will flourish only as a result of the efforts of all sectors.

And the University of Saskatchewan, my alma mater, is an academic community whose mission is to achieve excellence in the scholarly activities of teaching, discovering, preserving, and applying knowledge. The U of S is justifiably proud of its role and reputation as the research-intensive home of our professional, medical, and dental faculties.

And that university is undergoing major and important change right now. Just as the University of Regina has within the past five years renewed over one-half of its academic staff — an accomplishment both challenging and invigorating — the University of Saskatchewan has also embarked upon a major program of renewal.

I quote President Peter MacKinnon, who said:

In the two and a half years that I have been President of the University of Saskatchewan, there is one theme that has continued to inspire me — the remarkable vision of our university founders. They understood that the success of a new province, established only two years before the University itself was inextricably linked to the availability of advanced programs and scholarship on a campus of outstanding beauty. Now I believe that it is time to renew the noble dreams of our founders.

President MacKinnon goes on to say:

In our second century, however, we will face issues unimaginable in the days of our founders. Rapid change and uncertainty have become defining features of our culture. Universities must learn to anticipate and to respond quickly, but without losing sight of those core values that have made them the most enduring of the world's institutions. Boundaries are becoming less distinct. In the new global environment, our faculty and our students must be citizens of the world. Knowledge is the new currency, and as a university we have a weighty responsibility to develop and transmit that knowledge.

And they are doing that, Mr. Speaker. The U of S has recognized the issues of student enrolment pattern changes, the competition for faculty all across North America, and the need for increased differentiation among universities.

So they are building a reinvigorated campus with an intense research focus that maintains strong links to the community. They are determined that the U of S will be known for its adherence to high international standards and its pre-eminence in specific areas of innovative, interdisciplinary programming.

Let me give you just two examples. Just two days ago I attended an announcement of a \$2 million research project that will look at co-operatives all across the continent — a major

piece of social research. And we all know about the synchrotron, the hopes for so many who are working to grow the innovation agenda.

Underlying all this, Mr. Speaker, is a total commitment to the U of S to be known for research and training programs related to Saskatchewan, to Western Canada, the North, and the Great Plains environments of the world. In other words, the University of Saskatchewan has, as one of its key elements as it pursues excellence and change, a true sense of place.

Yes, the university is changing, but it is changing by building on the strengths of the past, strengths that have been nurtured since the university was founded. The U of S will succeed in a way that is uniquely Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I've tried to paint a picture of the incredible importance, indeed the centrality of the two universities in the economy, the hopes and aspirations of this province. I hope I've done so in a way that offends neither one.

I also trust that members will understand that even though I've spent a fair amount of time extolling the virtues of the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, that this in no way diminishes my respect and regard for the important role played by SIAST; the regional colleges; as well as all the federated colleges and Aboriginal educational institutions such as SIFC (Saskatchewan Indian Federated College), SIIT (Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies) and GDI (Gabriel Dumont Institute); as well as the private vocational schools.

But I did think it was important, Mr. Speaker, to address the issue of the universities' mandates and to brag them up just a bit. After all, Mr. Speaker, together these two universities receive over \$311 million of provincial funding and they take that money, that operational support, as well as research money, clinical health fund and other indirect research cost supports to provide innovative research opportunities, exemplary community services, and a quality education for over 30,000 students in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I started this address in reply to the Speech from the Throne commenting that for me at least the personal is political. By that I mean that our life experiences change and shape our values and our priorities. The events of the past year have really emphasized for me the wisdom of that old feminist saying, the personal is political.

I'd like to end my speech today by giving a few more examples. In the past few months, Mr. Speaker, I have visited all four of the SIAST campuses — Parkland in Prince Albert, Palliser in Moose Jaw, Wascana in Regina, and Kelsey in Saskatoon. Overall I was struck with the intense dedication and motivation of the teachers and the incredible determination of the students. I would go into classrooms, particularly basic education classrooms, and the students kept working rather than welcoming the distraction of a tour through their class.

I've been to almost every regional college in the province and I am struck with the sense of pride and recognition of the urgency of the work they do to bring post-secondary educational training opportunities to people in their home communities.

Not many people, it seems, know about the gems that we have in our regional colleges. They should go, it seems to me, from being our best kept secret to being the subject of routine daily coffee shop conversations. The regional colleges are very successful in fulfilling a basic regional educational need, and I applaud them.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, I was very privileged and honoured to be appointed to cabinet as the minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Provincial Secretary. It was an exhilarating, whirlwind time, those nine short months holding that portfolio, and it changed my point of view quite considerably.

I never would have thought, for instance, that I would spend half a day in a limousine with the Prince of Wales. And I certainly could not have imagined going to South Africa to attend a UN (United Nations) conference against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. I was there, incidentally, when the world trade towers were crumbled on September 11, and being on foreign soil at that tragic time brought me a feeling of keen and intense love for this country of Canada.

While I was in South Africa I toured our twin province of the Free State and I would like to tell you just briefly about one experience as I was leaving the township. I was escorted by two police officers since the government was very concerned about the high levels of violence and concerned for the safety of a cabinet minister from Saskatchewan. As we left I asked one of the police officers what his name was in his native language. He told me, Leef-hoo. When I asked him what that meant he said, dead. It means simply, dead. I was shocked and then I asked the other officer what his name translated to in English and he told me that it meant, my spirit doesn't sleep here.

Apparently it was quite common 20 or 25 years ago for parents to give their children names that reflected the despair and hopelessness that apartheid created. This strengthened my resolve that we must work even harder for a bright future for all of our citizens here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I sat down earlier this week and reviewed my calendar of events for last summer. It was a wonderful summer of learning. I attended over 30 powwows and I even learned to dance a bit, even though I have to be honest and admit here that one young man told me that my fancy dancing looked a lot more like just plain hopping around. I was slightly more successful at the Métis jigs that I went to.

(12:00)

I visited many First Nations in Saskatchewan and I was struck with the indomitable spirit and incredible patience of so many of the people that I met. From Thunderchild Reserve in the Northwest to Okanese in the South, everywhere I went, people were open, generous, and welcoming. Even at wakes, as people gathered to honour loved ones who had died, they still found time to share a joke or a funny story with me and to patiently teach me some traditional ways.

I learned first hand about the cultural significance of tobacco. And I even came to understand, as a diehard feminist, why it is so important for women to wear a long skirt during traditional

powwows. The healing gatherings I attended, even the indescribable sadness and grief on Little Black Bear First Nation after the shocking and tragic events last summer, all were important and compelling experiences for me.

Mr. Speaker, for too long in this province we have had two solitudes. I encourage every member of this Assembly to take time this year to visit a First Nation, to learn first hand about the dreams and ambitions of the residents, to see the eager children, innocent and hopeful, to listen to the elders, wise and patient.

You will come away with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the treaties as living, breathing contracts between Indians and the federal government and the provincial government. You will see why it is so critical that we move quickly and aggressively to ensure that we have a representative workforce. It is key to the future of this province, Mr. Speaker. It is key to the success of Saskatchewan, its businesses, and all our citizens.

You know, some 80 per cent of non-Aboriginal people in the province are employed, and 20 per cent — seniors, permanently disabled people, and others — are unemployed. But for First Nations and Métis people, these statistics are reversed. There is 80 per cent unemployment. More to the point, 75 per cent of First Nations and Métis families have incomes under \$25,000 a year. It's pretty hard to see how you can build a successful and sustained economy with this kind of income distribution.

Mr. Speaker, 52 per cent of Aboriginal people are under the age of 20, compared to less than 30 per cent of non-Aboriginals. Generally speaking, the Aboriginal population is 10 years younger than the non-Aboriginal population. And by the year 2045, First Nations and Métis people will be one-third of the population of Saskatchewan.

You know, in 15 years the Aboriginal share of new labour force entrants will be 30 per cent, but if they are not educated to enter the workforce, the jobs may be there but the workers will not be.

These grim statistics can only be reversed through education, Mr. Speaker. That is why it is so critical, so imperative, that we move forward on the second year of our Métis and off-reserve strategy. That is why, Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to table the post-secondary sector Aboriginal education and training plan. I encourage all members of this House to study it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close off with a couple of Cree phrases that I was taught this last summer.

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

Education is sacred, education is important.

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

Let's keep working together. Let's respect each other. That is the good way.

Mr. Speaker, during the bus tour this summer, I often heard our Premier say the future is not ours to know, but it is ours to choose and to build.

We have a great province here, Mr. Speaker. We're the fourth richest in all of Canada; third in mineral production. We have the second fastest growing economy.

But we must also be first in inclusiveness, Mr. Speaker. We must lead the way in making sure that all people in Saskatchewan get a good education and get good jobs.

Mr. Speaker, the future is not ours to know, but it is ours to choose and to build. The choices we make today will determine our future. And for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I will definitely be voting for the Throne Speech. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had lengthy comments I wanted to offer today, but I looked at the clock and I realize that I'm not going to get anywhere near finished in the 25 minutes or so that are left.

I would like to offer my congratulations though to the Minister of Post-Secondary Education who just delivered what I feel is a very personal view of her role and her obligations as the minister and did a very effective job. I would even go so far as to say she waxed eloquent. That's in direct contrast to some of the droning speeches that I heard earlier. But nevertheless, I think credit needs to be given where credit is due, and I'd like to recognize the minister for that speech.

Mr. Speaker, I'm gratified to be here today. I'm gratified to have the opportunity to stand in this House and address the members of this House and to deal with some of the very important issues that face this province. I'm gratified for the privilege that democracy offers us. And even though it becomes very frustrating from time to time, we still have the opportunity to say what we feel needs to be said on behalf of our constituents.

I remember the first day after I was elected, walking up toward the building, approaching the building as so many of us have done over the years and looking up at the grandeur of this particular facility and being amazed at my good fortune, obviously — but also a little bit awed by the obligation and responsibility that comes with being an elected member.

And as I climbed the stairs to the front door, one question kept coming back. It's a very simple question and maybe underwhelming in its simplicity, but what am I doing here? And I've asked that question many times and the question I think has been answered several times over. What I'm doing here is representing the people who put their confidence in me as their elected representative. I am here on a day-to-day basis to make sure that their concerns are heard. And I want to express my appreciation to the constituents of Cypress Hills and to thank them for the opportunity to serve them in the best capacity that I'm capable of doing.

I'd like to also acknowledge this morning the support of my family. I heard the member from Sutherland the other day acknowledge the support of his wife and his children, and I have wanted to make that point on several occasions in this House. None of us serve in this capacity without the, either tacit or willing, support in varying degrees of our families back

home. And the sacrifice that we make being here is not nearly as significant, I believe, Mr. Speaker, as the sacrifice made by the family members that we leave behind.

In my own case, I usually drive to the city of Regina from my home in Eastend on a Sunday night — it's a four-hour trip — and I don't return as a rule until late Friday evening. And during those times, my wife and daughter are at home alone to tend to the business of family life and all the other peculiar little things that arise in the time span, time frame, that I am away.

So today I would like to acknowledge specifically my wife Marilyn, and my daughter Brooklyn, who spend at this time each year by themselves basically while I am here about the province's business.

One of the things related to that particular note of appreciation is the fact that we as the missing family members, or the away family members, we miss opportunities to share in the special events of our family members who are at home.

And in my own case, this past week my daughter has been performing in the music festival in Shaunavon each day, either as a singer or as a pianist and maybe participating in musical theatre. And prior to my being elected, those were occasions that I was able to spend being with my wife and watching my daughter perform. And I haven't had the opportunity to do that in the last three springs.

And so I miss that and I think that my daughter misses my presence there. It's a sacrifice that we've made as a family. And I know that it's something that my daughter may not understand at this point, but I'm sure she will accept as she comes to appreciate the importance of the job that we do on behalf of our constituents at home and the people generally throughout the province.

As you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Cypress Hills constituency is a tremendously large constituency. And I have alluded to that on several previous occasions in speeches I've made to the House. If you get in your vehicle at the very south end and drive as straight north as possible at 100 kilometres an hour, it would take you two and a half hours to cross the length of the constituency. At the same speed, going from the Alberta border to just outside of Webb on the eastern boundary of the Cypress Hills, you've got an hour's drive.

So given those kind of dimensions you can understand the vast size of the constituency of Cypress Hills. From the community of Consul in the extreme southwest to the community of Success which would be the most northeasterly community. From the southern points of Frontier to the northernmost points of Leader. From Maple Creek to Webb. A tremendous, tremendous area, filled with wonderful people, very supportive people. People that, whether we agree or not politically, have learned that during the interim between elections I am there to serve them. And I appreciate again the opportunity to do that.

One of the things that does concern me, having mentioned the size of the constituency of Cypress Hills, however, is that there is a prospect with the redrawing of electoral boundaries sometime prior to the next election or immediately thereafter, we are going to have an even larger territory to serve in that part

of the province. We've had enough of a population loss, which I want to address in a few minutes, to require an expanding of those boundaries. And it's going to make it even more difficult to serve adequately the people in that vast area. We will try; we will try to the best of our ability. But that is a serious impediment to the democratic system I believe, having constituencies that are so tremendously large.

And that's why I might add at this point that it is of great importance to me personally, but to the people of constituencies like mine and similar large and underpopulated areas, that we have a plan in place in this province to keep people who are willing to stay otherwise, but to keep people in the communities that are encompassed by these large constituency boundaries. We cannot afford, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to lose one more person from those vast areas because of the impact that has not just on the economy, not just on the social structure but on the very democratic elements that we talk about having representation on a very personal plane.

And I think that the principle of democracy is eroded, to some extent, as boundaries get ever larger in rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have the privilege of serving literally hundreds of farmers, an equal number of ranchers, small-business people, operators of all kinds of businesses throughout the constituency. I have the privilege of serving teachers and health care workers, homemakers, retirees, artists, and many, many other individuals of various occupations.

Even though we are a small population and a large area, we have a very eclectic group of people in my constituency, and there are communities there that are home to tremendous capability and talent and wonderful artists. And I would encourage anybody who — from this Assembly — anybody who has not yet visited the communities in the Cypress Hills area to do that, to make that part of their opportunity for travel this summer, and to come see what our small communities have to offer, not just in the way of wonderful, artistic works, but also in terms of some of the great museums we have down there. Some of them are in very small communities but have done . . . represent wonderful efforts to display the history and even what they believe to be the future of their areas. And tremendous volunteerism has been exhibited by the development of these museums in many small communities.

And one other thing I'd like to allude to is the wonderful murals and similar efforts at artistic expression that adorn the walls of buildings in a couple of my communities. But the one that comes to mind first and foremost is the community of Sceptre, where artists have come in and painted the walls of some used and some unoccupied buildings but have depicted various, important, historical scenes from that area in those murals. And it's a very attractive feature for the community to attract people into their community and to tell them a little bit about themselves.

And one other thing I would like to do before we get into the substance of my presentation today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is to talk about the people who work in my office. I currently have two individuals who jointly share the role of constituency assistants in the Cypress Hills constituency office and I'd like to acknowledge them today. They are Sherry Webster and Beth

Humphrey.

Those two ladies have been on my staff at differing intervals. Mrs. Webster has been part of my staff since day one and Mrs. Humphrey has just come on staff in the last couple of months. And together, those two ladies do a wonderful job of supporting me, researching for me, writing letters, communicating with constituents, handling the telephone calls, and generally trying to make me look good. It's a difficult task but they're doing as good a job as they can with what they've got to work. I really appreciate their efforts on my behalf.

Mr. Speaker, the theme of the Speech from the Throne this year was province of opportunity. What a wonderful title. Mr. Speaker, I can't think of a province that has more opportunity than the province of Saskatchewan. I have no dispute with the title.

I think that the members of the government have often tried to portray us as purveyors of doom and gloom. Mr. Speaker, I'm here to say today that nobody — nobody — believes in this province more than me personally, and my colleagues in the official opposition. We have every reason to be optimistic about the potential, about the opportunity that exists in this province.

If there's any concern on our part about what the . . . is in . . . held for the future of this province is the way in which it is governed, frankly. And if there is doom and gloom in this province, I would say that our view is that that is part of the government's record, frankly. And we have looked at their record of governance and we've seen the statistical information and the evidence of the results of their government's policies. And the doom and gloom arises as a direct result of what we see are the policies implemented that have caused this province not to realize its full potential.

And consequently to be called the purveyors of doom and gloom is not just misleading, it's unfortunate. Because there is no lock, there is no lock on love for this province by any one political party. And I think that that point needs to be made very clearly this morning, Mr. Speaker.

We are loyal, we are enthusiastic, and we believe the opportunities and the potentialities of this province to be limitless. What we've seen unfortunately is limitations put on realizing that opportunity and potential through the policies of the current government.

A few minutes ago I was talking about the size of the constituency of Cypress Hills and how we cannot afford to lose any more population. I had brought with me a copy of a printout, statistics from the most recent census conducted by Statistics Canada. And looking through this, I just wanted to make a particular note of the constituencies in the extreme Southwest — particularly my own, the constituency of Kindersley, and the constituency of Wood River.

Cypress Hills in the last five years, according to StatsCanada, has lost 880 people. Now I understand there might be an opportunity for some adjustment of these figures. But by and large, I think that would be fairly representative of the reality I'm familiar with anecdotally and through personal experience — a loss of 880 people in the Cypress Hills constituency in the

last five years.

Now if you can extrapolate that over the past decade since the previous census was undertaken, that's 1,700-plus people that have gone from that constituency. You know, that's the size of two or three small communities. It's as though they would have been obliterated from the map.

Unfortunately — or maybe fortunately — all those losses don't come from just one community; they come from all the communities. But you can see the consequences of that loss in each of those communities with decaying houses, abandoned houses, closed businesses, and failing opportunities.

The constituency of Kindersley has lost 1,081 people and Wood River has lost 1,577 people. Those two latter figures taken from the last census which accounts for the last five years.

Now you add those up and just out of the extreme southwest corner we have tremendous losses that cannot continue unabated. There has to be something put in place to challenge people to stay here, to keep people here, to give them a reason to stay in this province, and to contribute to its growth and its opportunity.

And that's why I think the population issue is so significant. While the losses that have been announced have been downplayed by the government and by their sympathizers, the reality is that those losses mean very significant things to areas that are underpopulated already. And we simply cannot continue to have that kind of out-migration in the rural areas, particularly in the Southwest.

I digress just a little bit, Mr. Speaker, to say that I am also . . . I'm affronted by the assertion from members of the government that call us the Alberta-envy party.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is, the reality is that for most of the people that live in the southwest part of the province, and in my constituency in particular, Alberta is the land of opportunity. That's where their medical care happens. That's where they do their shopping. That's where their children go to post-graduate school, by and large. That makes Alberta much more relevant to the people in Cypress Hills than Regina or Saskatoon. Proximity is very important. And it's not that we envy Alberta, but it is our reality in terms of where we get our services and where we seek our professional help.

And I don't know anybody in Regina, frankly, Mr. Speaker, who would willingly drive to Saskatoon if they didn't have to. We in the southwest part of the province are closer to health care in Medicine Hat than we are in Swift Current even, in many instances, but certainly closer than we are to Regina or Saskatoon.

So we have an immediate opportunity to make direct comparisons. We don't like having to do that, but that's the reality we're faced with. And I think that because we're in a position to make those direct comparisons and live with that particular proximity, we shouldn't be automatically called Alberta-envy or people of Alberta-envy.

That's not true. We think that the opportunities that Alberta

provides for many residents of southwest Saskatchewan, can be, ought to be, available to us in Saskatchewan. And unfortunately that has not happened and it is our desire to see the economy grow and the population grow so that we can have the availability of very important services right close to where we live.

I just want to refer briefly to the article out of *The Leader-Post* dated March 13, Wednesday, March 13, 2002, referring to the drop in population. And I guess this particular article, well I won't quote from it at length, this puts into perspective the significance of the population loss as we've seen in this province:

Not since Ronald Reagan took the president's office and (Prince) Charles married Diana have fewer people lived in Saskatchewan, according to the latest national census.

Just under 979,000 people currently call Saskatchewan home.

And that's according to the numbers that were released just about 10 days ago.

That's the lowest number since 1981 and a drop of more than 11,000, or 1.1 per cent, from the most recent census in 1996.

. . . Saskatchewan people moved around both within and outside of provincial boundaries during the five-year gap between 1996 and 2001 . . .

But listen to this article . . . or I mean this particular sentence from this article, Mr. Speaker:

Alberta's thriving economy continued to lure Saskatchewan residents across the border, which partially accounted for that province leading the country in population growth at 10.3 per cent. The national rate was four per cent.

Now the reason I want to point that out and emphasize that, Mr. Speaker, is that as I alluded to earlier, when young people graduate from the high schools of the Cypress Hills constituency or from the Wood River constituency or the Kindersley constituency, without very many exceptions, Alberta is the destination of choice.

And I need to know — I need to know — what the government intends to do about changing that. When I go to speak at schools, I talk to those young people and I ask them to assume their responsibility as citizens of Saskatchewan. I challenge them to look at what Saskatchewan has to offer. I promote the University of Saskatchewan, the secondary . . . I'm sorry, the post-secondary institutions that this province very proudly funds. I ask them to look at opportunities that exist here. And if they must leave to go to school, would they please come back.

But too many times, Mr. Speaker, the response from those students is, if we go to Alberta to school, we're not coming back — we're not coming back. And we have witnessed that first hand over and over and over again.

I don't deliberately send them to Alberta. The official

opposition does not send them to Alberta. Their parents especially don't send them to Alberta. Those young people are mature enough to make some important distinctions and choices for themselves. They look at the realistic opportunities, they make the comparison, they make the choice themselves. It's an unfortunate choice, Mr. Speaker. We need to level the playing field to give those young people every reasonable opportunity and every desire to stay in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, many people on the government side deny the reality of this scene. They don't know anybody from their constituencies who go to Alberta, or they know very few. They don't live with this reality. But because they don't live with the reality, they deny the reality. And I find that very offensive. It's as though the border starts outside of Moose Jaw. It's as though anything west of Moose Jaw doesn't matter.

And I think that when the government starts taking this whole scenario seriously, they will have shown themselves as a legitimate, province-wide government. At this time, Mr. Speaker, they do not address the issues that compel my constituents to make this very unfortunate choice. And I think that it's time, high time, that the government paid attention to that.

I want to quote my own leader on that very subject. Mr. Speaker, our leader said, in view of the statistical information that showed Saskatchewan's population plummeting like a stone, he said:

When you have a province that people want to leave rather than coming to it, you have to say that the policies and actions of the government are driving people, are driving taxpayers from the province.

And that unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, is the reality that we live with in the Southwest.

You've heard, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure several times, and you're about to hear many more times, the statistics about population loss in this province. I alluded in that article to the fact that the population is the lowest it's been in 20 years . . .

(12:30)

The Speaker: — Order. Members of the Assembly, it is now 12:30 and pursuant to rule 14(3) that is incumbent upon me at this time to put the motion which is the amendment to the main speech.

We have been debating the original motion along with the amendment. And I will reread the original motion first and then I will reread the amendment. We will be voting on the amendment.

The motion is:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour The Honourable Lynda M. Haverstock, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

That was moved by the member from Saskatoon Greystone, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Idylwyld.

Pursuant to that there is an amendment, which has been moved by the member from Moosomin and seconded by the member of Rosetown-Biggar, which we will shortly vote. And the amendment reads:

That the following words be added after the word, session:

however this Assembly expresses its non-confidence in the provincial government which has failed to put forward a plan to deal with the growing crisis of out-migration from our province and a lack of economic growth caused by the short-sighted policies of the current Premier and cabinet.

The vote then is on the amendment to the motion.

The division bells rang from 12:31 until 12:41.

Amendment negatived on the following recorded division.

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. Order. Order, please. Remain standing please, members. Order, please. We must be able to hear every member's vote distinctly, members.

Yeas — 21

Hermanson	Elhard	Heppner
Julé	Krawetz	Boyd
Toth	Bjornerud	Eagles
McMorris	D'Autremont	Bakken
Wall	Kwiatkowski	Brkich
Weekes	Hart	Allchurch
Peters	Huyghebaert	Hillson

Nays — 29

Calvert	Addley	Atkinson
Hagel	Lautermilch	Serby
Melenchuk	Cline	Sonntag
Osika	Lorjé	Kasperski
Goulet	Van Mulligen	Prebble
Belanger	Crofford	Axworthy
Nilson	Hamilton	Harper
Forbes	Jones	Higgins
Trew	Wartman	Thomson
Yates	McCall	

The Speaker: — Order, order, order.

(12:45)

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — I would ask leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I thank all members and thank the current speaker on the debate. Mr. Speaker, we have three very important guests in your gallery today. That would be Kevin DeWalt, chief executive officer of Minds Eye Pictures, well known to many of us. And with Kevin today, Mr. Tim Johnson, who is the executive vice-president of programming for PAX TV. And with Mr. DeWalt and Mr. Johnson another well known Saskatchewan citizen, Valerie Creighton, who is the CEO (chief executive officer) of SaskFILM.

Mr. Speaker, members will be interested to know that Mr. Johnson, who is the executive vice-president of programming for PAX TV, represents the seventh largest broadcast television network in the United States. It's a network that features shows which promote very positive role models and programming. And Mr. Johnson just moments ago flew into Regina. He's here to tour the Canada-Saskatchewan sound stage, very near to completion here in the capital city, and will be touring a variety of locations in and around Regina.

PAX and Minds Eye are discussing the potential of several television projects for the province. And if I may say, Mr. Speaker, not just several weeks ago I joined Mr. DeWalt and Ms. Creighton at the Babelsberg studios just outside of Munich, Germany — Europe's largest studios and oldest studio — where Minds Eye have signed a memorandum of understanding for a film production in our province where Minds Eye and Saskatchewan people are well known and highly regarded.

So I would invite all members this afternoon to give a very warm welcome to Mr. Tim Johnson from PAX TV, to Kevin DeWalt, and Valerie Creighton.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why was the member from Milestone on his feet? Debate resumes on the main motion . . . Why is the member on her feet?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to add my welcome as Minister of Culture for the province and I want to say that I couldn't be happier to have such talented people interested in our province and we look forward to all the partnerships that we are able to do with people around the world. And we thank you very much for considering our community and thank people like Kevin and Valerie for all the good work they do. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Wood River on his feet?

Mr. Huyghebaert: — To introduce guests.

Leave granted.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the behalf of the official opposition, I'd also like to share with the Premier inviting the guests to the gallery this afternoon, and welcome them to Regina and Saskatchewan to look at some of our beautiful country and the sound stage that maybe we can get some business out of. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Prebble, seconded by Mr. Forbes.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise today to enter debate and to make a few remarks on the Speech from the Throne. And, Mr. Speaker, it was a very good Speech from the Throne that lays out our government's plans and vision for this province. But first of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes to welcome our newest member from Saskatoon Idylwyld.

It hasn't been that long since my first day of walking into this Assembly and taking my seat. I remember the sense of awe in entering the House and the Assembly and assuming that privilege. And, Mr. Speaker, it was a sense of awe at the history and also the future that is held within this Assembly. But, Mr. Speaker, when we also walk into this Assembly we bring with us that sense of responsibility as representatives of our constituency. And if any . . . if the first few days of this session have been any indication, the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld will do his constituents proud. And I'm sure that he will make huge contributions to the good government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as other members have done, I would like to take a few minutes and just thank my family for all the support and advice and encouragement that they have given to me throughout the years. And not only since politics but from the very beginning, Mr. Speaker, when I have become involved in many activities throughout the province, the family has been very supportive.

And I'm sure that all of us in this House would recognize that we couldn't do this job, we wouldn't have the opportunity to be here if it wasn't for the sacrifices and support that we get from our families. They can be our best encouragement and support, but also our sharpest critics at times. But we couldn't do the job without them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of . . . Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of representing the constituents of Moose Jaw Wakamow. And I'm sure the

members in this House are aware of the success that Moose Jaw has achieved over the last number of years — the Tunnels of Moose Jaw, the Temple Gardens Mineral Spa, the murals throughout the city, the revitalization that's going on in our infamous River Street, museums, art galleries, shops, stores. Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on for a lengthy bit of time talking about Moose Jaw.

But, Mr. Speaker, the real source of pride that I have as a representative of Moose Jaw Wakamow gets down to the simple fact that in Moose Jaw it's the people that make the difference.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — None of the successes, none of the changes, none of the innovative ideas that have never come about . . . or would have never come about but for the vision, the dreams, and the hard work of the people of Moose Jaw.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I think of those people, one of the first that springs to mind is Yvette Moore. She's a well-known local artist and entrepreneur. She owns and operates an art gallery in a restored land titles building — Mr. Speaker, a building that her family and herself renovated and restored.

This art gallery not only sells and displays Yvette's artwork, but she is an enthusiastic and shameless supporter and promoter of other Saskatchewan artists and specialty crafts. As a strong supporter of Moose Jaw, Yvette gives generously of her time and energy to various boards and projects within the city. And also she gives back to the community in so many other ways.

And Yvette Moore is not alone, Mr. Speaker. We have Michelle Powers from the Moose Jaw Tourism who has worked tirelessly to build a new tourism centre in Moose Jaw. Deb Thorne from the Temple Gardens Mineral Spa, the spa that's currently undergoing an expansion.

And also Gary Hyland, a former teacher, a writer, a founder of the Saskatchewan Festival of Words, and he will soon be the recipient of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal awarded here later next month.

But Gary is also a driving force behind our proposed new cultural centre in Moose Jaw. And the public fundraising drive for that was just kicked off a couple of days ago and we heard a member's statement about it today. But knowing these folks in Moose Jaw, I know that the construction and renovation will be underway in no time flat. They'll have the job done.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the very active people in Moose Jaw. But the really exciting part is, is that success builds on success. Enthusiasm is contagious. And this positive attitude that's displayed by these few people in Moose Jaw is flourishing within our city.

Mr. Speaker, the four pillars spoken about in the Throne Speech, the pillars on which we will strengthen our province's future, speak of investment in the economy and in the environment; an investment in infrastructure to build our province.

Mr. Speaker, we can read the throne speeches and we hear many of these comments and they may seem remote statements. So what I like to do, Mr. Speaker, is take these statements and think of the investments in our community, how it relates to myself, how it relates to my family, how it relates to my community. And I would encourage others to do this also. It makes it easier to understand what the plan is that this government has laid out and how it relates to each and everyone of us.

Moose Jaw has invested in the economy. Municipal and private partners have worked together with support from this provincial government, Mr. Speaker, one step at a time. And each step over the years has built a solid foundation for Moose Jaw to grow and flourish.

Mr. Speaker, another one of those steps is the Moose Jaw Wakamow valley. It's another source of pride for all of our citizens. The valley authority along with the manager Bob Willis have worked tirelessly to revitalize this beautiful piece of Moose Jaw. Walking and biking trails, wildflower gardens, bird watching in the summer; skating and cross-country skiing in the winter — the valley holds something special for all of us and is truly one of the best assets of our city.

Another one of those steps, Mr. Speaker, that has been taken in our community, one more addition to our community's foundation.

Mr. Speaker, another one of the four pillars in the Throne Speech talks of the provision of quality education. Quality education is essential to the success of our province, and it's essential to expanding the economy and providing opportunities for our youth. Community schools have been spoken very highly of, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very pleased to have a community school in Moose Jaw Wakamow. Riverview Collegiate and Empire School play important roles within our community and in our city.

The adoption of the School^{PLUS} program integrating education and human services and building on these community schools and allowing these community schools to adjust and address the problems and concerns that are in their communities.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I see that time is running late, and I have many more things. I'm going to stand . . . on Monday I promise I'll stand and talk about Moose Jaw forever. But right now, seeing the lateness of the day, I would move that we adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the House be now adjourned.

The Speaker: — This House will stand adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m. I wish everybody a good weekend and see everybody back at 1:30.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:58.

CORRIGENDUM

On page 134 of *Hansard* No. 5A Wednesday, March 20, 2002,
the line beginning

Mr. Elhard: — . . . hear we lobbied
should read:

Mr. Elhard: — . . . year we lobbied.

On the same page, the line beginning

Mr. Elhard: — This government
should read:

Mr. Elhard: — . . . (inaudible) . . . government

We apologize for these errors.