



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

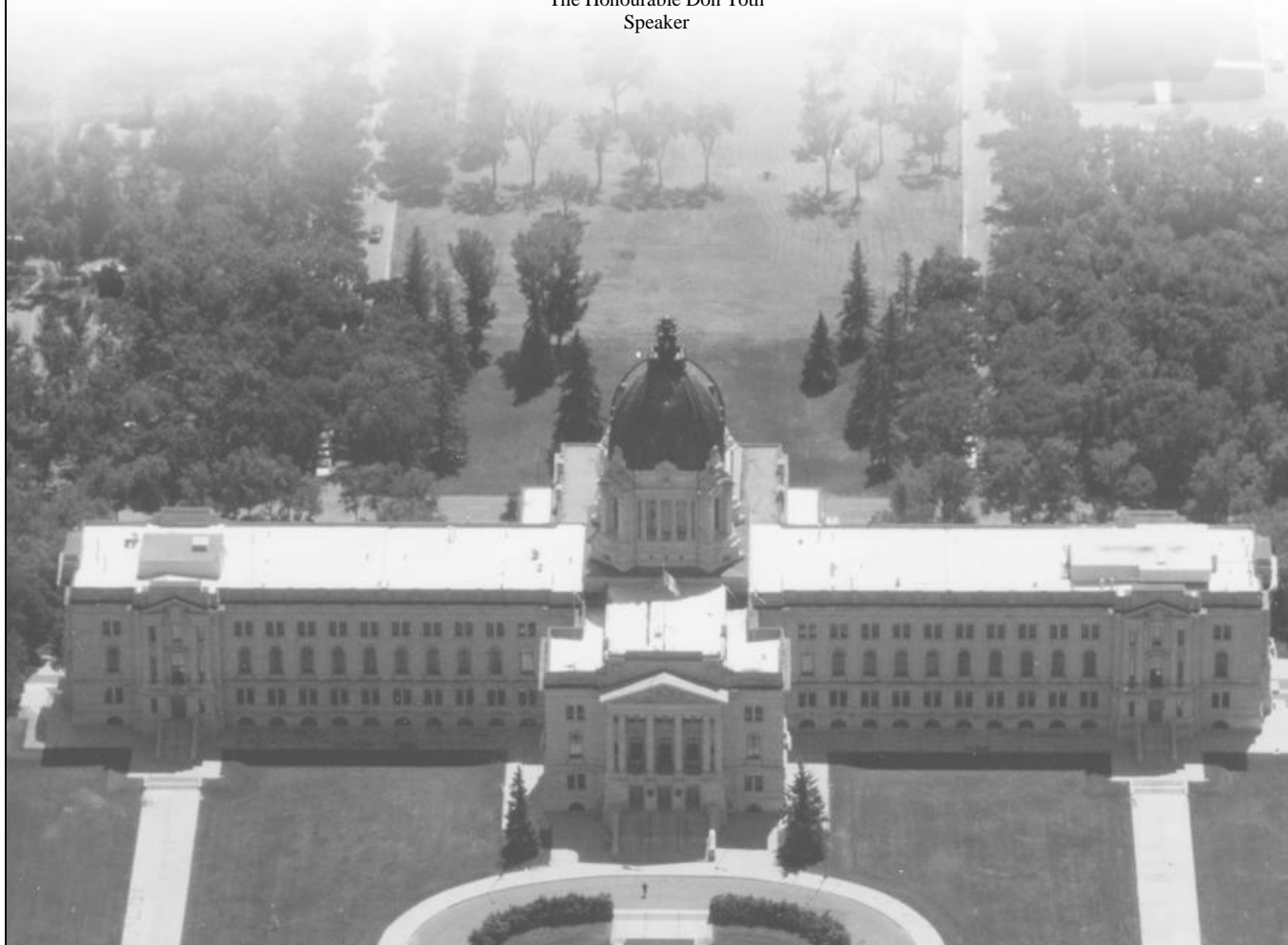
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Plan for Climate Change

The Deputy Speaker: — The debate before the House is a government motion. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a delight to again rejoin the debate on this important government motion. I'd like to take a few minutes if I can to recap, to review, because I know people are tuning in now after 7 o'clock. They're home from work and they want to know what's been going on in the House today, and so I'd like to give a review of what's going on and then introduce some more of my points that I'd like to bring forward in this debate.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're here tonight talking about a government motion — the one that the Hon. Minister of Environment has put forward — and it's a three-paragraph motion. I won't read it, but I'll just summarize it if I may. And I know that several people tonight will actually have the opportunity to read it, to hear it.

But the first paragraph talks about the Assembly supporting the government's plan to address climate change — for one, that it balances the “environmental protection with economic growth, thereby ensuring the well-being and future prosperity of Saskatchewan families . . .”

But then they talk about in the next paragraph the Saskatchewan plan, that we should support it. It essentially talks about “direct offset payments into the Saskatchewan Technology Fund to fund research into the development of technology needed to help the world reduce and control carbon emission; and further,” and this is the crux of the matter in many ways, “That this honourable Assembly encourage the government to actively promote the Saskatchewan plan at the United Nations COP 15 Conference in Copenhagen, in December of 2009.”

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I raised a couple of concerns with this motion right off the bat. I thought that this was an unusual motion because largely it could have been dealt with by the Bill or — you know, we'll talk a little bit about the plan — but the Bill that was introduced last May. I believe it was May 11th. Just before we ended the House and we went for summer break, it would have been. And then it died on the order papers, didn't even make it to second reading, unfortunately. Then we could have had a very good discussion. It could have been in committee, but instead it just died, and we're not sure whether that Bill will be reintroduced.

We understand, we've heard tonight or this afternoon that the intention is to reintroduce it sometime we understand, perhaps in the spring. Now we sure hope it's not again in May because, you know, the current government is halfway through its mandate, and if it goes into May, then clearly it may not be passed as well. And then we're into the last year of the mandate

of this government, and that's really unfortunate because this government in its election did talk about a plan, a promise to reduce carbon emissions, and by a significant amount. And they broke that promise. The minister was clear that they were not going to do that, not keep that promise, and they broke it. And you know it's interesting because I've heard other ministers break promises. This government does break promises at a fairly frequent rate.

Sometimes they just ignore those promises. I'm thinking in Social Services where we have a promise to recall the all-party committee on children who've been exploited through the sex trade. It was part of the minister's mandate letter. That promise has been ignored. They have not even acknowledged the promise. And so clearly promises are an issue for this government.

So this motion is odd. It should have been a Bill. The Bill should have been with us, and we should have been discussing it, debating it. But instead tonight we're debating a motion, and we have no idea what the plan is. There's just nothing there.

The other point I wanted to make about the motion though, and I talked about it this afternoon, was how . . . I'm not sure if the minister understands the purpose of her trip. I mean, not that I know or can tell her what the purpose of her trip is, but when you're going to a United Nations conference, you usually are part of a national team. You don't go as a provincial team. That's unusual.

Now I can remember when we were in Montreal in 2005. Because it was in Canada, Saskatchewan did actually send a large contingent of people there, but it was in Montreal and there were other events at the same time. This is in Europe. This is odd. They're sending three people. And I'm not sure whether the other two, who are from the department, are the top people in the department when it comes to climate change policy. They may be. I'm not sure. I know there are significant people in the department who know an awful lot about this topic. I don't see their names on the list. I see a couple of names that I know their expertise is in other areas, but I'm not sure if this is one of them.

But it talks about promoting the Saskatchewan plan. But really the work that needs to be done at Copenhagen, and I know the hour is getting late for Copenhagen, is the idea is to reach a treaty because the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012. And so this is very timely. This is the time. Time is of the essence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to get it right. And if we don't get it right now, then we have a problem.

And I think that this is an odd motion. I mean she does recognize, the minister does recognize that there's a responsibility to the world. And she talks about needing to help the world reduce and control carbon emission. And so I suppose we should hang our hat on that phrase, but really there's much more to it than that. We have a moral obligation.

My colleague from Regina Coronation Park talked at length about the global commitment we have, a moral commitment to our world. And he used the example of young people in Africa. I know that he and the member from Saskatoon Eastview had

particular experiences in Africa because they did a parliamentary exchange to Africa. And so I think he knows of which he speaks.

Myself, I raised the issue of what's happening here in Canada and in North America and whether it's the hurricane disaster that happened in New Orleans or whether it's what we see happening in the Arctic. We heard that today on the news that citizens in the Arctic are very concerned about the success of what happens in Copenhagen, and so they're pinning a lot on this. They're pinning a lot on Canada to take a leadership role.

And it's not just a leadership role as if we want to be leader of the world. We want to be leaders with the world. There's over 150, 180 countries being there. We want to work shoulder to shoulder with countries across the globe to solve this international issue.

And so while we bring a Saskatchewan perspective, and that's very important because we've done a lot of very, very good work here. And the carbon capture, the PTRC [Petroleum Technology Research Centre] over at University of Regina is a great example of that. We should be talking about that. Absolutely we should be talking about that. But we need to make sure that we get a treaty, and if not a treaty, a framework signed.

And as I said earlier, that this was not a trade show. This is not a time to be thinking about new customers. This is a time to be thinking about how we're going to get it right in this world.

As my colleague from Regina Coronation Park talked about, how do we look at our children? How do we look at our children's children if they know we had an opportunity to get it right, if we had the opportunity to get it right but we chose not to?

Now we know that quite often the argument comes up about the economy versus the environment. And that is absolutely a false argument. They go hand in hand together. Absolutely they go hand in hand together. You cannot have one without the other. If you do not have a healthy environment, you cannot have a healthy economy, and vice versa. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a false argument, and I really think there's a problem there.

So I think, like I said, before I go on to my new points for tonight, I wanted to make the points that first we have a real problem with the government motion. We think there should be a Bill. There should be a Bill.

And of course the minister and her staff . . . As I was saying earlier, when I was minister of Environment, I actually did attend a United Nations framework conference on climate change. It was in Montreal in 2005. And I can tell you, it is a wonderful thing. It is a, in many ways, life-changing experience because you get the chance to spend time with leaders around the world. And you come back with a global perspective. But you know, when you're there you're talking about Saskatchewan. You're talking about things that you know of.

And in Saskatchewan we have a lot to talk about, whether it's the grasslands sinks, carbon sinks that we have in the prairies or the boreal forest. We have a huge . . . well half our province is a

forest, boreal forest, and that plays a huge role in terms of capturing carbon. And so people want to know about our experience here. We have some unique experiences that we can share with others around the world, and one of those is carbon capture. But that's not the only one.

Think globally, act locally — huge, huge principle that I hope the minister takes with her, and that she actually brings to life in the Ministry of Environment. This is very important.

But finally when I review the motion that . . . Where is the plan? Where is the plan? They talk about the plan and just want us to blindly endorse a plan that there doesn't seem to be any details. And clearly we need to have those details.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier gave quite a talk this afternoon about his views around climate change and what should be happening. And he raised the TD [Toronto-Dominion] report, the one that just came out. And of course that was commissioned by the TD group and was commissioned and carried out by the Pembina Institute and the David Suzuki Foundation. And we actually talked a little bit about that before. But I wanted to review this because we talked about how closely this government has tied its wagon to the federal Conservatives, the Harper plan, and clearly how goes the Harper climate change plan, so goes the plan in Saskatchewan. And they can't be separated, and we see that in so many different ways.

And so I just wanted to raise a flag around some of the comments that the Premier said because when we have conversations and dialogue around this, we need to hear from all perspectives, all perspectives. We cannot have this fortress Saskatchewan where if the scaremongering around Saskatchewan . . . Will it hurt Saskatchewan? Will it hurt Saskatchewan? And then right away, up go the walls.

We have to have a good, frank discussion about this. And I think this is an important topic to have. I think that when we go through, and if we do the right thing about climate change, it is going to impact us all. It's going to impact us in a positive way.

And there will have to be changes that we make, no doubt about it. No doubt about it. But I think that we cannot, we cannot put our hands over our ears and say, we do not want to hear this. We do not want to hear this. And quite often I see that from the government side. They'll put their hands over their ears and their hat over their eyes and say, we don't want to hear any more of this because it's just going to hurt Saskatchewan. Well I don't know if it is. We have to have a frank discussion about it. And so tonight we have that.

And so I just want to quote from, I believe it was *The Globe and Mail*, a Jeffrey Simpson column from October 29. And the headline is, "Once again, pie-in-the-sky promises Ottawa can't keep." And I think this is a very good perspective that I think it's important that we hear. Do we have to agree with it? No. We don't have to agree with it, but we do have to hear it. We have to hear all sorts of voices on this so we can make a reasoned decision about how we should proceed.

And so this is what the columnist Jeffrey Simpson said. The target, and I quote:

The target is a 20-per-cent reduction in Canada's greenhouse . . . emissions from 2006 levels by 2020. Forget it. That won't and can't happen — at least not the way the Conservatives are suggesting.

It's hard to know whom the Conservatives are fooling with this target. Other countries' experts know it won't be achieved with the policies on offer. Canadian experts know the number is for headline consumption only. The government must know its own policies will fail.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have some questions. These seem to be the same numbers this government is using, and they're asking us on blind faith to adopt this kind of motion without details. And yet we read these kinds of articles in the paper, *The Globe and Mail*. And we read them in the *Leader-Post*, and we read them in *The StarPhoenix*. And we're supposed to accept that? Just accept that? I find that hard to believe.

And so our job as members of the opposition is to be critical, is to ask for transparency, to ask for details. And so that's what we're doing tonight. That's what we're doing tonight.

[19:15]

Well here I just want to continue on the quote here, because this does talk about the study. And I quote:

The study was financed by the Toronto-Dominion Bank, framed by the Suzuki Foundation and the Pembina Institute, and done by the country's leading climate-change-simulation company, MJKA of Vancouver.

The study shows convincingly that the government's policies will not work and, as such, confirms previous studies done by other organizations. The bank, now housing the country's leading economic "think tank" (TD Economics), doesn't endorse the study, but finds its analysis and conclusions "robust," which means highly credible.

So they don't endorse it. They just think this is very worthwhile thinking about because, as they used the word, it's robust, which means it has an awful lot to offer.

I'd like to continue, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Put another way, there would be a small overall national . . . cost and significant interregional economic flows from fossil-fuel-producing Alberta and Saskatchewan to other parts of Canada. But, even after those interregional flows, Alberta would still experience the country's strongest economic growth, and Canada's overall economic growth would remain strong. (The cost of doing nothing is considerable, of course, in the long term for Alberta, Canada and the world.)

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at that point they're not referencing Saskatchewan. We can maybe assume that Saskatchewan's in the same boat as Alberta, that of course it would have an impact, but our economic growth would still be strong. But the cost of doing nothing is huge, is huge. So have they counted

that into it as well?

And I'd like to conclude the quote here from this article and it goes:

Once before, Canada went to a climate-change conference, at Kyoto, and made promises it could not and did not keep. It would appear a repeat performance is in the making. Or, to put things differently: new government, same script.

So we have, at the federal level, real problems. And so we hope this government at the provincial level as part of a federal team can say, listen, let's get it right. Let's get it right. And, you know, it's interesting. I've heard some people refer on the Internet to the Copenhagen conference as the Hopenhagen, that there is a lot of hope. People are feeling really positive, and people are out there with all sorts of ideas to get the points across.

And one — I did a member statement about this a week or two ago — 350.org, talking about how different groups across thousands of organizations around the world, I think there was over 170, 180 countries that had different events symbolizing the number 350 where they are trying to get the point across to leaders to do something at Copenhagen. So let's really try to make sure something can happen in Copenhagen.

Now what's going to happen at Copenhagen? Of course, this is the COP 15, the 15th Conference of the Parties. And of course it's the highest body of the United Nations Framework on Climate Change and consists of environment ministers who meet once a year to discuss the convention's accomplishments. And so this is an important annual gathering. And it's good that we will have some representation to ensure that our federal minister does the work that needs to be done.

The goal of the conference is to create a global agreement to address climate change that will include all countries of the world. So why is it important? Well over a decade . . . And we're familiar with this, but just to make sure it gets on the record, most countries joined an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to begin to consider what can be done to reduce global warming and to cope with the outcomes. So in 1997, a number of nations approved an addition to the treaty, the Kyoto Protocol, which has more powerful and legally binding measures. And of course we understand that Canada was part of that.

In Bali, 2000, all parties agreed on the Bali Action Plan. And with that came the working conditions for negotiations that . . . for up to COP 15 in Copenhagen.

Developments in the world since the Kyoto Protocol, which was negotiated in '97 shows that a new agreement is needed. And of course this is very interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because a couple of things have emerged since in '97. It's amazing when we think of the past 12 years. The world seems to continue on. Are things at all very different? Well no, they really are different. Of course, we see the price of oil has soared. Really soared last year; it's come down.

But the other thing that's been really noteworthy is the fact that

China now has replaced the USA [United States of America] as the largest emitter of greenhouse gases. And of course, we know India can't be far behind. So the players are changing as well

And so it's really time to think about, how can we do this? How can we make this happen? It's a different world since '97 and Kyoto, so Copenhagen is a significant time. And many accounts agree that Copenhagen conference represents more or less the last chance, the last best chance to achieve an agreement, and if the agreement is to be approved and ratified, for it to come into force before the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

Now it has been proven . . . And you know I have to tell you that when I was in Montreal in December of 2005, and it was quite an event actually, you think you know when you go to these conferences what the situation will be like. And every morning we would have greetings and messages from the different countries from around the world, and how they would be responded to. And you know that in the background in the different rooms that the different agreements are being hammered out. And in fact there was some 40 different agreements hammered out in Montreal. And I think to Canada's credit, that was a very good, very good conference.

And so we have the same circumstance here where we can actually move things forward quickly if the governments decide that this is the thing to do. It can turn on a dime. The ministers of environment will be present and do have the authority to act. And so we need to make sure that our minister goes and says to the federal minister, make sure your ducks are all in a row because we want to see things happen in Copenhagen. We're not just going for a holiday. We're not just going for a trade show. We want this to be important.

And I think that this would a huge feather, an impressive feather in the cap of all of the Canadian delegation if they go, and if they can show and work shoulder to shoulder with people right across the world to make sure this happens. So this is huge, what could happen in Copenhagen, because if we don't get it right, then the timeline of 2012 is looming right in front of us. And if there's not a commitment, not even to get a framework, then we have a problem.

But there are problems, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And of course we know that Canada did sign on to the Kyoto Protocol, but it's failed to meet its commitments, and so it's rapidly losing respect on the international stage. And we know that in many ways, but I mean the most significant, the most significant event that showed this was apparently at the climate change talks in Thailand just last month, in October 2009. Eighty countries staged a walkout during Jim Prentice's speech.

And Jim Prentice, the Minister of Environment of Canada, must have got the message — we expect more. When 80 countries walk out, you know, when you're at these events, people are very polite. They don't walk out just for nothing else to do. They must have been sending a clear, clear message. And so I hope that the Canadian government has heard the message.

It's very important that, if we are to show the leadership that I'm thinking that we do have, and people look to us as Canada, as a country that typically does have its act together and knows

what the right things are to do. But Canada's reputation in this, in the international stage is really slipping. And we see this on many fronts, whether it's the United Nations work around climate change — and even now, when we get close to December, and I'll be talking about this more — around disabilities.

You can name several, you can name several agreements that the federal government is walking away from. And that's really unfortunate because . . . And we know that this provincial government can do an awful lot to say to its federal counterparts, let's get our act together. Let's get this thing done, and let's get it done right because the world is looking to us to get it done, to get it done right. So Copenhagen, let's make sure this happens.

So we understand that it, Copenhagen, there will be well over 10,000 people. These are huge events, some 189 different countries. There will be the government officials who will be there. There will be the non-government, the NGOs [non-governmental organization] will be there to make sure that their voices are heard and that this is not a closed-door event, that people will be putting pressure on. And we should expect that and welcome that because that's how you get these things done right.

So what do you think the message will be from Saskatchewan? Clearly, if you read the motion, they're going to be promoting their plan. But we don't know what the plan is because it hasn't been tabled. So where's the plan . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . She says you make it up. Are they going to make it up? They're going to write it up on the plane — the plan on the plane . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . He's going to call it in.

Well we know what they've said about the climate change, and we know that there's some issues. And here it was quite a week. In May, this is what the minister said. And I quote:

I said all along that the position of our government is to balance the economy with the environment. And we have to consider making sure that Saskatchewan, while we currently are leading the country, Mr. Speaker, that we remain in a good position. And we will make sure that the decisions that we make keep Saskatchewan competitive.

Now on one hand, how can you argue with that? Clearly we want to be competitive, but the world is much more complex than that. Being solely, only thinking about being competitive is what got us into this mess. There is some moral obligations here. There's some environmental obligations. And when you have a Minister of Environment talking about being competitive as the only benchmark she has, what kind of a minister is that? What kind of a minister thinks only of being competitive? I have some questions about that.

Now I think it is time. Well we'll see. We'll see. I am hopeful. I am hopeful when she's going to Copenhagen, she'll come back much more with a world view. She will be acting locally, but thinking globally. And she will . . . Maybe we will get a Bill, after she comes back from Copenhagen, that has decent benchmarks.

But then I want to go on and talk about what did the Premier . . .

I mean we've heard him speak earlier today, and I think this is consistent to what he said. This is what he said on May 12. And I quote:

... we moved away from NDP targets because we want to see the economic momentum of the province continue because it's that economic momentum that will pay for these carbon capture initiatives, that will pay for initiatives to make sure we are more environmentally sustainable in the future.

And clearly again pretty upfront statement. And you can't see too much wrong with that except that, you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have to have that moral reasoning before. I mean the economic ... We want to be the momentum that's happening, but at the same time there has to be an overall framework on this moving forward. I mean it's sort of like you're going to work really hard, make lots of money, and then you're going to make some plans. No, you have to have a vision beforehand. We want to know what that vision is beforehand. What is the plan? What is the plan? And we just don't see it at all. And there's so many more questions we have about that.

But then they go on and say, well what did we do? What did the NDP actually do about this? And, Mr. Speaker, I am really happy to talk about some of the things that we did in the last little while. And of course they talked about some of the things we did under the former leadership of Premier Romanow. And he did an excellent job, especially around the carbon capture that was really a very important initiative over at the PTRC. You know, as a former minister myself, I was quite familiar with it. And very important, so I'm very glad to see that that happened.

But what is our record? What have we actually done? What have we actually done? Now they talked a lot about things that they will do. And now we know that they're well into their third year. They're past the second year mark, well into their third year. But we haven't really seen a lot of action — a lot of words, a lot of words, but not a lot of action.

Well we built enough wind power capacity to provide electricity for 73,000 homes. Now they're saying they're going to build more. Well we're going to look forward to that, and we hope that actually happens. We haven't seen it yet, but we hope ... Why did it take two years to get to an announcement? I am not sure. And we pioneered carbon capture and storage technology. And they acknowledged that, and that was very, very important.

[19:30]

But some of the other things we did, promoted energy conservation through programs like EnerGuide, which provides assistance for Saskatchewan families to retrofit their homes to be more energy efficient. And this is such an important program, and we're very happy that we could have been part of that and made that happen.

We know with the rising costs, and of course we do have some concerns about the rising utility rates in this province from SaskPower and SaskEnergy. We're not sure what's going to happen with them. It's a bit of a shell game; they're reducing

rates one month and then increasing them again. And so we're not quite sure what's going to happen over there. But this is an important program.

And we heard earlier today some questions around the 20 per cent commitment that the Premier had made in Quebec. And we've not seen any action on that. SaskPower says we can only do 9 per cent; 9 per cent is all we can do. And we don't see them pushing them to say, 9 per cent isn't good enough; it's got to be 20 per cent. The Premier made the commitment, and to me it almost sounds, you know what it sounds like to me? It sounds like a promise broken, yet another promise broken. And so this is important.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one that I am very happy about, some of the things that we did around the Saskatchewan home energy improvement program where we were able to provide to 500 low-income families each year for five years — and this government continued this; this is a good thing — a program in the fall where low-income families received about \$200 worth of goods, whether that was low-flow faucets, plastic sealants for their windows, or whether it was some caulking, and some new lights, energy-efficient lights.

But it was really an important event in the fall that happened with SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] students in several communities throughout the province. I know there was at least a dozen, if not 15 or more communities that were involved in this. It was a five-year program, coordinated too through the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army would put forward the names from the different communities around the province, and we just went out there and blitzed them.

And I'm not sure if some of the members in the government side has done this. Many members on this side, when we were in government, had done it. And it was a lot of fun to go into a home and talk about energy efficiency and what you can be doing to promote energy efficiency. There you go, that the first step on that journey of energy efficiency and conservation begins in the home. And this was really worthwhile because many of the folks that I know in my riding, it's hard for them to take that first step, to spend the 50 bucks or the 100 bucks and see the return, but clearly they need to do that. Clearly they needed to do that.

The other one that I wanted to talk a bit about was reducing PST [provincial sales tax] on energy-efficient appliances to encourage more Saskatchewan families to buy them, and provided more than 16,000 homeowners with rebates and grants for programmable thermostats, Energy Star appliances, and home upgrading programs. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to say it was one of the first initiatives we did after the election of 2003, in the fall of 2003, was to announce the rebates on energy-efficient appliances in the home. I believe they were the washers and the dishwashers and things like that and fridges and stoves. And it was a phenomenal thing how we were able to track how well, what kind of an impact this had on the environment.

But yet it was an economic issue because people had to buy those appliances. And here they were buying the right appliances, and we were encouraging them. And in fact at some

point I think we had figured out that the reduction in terms of the CO₂ emissions had some phenomenal amount, in terms of coal that we did not need to burn. Our wind turbines, we would call them ghost wind turbines because actually we were saving the CO₂ and the energy. And so it was a very good, very good program, and we're glad to see that that's continued on.

And of course we set targets that would have achieved the highest per capita reduction in greenhouse gases of any province in Canada. The energy and climate change plan committed to stabilize the greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. That's next year. Are these guys on track for doing it next year? I don't think so.

And reducing emissions by 32 per cent of 2004 levels by 2020 and 80 per cent by 2050, now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those are impressive goals. Their promises are there. We've got their promises. We'll hear more about that. But I want to talk a little bit about how are we going to achieve, how are we going to achieve this because this is the question. We don't see a plan. We don't see a plan.

We know they talk a lot about the carbon capture, clean coal thing. And I'm familiar with that, and I think that's worth about 8 megatonnes of CO₂ emission, unless they've got more, unless they've increased it significantly, but that's the number we were used to hearing. But I want to talk a little bit more about our plan because there can be a plan, there can be a successful plan, a plan that people can be proud of here in Saskatchewan.

Now we also established a Green Initiatives Fund with 4.9 million for programs, for support for sustainable communities, green technology commercialization, and green energy conservation.

And then also, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and we'd all be familiar with this — we established the \$320 million Green Future Fund with proceeds from the sale of the government's share of NewGrade Upgrader. And we saw that 320 million disappear into the GRF [General Revenue Fund]. The Minister of Environment wasn't quite sure where it went, but that's where it went, and then it went into other things. But clearly they could have done so much more with that in terms of investing those profits in technologies that would reduce the CO₂ emissions here in Saskatchewan. And of course the \$40 million energy conservation loan program during the 2007 election, that would have paid for energy conservation and energy-efficient upgrades.

So there is so much that we were doing, and of course it has been lost. But they are the government, and now we look forward to seeing what their plan is. But I wanted to talk about what can be in a plan because there has been a lot of good work on plans around the world.

Now interestingly, when I was in Montreal at the United Nations Conference, I was able to have lunch, be sitting with some of the folks from BP, Beyond Petroleum from London, England. And they were very interested in our carbon capture program, and they were very familiar with it.

But he told me about a really interesting idea, that if I may, Mr. Deputy Speaker, take a few minutes to talk about. And I know

many people would say, and I think this might be one of those times where a picture is worth a thousand words. But I can't show you the picture on this page, so I am going to have to describe it. And it may take me about a thousand words to describe it. But many of the folks would have this.

This is from our green strategy energy and climate change plan. And it's a page out of that about how can you do a plan. But this is something now, when you see the graph and it's called Saskatchewan's emissions reduction wedge. And I'm not sure where the concept came from. I had heard about it in Montreal from the folks at BP, Beyond Petroleum, formerly known as British Petroleum. They had this very interesting idea about how do you tackle a problem like CO₂ emissions that are going up, going up like that. But how do you tackle a problem like that that seems to be insurmountable, particularly for Saskatchewan. How can you tackle that problem?

Now the other people who did this type of graph are the people from Princeton, Princeton University. In fact if you go on the Internet and you type in Princeton wedges, you'll come up with a graph like that's on this page. And it's interesting because we have people in Princeton talking about this. You have the people in London, England talking about it. You have people in Montreal talking about it. And actually I think the people . . . I was not the minister at the time when they developed this graph, but I just think it's the greatest idea.

But my colleague from Regina Lakeview became minister and took this on and did a great job. But I understand that it came maybe from the national council or the Round Table on the Environment and the Economy — the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. They had a meeting, and they talked about the wedges. How can you turn the corner on a problem? When you see a graph going straight up like that, at an angle, it's insurmountable. We should just give up. We should just give up and go home. Well we can't do that. We can't do that in this world. People are looking to us for leadership, and this is a really interesting idea.

So what you do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you can visualize this. Your graph is going up like that, and you wanted at some point to turn that line and go down like that. So you're up like that, and you want it to turn around like that. So how do you do that on a fulcrum like that? Well you have a series of wedges, a series of triangles, and they all start out as very small pieces, but you have five or six of these wedges. And what can you do? And they all start out very small, but over the course of time, over the course of 20, 30, 40 years, you can have a significant impact on the problem you're trying to solve.

So this is what we had — Saskatchewan's emission reduction wedge. And I think it's a very worthwhile diagram. And I hope the minister now, she has a copy of this. I know she often has it in the House, and she'll stand up and wave it actually — the report. I don't know if she's actually looked at this one. But I think it's worth looking at, and many of her folks will be familiar with it.

So what are the five things that we were talking about doing? What were the five things?

The first one, the first one was conservation and efficiency. We

know, and in fact actually we've heard the committee, the Standing Committee on Crowns when they were talking about energy, the best kilowatt or the easiest kilowatt to produce is one you don't need to because you've done good conservation. And so this is really important. Conservation and efficiency are important initiatives that we know we can do.

And actually, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is an opportunity here for our province. This is really where the environment and the economy meet hand in hand. Because if you've got people working on conservation and efficiency, then you really do have a triple bottom line of sustainable economic environmental growth. This is what it's all about, truly. So if you can master conservation and efficiency.

And I talked about some of the initiatives that we had already done, and whether they were around energy efficient appliances, whether they were retrofitting your home, that type of thing. But we need to take a look at industry. How can they do it better? How can they do it better? And so this is truly a worthwhile wedge, and I think that it's important. But again, like I said earlier, the Premier had promised 20 per cent reduction in energy through the use of conservation. And we're just not seeing that.

The other wedge was around carbon capture and storage in the oil and gas, electricity sector. So this probably does play into their plan a bit because we do recognize the importance of carbon capture and storage and the impact it can have in oil and gas and electricity sectors. That's really important that we do good work around that, that we just don't walk away from what's happening in the oil and gas and the electricity sector. So that's important.

The third wedge was around increasing the use of renewable energy. And this is so important. Like, as I talked earlier, we had done enough to power 73,000 homes — 73,000 homes — and that's what's happening tonight here in Saskatchewan. They have talked about how they want to do much more, and we hope that does happen. And if that does happen, that will have a huge impact on CO₂ emissions.

Again the proof will be in the pudding because, you know, we've seen many promises from the government side that have been quietly forgotten. Some have been small; some of them have been huge. And of course the biggest one has been the Minister of Environment, her own promise from the campaign where they had set a prior goal around CO₂ emissions and then broke that promise. So is this also in that area?

Now the other one that I think is important, the fourth wedge which is particularly important for Saskatchewan, promote the creation of natural carbon sinks. Now for Saskatchewan, that's a really innovative one. And I hope the minister has her people working on this, because whether it's a boreal forest — which we know, and the reports were coming out in the newspapers today and yesterday about how important the boreal forest is in the world, in the northern hemisphere in terms of carbon capture — it's a natural sink. And what are we doing to make sure we have healthy natural sinks here in Saskatchewan?

[19:45]

And of course we also have the grasslands, a very important part of Saskatchewan, and one that we cannot ignore in terms of what it can be, how it can be effective in terms of carbon sinks.

The fifth wedge that I want to talk about is the one around reducing methane and other emissions from our oil, gas, and agricultural sector. And I think this is an important one because — and this is one that I would really like to hear the minister, when she is talking about her plan, talk about the role of agriculture — because we know that in Saskatchewan agriculture is a huge part of our economy, but it's also a huge part of our environment. And how do you connect the two? It's a significant challenge. And whether it's through tillage or whether it's through the inputs, this is an important area that Saskatchewan can show some real leadership. And I'm hoping that again we can really show some real leadership around the agricultural sector, and of course from our oil and gas sector.

So those are some components that you can have for a significant plan. You can have conservation efficiency. You've got to keep the promise though. And you can talk about carbon capture, and that's a very good thing. You can talk about the use of renewable energy, another promise and we've got to hear what's happening there. You can talk about the natural carbon sinks, and we have not heard the minister talk anything about that. And we have to talk about methane and the other emissions that come from our oil, gas, and our agricultural sector. This is a huge, huge thing.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those are some of the challenges that we have. Yet they can be solved, but if only we heard about them. And I don't know whether the minister just got the information about going to Copenhagen, and that's why the motion came forward and we're not seeing a Bill. I would have preferred to see a Bill so we could actually have something we can hang our hat on.

But I would be remiss if I did not talk about a couple of things before I wrapped up here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that is of course the impact . . . And I hope the Minister of Social Services has been leaning on the Minister of Environment. I know they're desk mates, and they can talk about this. But in the world, climate change is having a huge impact on those less fortunate.

And if we have an opportunity while we are acting locally, we should also think globally. It's very important, especially when we talk about the millennium development goals. And so we see the millennium campaign, End Poverty 2015. This is of course an international campaign talking about the impact that we have, that climate change has around the world, in particularly in the Third World.

And it's an important one that hey, I mean, this is everyone's issue. This is everyone's issue, and so you cannot just say this is about industry. This is about poverty as well. And so I have before me a document to End Poverty 2015, the millennium campaign, *The MDG Path to a Climate Change Solution*. And MDG stands for millennium development goals, and the title is *Seal A Just Deal. Seal A Just Deal*.

And I think when we go to Copenhagen, we should be talking about that. It's an interesting document. And of course, in many

ways we think that doesn't have too much to do with us, but it sure does have an awful lot with us. And in fact I just want to read one aspect of it because this is so important. This is so important. The impact of climate change on the millennium development goals:

Threat caused by climate change.

... Climate change will have a direct impact on environmental sustainability by: fundamentally altering ecosystem relationships; changing the quality and quantity of natural resources and biodiversity; reducing ecosystem productivity.

And goal 7 of the millennium development goals is ensuring environmental sustainability. And so while we can say, what's that got to do with poverty, it has everything to do with poverty. Because we know that, actually in Saskatchewan in rural communities, that those who are closest to the land actually sometimes don't have the highest income. And we know that to be a fact. We know that farmers many times are facing some real challenges. So the sustainability issues are huge.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a couple of weeks ago when I was at the 350.org demonstration in Saskatoon along with my colleague from Saskatoon Massey Place, I ran into a professor from the University of Saskatchewan who works at the Saskatchewan Research Council, Dr. Elaine Wheaton. Actually I first met her in Montreal. And we had quite a discussion. I was telling her about the Princeton wedges because I think actually it can apply to many other problems we face in Saskatchewan, i.e., the foster care issue. You have ... [inaudible] ... foster kids going up. How do you turn that around? It's a problem faced by all Canadians, all Canadian governments.

But she raised the issue around drought — and drought, and what we have. And we've seen that one. We've seen the Minister of Agriculture talk about the drought in the Southwest. These are real issues. These are real issues. These have issues on how well people can live their lives. It's a real challenge.

But I do want to say to the minister that if she is, happens to be in Copenhagen, if she is in Copenhagen, I would recommend that she drop by a couple of other places in Europe if she's doing a European tour.

The first place she should go to is Norway, in many ways an oil-producing country like our province, an economy that's tied heavily to the production of oil, and see the kind of things that they've done. Here is a country that's met the Kyoto benchmarks. And they seem to be doing all right. In fact they're doing very, very well. They're one of the first countries to come out of the global recession because of precisely the kind of things they've been able to do around Kyoto, and tying the economy and the environment together and saying, we want to have a sustainable economy. This is hugely important.

The other place I would recommend the minister go when she is in Europe is she should go to Geneva. She should go to Geneva and drop in on the United Nations complex, particularly the ILO, the International Labour Organization. And maybe she wanted to take the Minister of Labour along. I think it's very worthwhile because the tie, the tie between working people and

the economy and the environment is huge — is huge. It's not just a niche discussion we're having here. For working people around the world, climate change is important and the ILO has done some amazing, amazing work around sustainability. And I think this is an important issue.

But I would encourage the Minister of Environment to really think about how they can link these things together. She should be talking to the Minister of Social Services around poverty, talking to the Minister of Labour around ILO and how this can all be part of the solution. How they can be part of the solution, and talking to people around the world. So I really do hope that she comes back, she comes back with a vision and a plan and really on fire in terms and comes up to the Premier — and maybe the Premier will be back from Washington — talking about how we can do things so much better here in Saskatchewan. We can do things so much better.

I want to conclude on just two comments here. One, this is an article from the *Calgary Sun*. The *Calgary Sun*, and this is from the 15th of November. Not that long ago, Mr. Speaker. And this is what they were talking about in anticipation of what might happen in Copenhagen. The headline is "Climate talks nothing but hot air — Global warming conference in Denmark 'doesn't look promising,' says environment minister."

But I am personally very glad that our minister, if she goes, she will champion the cause of the world and really tackle climate change.

But this is what the quote is. And I'll quote here: "Earlier this month ... " And I'll quote:

Earlier this month, Michael Martin, Canada's chief climate-change negotiator, admitted [and I quote] "we are clearly a long way from a treaty."

[The story goes on.] A senior federal official puts it more bluntly, saying the only strategy occupying the war room these days is "how to get in and out of Copenhagen without being blamed for what's not going to happen."

Now, I hope, I hope if the Minister of Environment from Saskatchewan goes, she's much more positive than getting in and out of there without being blamed for what's not going to happen. No, I hope she's going to have spent some time in there talking to Mr. Prentice and saying, let's get this done right. Let's do this thing right, and get it done tonight. Let's do it. Let's make sure it happens.

Now one of the most powerful things — and I just want to end on this, Mr. Deputy Speaker — is that one of the most powerful parts of the climate-change conference, and I'm sure it will happen in Copenhagen, is that there will be youth. In fact I know that there will be one youth from Saskatchewan. In fact she has been at several of these, and this is Rosa Kossick Kouri. Many people would know Rosa. She will be in Copenhagen and she will be watching what our minister does. And she was in Montreal. In fact she was in Bali as well.

And I think about this quite often. This was a very, very powerful moment — very powerful moment when the youth stood up and spoke to the thousands of delegates in Montreal.

And as there will be 10,000 delegates in Copenhagen, I hope the minister takes time to listen to what the youth has to say. Now the youth made an impassioned plea saying, do the right thing. Do not leave us an inheritance of a world that cannot be saved. The world is a beautiful place, the environment is one that's in tune, can be in tune with the economy. We can work this all together.

But this is what their phrase was, and I'll quote: "Look into our eyes; stand with us." And so I think this is very important. And everybody in the room — everybody, thousands of people — just stood up and clapped, clapped for the young people when they said, "Look into our eyes; stand with us."

And so with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would hope that the Minister of Environment listens to the youth, listens to the future, comes back with a plan. I will not be supporting this motion. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm certainly pleased to be able to enter into this debate on this very, very important topic, Mr. Speaker.

Climate change, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a major, major issue that this world is facing. It is, as President Clinton described it, it is the defining challenge of the 21st century and how the world and we, as part of the world, deal with this will determine what kind of a world and what kind of an environment our grandchildren will have to live in.

But it's also a very difficult challenge, Mr. Speaker, particularly for governments of the developed world, and particularly governments of Western Canada I would submit, because the effects of climate change are somewhere down the road. They may be 15, 20, 25, 40 years down the road. It all depends on how quickly the effects of climate change become evident.

And so therefore for a government of Saskatchewan, in particular, to deal with climate change and to have the citizens of the province engaged in climate change is a major challenge because all one would have to do today is walk out on the steps of the Legislature and walk down in Wascana Park to see the beautiful day, the clear skies. We have no smog. We have really no evidence that other parts of the world are already experiencing.

I can think of the people of Canada that live in the North and see the ice melting at a much more rapid increase, the longer open summers, the ice-free Northwest Passage that has occurred in recent years, which is unusual. Those are some of the things that scientists tell us are the forerunners of major and permanent changes to our climates.

Also because of the lack of evidence and of tangible evidence of climate change, I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a significant proportion of our population in Canada, but more so in Western provinces — and particularly Saskatchewan, Manitoba I would submit, probably Alberta — are unaware or perhaps don't believe that it's a real issue.

And so therefore it makes it exceedingly difficult for governments to deal with this issue. But it is an issue that our scientists are telling us that we as governments of provinces, states, countries around the world must deal with if we are to prevent some of the dramatic changes to our climate that our scientists, through scientific examination and discovery, believe and have documented will probably happen.

[20:00]

So this is the task that our governments of the day find ourselves with. There is confusion as to some of the definitions, of weather as opposed to climate. And I was reading a couple of books that I was able to get from the Legislative Library recently, and I came across the definitions that perhaps may help clarify the difference between weather and climate.

Weather is defined as the statistics of the day. As an example, today in Regina here the sky was clear. The high was 15 or 17 or whatever. It set a new record, and there was no precipitation. Climate, on the other hand, is the probability of major weather events happening. And quite often people who are not totally knowledgeable in the area get the two confused.

Our scientists are telling us that we will be seeing some significant changes in weather. And first of all I should profess that I'm certainly not a scientist. My knowledge is limited in this area. But what I have done and what I've attempted to do is review the scientific literature that is available, and I'm basing my comments on what I have learned by examining the comments of scientists and scientific literature. And scientists tell us that, as climate change progresses and it increases and it happens more rapidly, we will see more significant changes.

One might point to today's record-breaking temperatures in the West, and in Saskatchewan in particular, and say this perhaps could be an evidence of climate change. Today's records that were broken in Saskatchewan, and there was a number of them, were broken not by a tenth of a degree or 1 degree, but they were broken by, in some cases, as much as 5 and 6 degrees. Now is that evidence of climate change? I'm not a scientist. I don't know, but it does lend itself to what the scientists are telling us.

The upcoming meeting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the Conference of Parties 15 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, I believe history will show is one of the most, will be one of the most historic meetings that our present-day world will have had. And history will unfold as it will, and it will record whether there was success in addressing this major issue or whether there wasn't, and whether there was a need and there will be a need to future meetings to address this major issue.

But what is happening between December 7th and 18th is 192 nations of the world will be gathering in Copenhagen to try and hammer out a new agreement, a worldwide agreement. A worldwide international treaty to address this major challenge that mankind has of climate change, and that will be the successor to the Kyoto Protocol which was adopted by the same United Nations group in 1997. It was ratified in February of 2005 when enough of the signatories to the international treaty ratified it within their own countries and put it in effect.

Canada was a signature to that international treaty, and Canada had agreed at that time to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 6 per cent below the 1990 levels. Canada was one of the nations, I believe, that will have great difficulty in meeting that commitment. It's not the only nation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but it is one of the ones. There are some countries, particularly the European countries, that it is reported that will be able to meet their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

So what the challenge is in Copenhagen is to come up with another international treaty that is much more aggressive. Because what the Kyoto accord did was by and large, if it was achieved, it would reduce but it would not . . . or at least stabilize the amount of CO₂ emissions that the countries of the world were emitting, but it would really do very little to address the major problem. Now the countries of the world need to take the next step. This is what the scientists of the world are telling us, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And the two major challenges at Copenhagen are this. Number one, to set those higher targets for CO₂ emission reductions so that the world makes meaningful progress on reducing CO₂ emissions. And secondly, the second major challenge is for the developed countries of the world to provide financing to the developing countries of the world to help them along the way, to help them be part of this. And that is a major challenge. And the leaders of the world will be grappling with those two major challenges, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

As I said, former President Bill Clinton said when he was here in Regina a number of years ago, when asked, what is the major challenge of the world in the future, the major medium- and long-term challenge? And he identified climate change.

I think perhaps, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a recent article by the columnist and historian Gwynne Dyer perhaps puts this in terms that we perhaps could identify. And I think what I would like to do at this time is probably read a portion of a recent column or article that he wrote dealing with climate change, and it's dated October the 29th of this year. And the title of the article is, J-O-I-D-E-S, "JOIDES research shows global warming will accelerate."

And I will read part of the article, because I think that frames the challenge of what the leaders of the world are facing in Copenhagen and in subsequent years. Gwynne Dyer writes, and I quote:

The news is bad, and it's coming in fast.

Turn tens of thousands of scientists loose on a problem for two decades, and the results will seem pathetic for the first few years, because it takes time to gather the data — even build the equipment with which you gather the data. But slowly the flow of data will grow, and [then] at the end of 20 years you can expect major new insights every month or so.

That's where we are now with climate change. September's unwelcome news from the Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research in Britain, was that if fossil fuel use continues on the present trend line, the planet will be an average of 4 degrees Celsius warmer by

the 2060s.

This contrasts with the prediction of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, published in 2007, that we might see 4 degree Celsius [increase], at the most, by . . . [2021].

This month's bad news came from the drilling ship . . . (Joint Oceanographic [That's easy for some people to say.] . . . Institutions for Deep Earth Sampling) which brought up cores from the ocean bottom containing sediments dating back 20 million years.

And this I believe is some of the important part:

Scientists reported that when carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was last at 450 parts per million, the average global temperature was 3 to 6 degrees Celsius hotter than [it is] now, and sea levels were 25 to 40 metres higher.

I continue the quote:

That is bad news because 450 parts per million is where we are hoping to halt the rise in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere this time around. (We are currently at 390 parts per million.)

All the world's major governments have agreed in principle that warming must never be allowed to exceed 2 degrees Celsius, because beyond that we would risk runaway warming — and it was thought that 450 part per million would let us stop at that point.

Not so, it would appear, or at least not for long. The leader of the JOIDES research team . . . from the university of . . . Los Angeles, put it bluntly: "What we have shown is that in the last period when CO₂ levels were sustained at levels close to where they are today, there was no icecap on Antarctica and sea levels were 25-40m higher."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one can only imagine that if these predictions should come true . . . In fact I can't imagine what this earth will look like. This is I believe a very serious and dire warning, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I know people question where these predictions and the science, as to where do they, you know, where do they come from? Is it sound? Is it skepticism? I've heard speakers talk about some of the people who have taken up the cause, David Suzuki and some of the other organizations who, I believe, admit are not experts. But what they are doing is relaying the message from the scientists around the world who deal with this issue.

And I think if one reads some of the material that's available, and you have to differentiate between some of the junk science and real science, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I believe one of the ways of doing that is to look at reports and try and get an understanding if this is true science or is it just merely an opinion. Because true science works on a peer-reviewed system where scientists, whether it be a physicist, whether it be an atmospheric or climate scientist, they do their work. They use

the scientific method, and follow age-old process of making sure that their science is sound.

And then what they do is they will write a report of what they have found and publish it in scientific journals. And those scientific journals are reviewed by other scientists who are expert in that particular field. And they will review that and try and pick holes in this, to the process and the findings of the publication. And so, therefore, before these scientific reports are published in the journals, the authors and the scientists who have done the work do their very level best to ensure that they are working with sound science.

And that is the process that, I believe, is used in dealing with climate change. This is what the literature has said. And we have a number of scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change who are from Canada, who are true scientists, who follow the honoured and the code of scientists, who use the scientific method, use the peer review method. So when they put something out there, they have done their very level best, and if it is bad science, other experts in the field will quickly point it out because that is the way science has evolved over the years.

[20:15]

And the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a committee of the UN [United Nations] body that has been tasked with getting a handle on climate change. And it's not 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 10 or 20 or 100 scientists. It's thousands of scientists from around the world, from many, many countries. This IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] group has issued four major assessments of climate change. They have worked for many months — in fact maybe a couple of years — on these things. They undergo rigorous scrutiny before their reports are released.

And as an example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the most recent report of the IPCC will be released in Copenhagen. They met recently in Bali over a period of a number of weeks to gather all their data and come up with a report. It's a report that contains scientific study from 430 delegations from 23 countries around the world. This is just an example, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One of the scientists, as I mentioned, from Canada that was a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a scientist from Victoria, a Dr. Andrew Weaver, who is a professor and Canadian Research Chair on climate modelling and analysis at the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences in the University of Victoria. He was one of only seven Canadian scientists who were lead authors on sections of the 2007 report of the IPCC.

Dr. Weaver wrote a book which was recently published, in fact last year. It's called *Keeping Our Cool: Canada in a Warming World*. I would highly recommend anyone who wants to have an objective look and get a better understanding of this issue that we are talking about here today, climate change, to read that book. It is a real eye-opener. It is authored, as I said, by one of Canada's leading scientists on the issue. And I believe that it's a great help in understanding and framing the argument.

Now I know there's a number of skeptics still in our province,

in our communities and, I believe, about this whole issue of climate change. And it's not because they fundamentally disagree, I believe, with the whole concept that our climate is changing because of human activities and mainly burning fossil fuels. It's because they haven't had an opportunity to have access to the knowledge.

And also another factor that is certainly making the role of government and making sound decisions on this issue much more difficult is because there is a whole cadre of people, the climate change deniers, who are now realizing that they have by and large lost the argument and are now attempting to delay action on this issue.

It's not unlike what had happened a number of years back when the scientists and doctors were telling us that there was a direct link between smoking and lung cancer, and a direct link between second-hand smoke and lung cancer. There were vested interests that had a lot to lose, and they were powerful interests that funded campaigns to either deny or delay. And people have written on this that they see the same thing happening.

Now I certainly don't profess to be an expert in this issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but what I do is I have an open mind about the issue. And I've read a fair bit of material on it and with an open mind. And I try to evaluate the information that's presented in the same context as I would analyze information about the H1N1 flu and pandemic that we are in the midst of. Now perhaps the pandemic may not turn out to be as severe as what was forecast. I believe the experts are telling us at the very least that it has potential to be quite severe.

And I look to people like Dr. Don Low from the Toronto area, who was the Canadian lead on SARS [severe acute respiratory syndrome] when Toronto was faced with that SARS issue a number of years back. And Dr. Low spoke recently. I saw him on TV where he said, why wouldn't you have a vaccination? He says, this disease has potential to cause deaths, as it already has, unfortunately it seems like in our younger people and so on. And why wouldn't you have the vaccination? Science is showing that for the average person there isn't any great side effects and those sorts of things.

So that's what I try to do, is look for those experts who have credibility and see what they have to say on the issue. And I believe Dr. Andrew Weaver from the University of Victoria is one of those experts, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Just a little bit about the science of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and how it's set up and the work it is doing. I already mentioned it's composed of thousands of scientists around the world from various countries, and Dr. Weaver's book explains this. There are three working groups. Working group I assesses the scientific aspects of climate systems and climate change. Working group II assesses the scientific, technical, environmental, economic, and social aspects of the vulnerability of climate change. And working group III assess the scientific, technical, environmental, economic, and social aspects of mitigation of climate change. And in layman's terms, group I describes the problem. Group II details its consequences, and group III tells us what are some of the mitigation things that we can do to lessen the issue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I found it a bit of an eye-opener last March when I had the privilege of attending the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association seminar in London, England where delegates from all across the Commonwealth gathered to study the Westminster style of government. And one afternoon we talked about climate change and the impacts and the consequences and what governments are doing and so on.

We didn't get into a lot of depth because of time constraints and so on, but I think what I will always remember and what stood out from that discussion was the comments from some of the delegates, particularly from the African nations. Delegates from countries like Kenya, Ghana, and Oman were very adamant that the world needs to do something about this. They said that they are, in their opinion, they were already experiencing some of the effects of climate change. They as poor countries had little ability to actually make a difference. But what they said is they need to be involved because they have got to be effective in a dramatic way, and they needed our help. And I believe that is something that we certainly need to consider.

We need to look at, around the world, as to how serious other countries around the world are taking this issue. And of course it's no surprise that in Europe we know that they already are leaders in the area of reducing CO₂ emissions and working towards further programs and to deal with the issue.

But also developing countries are doing some extraordinary steps to draw attention to the perceived effects of climate change. The Government of Nepal very recently held a cabinet meeting at the base camp of Mount Everest. And the purpose of that was, according to their Prime Minister, was to demonstrate and draw the world's attention onto how their country will be affected.

The Government of Maldives, a South Pacific nation, within the last month or so held a cabinet meeting under water. This is a country that is only a few metres above sea level, and if the polar ice caps melt, they certainly will be dramatically affected. The country of . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. Recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The country of India, one of the major developing countries which is very quickly becoming a major economic force in this world, is certainly is doing some things that I think we should take note of. A recent release by a world agency indicated that CO₂ emissions from the major cities of India are significantly lower than the CO₂ emissions of some of the North American countries when you compare our cities . . . when you compare them to cities like New York or Toronto.

The Government of India sees that there's also opportunity in addressing this major challenge. They see embracing green technology as a way to fight poverty in their country because of the opportunities that green technology presents. I was surprised to learn, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that India is the fifth largest wind power producer in the world, and that Suzlon, an Indian company, is the largest international wind energy company in

the world.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in recent years, I believe that business leaders, municipal leaders are ahead of national leaders on this issue, and I think we should pay attention to what some of the business leaders are saying and what they are doing with regards to this issue. A recent conference of the insurance industry in Great Britain were very concerned about the sustainability of the insurance industry in that country as the effects of climate change manifest themselves. They're predicting that there will be higher insurance premiums due to major weather events, and in a number of cases, companies, individuals may not be able to buy insurance.

Wal-Mart, the largest retailer in the world, back in 2006 took this issue seriously and set about a plan in place to dramatically reduce its CO₂ emissions. Did they do it because they are good world corporate citizens? Perhaps. I don't know. I don't know what their motivation was, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I do know one of the reasons that they did it, and they have since stated, is that it makes good business sense.

And I think that idea was driven home in a major way, perhaps a small way, to me this summer when I had the privilege of being a part of the PNWER [Pacific NorthWest Economic Region] meeting in Boise, Idaho. One of the tours that delegates could take was to the Banner Bank Building in downtown Boise, Idaho. And when I saw that, at first I thought, well why would anyone want to go and tour a commercial building? It's a building that . . . I mean all you need to do is go in downtown Regina and you can see commercial buildings.

And until I looked a little more closely, and the reason that the organizers of PNWER in Boise put this on the agenda is that the Banner Bank building is one of only 20-some buildings in the world that has achieved the LEED [leadership in energy and environmental design] platinum status. So I thought I would go just to see what this was all about.

[20:30]

As it turned out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was very pleased to go. Because what the designers and the developers of this building did was they used current technology, but they used it in a way to achieve the smallest environmental footprint that they could when they built the building.

And they explained it in this way. We had the good fortune to have the developer and the driver of this building, a Mr. Christensen, make a presentation to the group. And he said, to sum it up this way, he said, we didn't really invent any new technology. We used existing technology and we just put it together a little differently. But they achieved some pretty amazing results, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That building uses 40 per cent less energy than a comparable building in Boise that didn't use any of the innovative techniques that they used.

And Mr. Christensen summed it up this way. He says, look, he says, certainly I have a concern for the environment. But, he says, I'm a businessman, he says, and when I invest money I expect to have a return. And he says one of the most surprising outcomes of this design of this building is that he was able to achieve, on a year-over-year basis, a 37 per cent return on his

investment.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the whole process of the Banner Bank building was so outstanding that a documentary filmmaker made a documentary of the process of building this building and the outcomes, and it was nominated for an Academy Award. I'm not sure whether it won or not, and I don't think that makes any difference. But it has a rather intriguing name, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the name of the documentary is *Green is the Color of Money*. And I think there's a message in that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in conclusion what I'd like to say on this topic is that, as I said at the beginning, this is a difficult topic and a difficult issue for governments to address for a number of reasons, as I outlined at the beginning of my remarks — that there is no immediate threat, at least in our part of the world, that we can point and say definitely this is one of the outcomes of the change to our climate. There's a fair bit of uncertainty amongst the people of our province and parts of our country. There is, I believe, a fairly high voter concern about this. And so therefore it's difficult for any provincial government under those terms, whether it be here in Saskatchewan, whether it be in Manitoba, whether it be in Alberta, whether it be in any of our Canadian provinces. I would imagine that the Maritime governments are struggling with this.

I believe that the plan put forward by this government is a good start, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I believe that it's a sound plan that we are starting. I also believe that more will have to be done in the future. But the fundamentals of the plan are a strong commitment to carbon capture and storage, which I might comment on that just in the last day or so President Obama, when he was visiting China, discussed with the Chinese leaders. And I'll quote from a *Globe and Mail* article dated yesterday, as a matter of fact:

Mr. Obama and his Chinese counterpart are expected to sign a series of deals to co-operate on clean energy and emission-reduction technologies, including capturing carbon dioxide from smokestacks and permanently storing it underground.

So I'm thinking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if this is a big enough . . . if carbon capture and storage is good enough for the United States of America and China, the two largest economies in the world, I think it's probably good enough for Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And one of the other major components of the Saskatchewan plan is to take the monies that will be levied against our large emitters for exceeding certain levels of carbon dioxide and keeping those dollars here in Saskatchewan so that we can develop the technology to deal and make meaningful changes to our carbon emissions.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in conclusion, I think what I would like to do is just make the members of this Assembly aware, and the general public, of another article that I came across in my research, and that was an article that I found on the Internet dated July 18th, 2007, and the title is "Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu Announce The Elders — A Historic Group of World Leaders."

Basically what the article tells us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that Nelson Mandela and Bishop Tutu formed this group that they call the leaders, and the founding members of this leaders . . . of The Elders — sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And some of the founding members or the founding members of this group, of course, were Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu; along with a former — and if I could pronounce the individual's name I would — but is the former foreign minister of China from 2003 to 2007, so a very recent foreign minister of China; Mary Robinson, a former president of Ireland; another individual from Bangladesh who is a banker and economist, and his claim to fame was that he developed the microcredit concept to lend money to poor people in the world; Ela Bhatt who was the founder of India's Self-Employed Women; and Gro Harlem Brundtland, former prime minister of Norway. These people were the group that Nelson Mandela called The Elders and . . . Oh, I omitted one person. Sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Former President Jimmy Carter is also a member of this group. And what this group of elders have done, they've gathered together to draw attention to climate change.

And another article in *The New York Times*, just very recent, October 31st, 2009, reports that this group took their grandchildren and young relatives to Istanbul, had a photo op, gathered the media of the world around to draw attention to climate change. And Archbishop Tutu's three-year-old granddaughter was puzzled at what took place. An older cousin of hers addressed the gathering, and she had an inflatable globe and she crushed it. And the young three-year-old said to her grandfather, she said, what's happening here? If the world is gone, are we going to go to the moon? And Bishop Tutu whispered into his granddaughter's ear. He says, I don't know. I won't be there. I'm 78 years old. And I think that's part of it that sums up the issue.

The article goes on, and I'll quote:

At its core, that conversation about whether some of the first beneficiaries of the wonders developed during the last century — like electricity at the flip of a switch — have the means, or the will, to help their descendants with the consequences of burning vast quantities of fossil fuels.

I think that's the challenge. I believe that's the challenge that President Bill Clinton was talking about.

I have one more thought that I would like to put forward in this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've all heard the story of the frog in the pan. If you put the frog in the pan when the water is cold, you can turn up the heat, and you can turn it up, and you can eventually boil that frog alive. If you put the frog in when the water is hot, he'll jump out.

I talked to my granddaughter about this a bit and my grandson a bit about this whole issue. And I was surprised that they actually have a concept of what I was talking about — climate change and those sorts of things. And I talked to them a bit about Bishop Tutu and his granddaughters and the other world leaders and so on. And my grandson said to me, he says, grandpa, I think we should have Tenaisha — who is our granddaughter living with us who has unbelievable artistic talent — draw a cartoon that . . . well he didn't use the word encapsulize, but that would represent the issue that we're

dealing with. He said, grandpa, it seems to me that if we had a cartoon where we had the world, and put a pot on top of it, and the frog in there, aren't we the frog in the pan? And as the world heats up, are we going to boil?

I think that's a question that we need to think about very seriously. Because I'm not going to suffer. I'm not going to see many dramatic changes in climate, but my grandchildren are. And that's why I'm here today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that's why I went to the Premier and said look, this is a major, major issue that we need to talk about, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I think we all as legislators, we have a great deal of responsibility because one day . . . I don't know whether I'll live long enough for my grandchildren to come back and ask me, grandpa, you were there; why didn't you do more? But I'm looking around in this Assembly and I see a lot of younger members and it may be their children, or if not, their grandchildren. I hope they don't have to answer that question. I hope that we collectively, not only in Saskatchewan, not only in Canada, not only in North America but around the world, realize the seriousness of this issue and that we find the intestinal fortitude and find the ways. Because there are ways. There are ways.

Dr. Andrew Weaver said we need to look at all the alternatives, develop the new technologies, or at the very least look at those energy sources that do not emit carbon. And he identified nuclear. And he has a great quote, and if I had more time I would read it into the record. In fact I probably can't find it in my material, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But those are the issues that I believe we need to think about seriously and I believe we need to deal with, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard): — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Applause]

Mr. Broten: — Thank you to my colleagues as well. It's a pleasure to join in the discussion this evening, Mr. Speaker, on the government motion that has come forward and the motion that we have been discussing throughout the day. And it's important, Mr. Speaker, because as members before me have commented, the issue of climate change is an issue that has long-term implications for our planet and for the creatures that live on it — humans and all the other aspects of nature that live on the globe, Mr. Speaker.

As the member before me just spoke, Mr. Speaker, what we decide today, what we talk about today will have implications for us all in the room certainly and for our families, but it's really the generations to come — and not really too many generations down the road, Mr. Speaker. So it's an issue now affecting people in very real ways, but it's an issue that has consequences down the road as well, Mr. Speaker.

I think, since there's been a number of speakers who have been talking on this issue and a lot of different aspects of the motion

are brought up and discussed, it's important, Mr. Speaker, to keep the exact wording of the motion in mind, Mr. Speaker. And there's three main parts of the motion.

The first paragraph is:

That this Assembly support the government's plan addressing climate change, a plan balancing environmental protection with economic growth, thereby ensuring the well-being and future prosperity of Saskatchewan families; and

This is the second paragraph, second section:

That this Assembly support the Saskatchewan plan to direct offset payments into the Saskatchewan Technology Fund to fund research into the development of technology needed to help the world reduce and control carbon emission; and further,

[20:45]

The third part:

That this honourable Assembly encourage the government to actively promote the Saskatchewan plan at the United Nations COP 15 Conference in Copenhagen in December of 2009 [Mr. Speaker].

So as myself and many other members here talk about all the different aspects to do with climate change, to do with the environment, it's important to keep what the actual motion is in mind. I wanted to read that for members watching at home so if they just tuned in now, just flipped to this channel and decided to stay a while on the legislative channel, that gives them an idea of what we're talking about. And, Mr. Speaker, my comments are going to address and talk about the three sections of the motion.

However before we get into my comments on the three sections on the motion, I do want to make a few general comments, Mr. Speaker, that provide the framework or lays a bit of the groundwork, Mr. Speaker, to help understand, to help examine the motion as we need to as an Assembly.

And all the members, Mr. Speaker, have gotten up, have talked about the issue of climate change. A great deal of what we in the global community know about climate change comes out of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC. Mr. Speaker, the IPCC is the leading scientific and intergovernmental body for the assessment of climate change. It was established 21 years ago by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Meteorological Organization to provide a clear scientific view on the current state of climate change and its potential environment and socio-economic consequences.

So, Mr. Speaker, we see by the establishment of the IPCC that this issue of climate change is one that has a considerable amount of scientific research behind it. It's an issue where there has been research. There have been conclusions and, Mr. Speaker, it's an issue that requires attention.

The IPCC, there are 194 countries that are members of the IPCC — including Canada of course. In 2007 the IPCC was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to “build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change.”

So, Mr. Speaker, we’ve seen as recently as 2007 a recognition by the global community that the work that the IPCC does on climate change is worthy, that they excel in what they do, that the recommendations and the comments that they make do indeed have a great influence for what policy-makers around the world need to be doing. The most recent report by the IPCC concluded that:

Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising average sea level.

And that’s from the IPCC, 2007, page 2, Mr. Speaker.

So there will be some individuals within society and sadly, Mr. Speaker, within this Legislative Assembly, who say that climate change is not a reality. Who would say that the issue of climate change is . . . the jury is still out. The verdict is not in, Mr. Speaker. But what we see from a dominant organization on this issue or an authority on this issue, an organization that has received the Nobel Peace Prize, an organization, Mr. Speaker, that has 194 member countries including our very own, Mr. Speaker, we see very clearly in their statement that they say:

Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising average sea level.

So it’s very clear, very conclusive.

The scientific community has also largely accepted that human behaviour has significantly contributed to the observed global warming trend. The IPCC report also stated that:

Most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations.

And that’s from page 5, Mr. Speaker. So a clear link that the warming that has been going on, that the IPCC says is a definite . . . in their opinion the very, very, very strong likelihood, Mr. Speaker, that humans are causing this by the release of greenhouse gas emissions through our activities here on the planet.

According to the IPCC, the global average surface air temperature has increased by 0.6 degrees Celsius since the year 1900 and is projected to increase between 1.4 degrees Celsius and 5.8 degrees Celsius by the year 2100, relative to 1990. Recent scientific studies indicate that an increase in global temperature of just 2 degrees Celsius would be a tipping point beyond which irreversible damage to the global climate would occur.

Mr. Speaker, the point that there’s a time, Mr. Speaker, where the change that has been caused by the release of greenhouse gases, when the temperature increases to such an amount that there’s a tipping point which the damage that is occurring to the planet, Mr. Speaker, cannot be reversed. The damage is done. And it’s really then, Mr. Speaker, how we as . . . the global community is able to respond and deal with the changes, Mr. Speaker.

So we see in the general evidence about climate change, Mr. Speaker, from the IPCC, we see conclusive evidence, Mr. Speaker, that climate change is real, Mr. Speaker. We see conclusive evidence in their opinion, Mr. Speaker, that the changes that are caused in the climate are caused by humans, Mr. Speaker.

And there’s a worry, Mr. Speaker, a statement by the IPCC that when the temperature increases a certain amount, Mr. Speaker, the damage that occurs to the planet cannot be reversed. The damage that occurs to our climate means that the changes that are caused through the increase in the temperature, we will have to live with, Mr. Speaker, as a global civilization.

So it’s important, Mr. Speaker, to see the large picture, to see what the global community is saying about climate change. And it’s also very important at the same time to see what the focus and what the impacts and the changes will mean to Saskatchewan, our province. Because, Mr. Speaker, while we as members, as Canadians recognize we’re part of obviously our country, Canada; we’re part of a global community, but we are members of the Legislative Assembly for Saskatchewan. So clearly when we look at an issue like climate change, it’s necessary that we look at what it means for our constituents, what it means for our province, what it means for our activities in this legislature and how we respond through policies and decisions.

And when we look, Mr. Speaker, at what’s happening here in Saskatchewan when compared to sort of the global picture, I think that the change that we see in the province here is an alarming one and is a concerning one for anyone who’s paying attention, Mr. Speaker. It’s not one where we can simply say we like warmer winters and crazy statements like that. It’s a much more serious issue and more complicated than boiling it down to not wearing a winter coat until late into the winter.

Here in Saskatchewan we see that the Canadian Prairies are warming at a faster rate than the global average. According to a report entitled *Saskatchewan’s Natural Capital in a Changing Climate: An Assessment of Impacts and Adaptation* done by Sauchyn, Barrow, Fang, Henderson, Johnston, and Pomeroy earlier this year, we see, Mr. Speaker, that in fact since weather stations were first established in Saskatchewan in the year 1895, a consistent temperature increase has been recorded at every one of those weather stations.

So, Mr. Speaker, as prairie people, of course, weather is something that everyone pays attention to. Perhaps it’s our . . . For those of us that are still on the farm, of course we’re always paying attention to the weather. And many of us are, if we’re not from the farm, we’re one or two generations removed from the farm and that’s something that we always pay attention to, we always care about.

We always are taking notice of how much rain is in the rain gauge and we're looking at the sky and wondering and taking note of the seasons and what that means for us. And if we're not on the farm, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we're golfers and we care about it in that way as well. So we know Saskatchewan people do care about the weather. And as early back as 1895 with the establishment of the weather stations, Mr. Speaker, we've seen a consistent increase since that period of time, since the beginning of 1895.

Since just 1960, the average daily maximum temperatures have increased by more than 3 degrees Celsius in both winter and spring. So while we do have the data going back in the province to 1895, we see since 1960 — almost 50 years, Mr. Speaker — we see that we have seen an increase of more than 3 degrees Celsius in both winter and spring. So we have data. We see changes that are occurring over a period of time. It's not a one-off thing. It's not a little blip. But we do have the longer data which academics and scientists, Mr. Speaker, can refer to and draw these types of conclusions in terms of how climate change is affecting us here on the Prairies.

The Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative published a study by Dr. Elaine Barrow entitled *Climate Scenarios for Saskatchewan*. Barrow's report looks at a range of global climate models based on various greenhouse gas emission scenarios. Under all of these models and emission scenarios, the projections are consistent — Saskatchewan will experience an increase in annual average temperature.

So, Mr. Speaker, if we look at the different models that have been developed from the data, if we project those into the reality here, it's clear, Mr. Speaker, that increasing temperatures here on the Prairies, and how that affects our climate overall, will be a reality for us here in Saskatchewan.

For the period 2010 to 2039, the projections range from an increase of 0.5 degrees Celsius to 3 degrees Celsius. So from about now, 2010 to 2039, increase in temperature from 0.5 degrees to 3 degrees Celsius.

Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, for the period 2040 to 2069 — a ways down the road for many members in the Assembly to contemplate and consider — the projections in this period of time according to the models, Mr. Speaker, the projections range from 1 degree Celsius to 5 degrees Celsius. And, Mr. Speaker, for the period 2070 to 2099, Mr. Speaker, the projections range from 2 degrees Celsius to 6.5 degrees Celsius.

So over these three bands of time that have been identified, Mr. Speaker, by the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative, we see in these three bands of time, from 2010 to 2039, 0.5 to 3 degrees increase. From '40 to '69, the projections range from 1 degree to 5 degrees Celsius. And, Mr. Speaker, from that last band, from 2070 to 2099, the projections range from 2 degrees to 6.5 degrees Celsius.

So we see, Mr. Speaker, a ramping-up within each band. As the temperature increases in each of those bands, the increase increases. The amount of the increase is greater in each of those periods.

These may not sound significant, but the projected effects of

such climate change are not insignificant. So when we look at the forecast today or the weather report today on the evening news, and we saw these high temperatures — you know, large amounts of temperature outside the normal seasonal averages — what I said here in terms of 1 degrees to 5 degrees might not seem like a big deal to us. But when you look at the trend lines over the century and the implications for what this means to the overall climate, the effects are significant, Mr. Speaker.

Here in Saskatchewan, some of the things that we will see with this change in temperature occurring here in the province, Mr. Speaker, increased water scarcity. Many days here in the Assembly we talk about the importance of water, whether it is to agricultural producers, whether it's to industry, whether it's to individuals living in our cities and towns and villages, Mr. Speaker. The recreation as well. That's part of our summer lifestyle and winter lifestyle as well, getting out on lakes. The availability of water and the quality of water is an issue for all people.

We know that with temperature increases like this, Mr. Speaker, that increased water scarcity will be a reality. And we know that this will have a great implication for how we live our lives here in Saskatchewan, great implications for how we engage in commerce, great implications for how we have fun through recreation, great implications for how we use tourism to promote our province, Mr. Speaker. So clearly we know that water is a big deal here in the province.

And we see these types of increases when we see these very reliable models that are created by researchers. And we know that they'll have great implications for water. That should cause all of us in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to be worried.

Another issue, Mr. Speaker, that we will see with increased temperatures that the researchers tell us, the issue is more frequent and intense heat waves. So, Mr. Speaker, while all of us at times might appreciate a warm summer day, and while many people in Saskatchewan like a brief escape to a warmer climate in winter, we're not talking about that. We're not talking about a day that might be a little more comfortable. We're not talking about simply making life a bit warmer for us. These are extended heat waves, Mr. Speaker, that will have great implications again for how we live here on the Prairies.

[21:00]

In the same way that the availability of water, obviously the availability of water is tied to the heat waves as well. But these heat waves will have great implications for Saskatchewan people — how we live here, how we make our livings and how we enjoy our livings, Mr. Speaker. So whether that's agricultural producers who now have to deal with extended heat waves for their crops, whether that is increased power consumption that heat waves might cause, clearly, Mr. Speaker, just as water scarcity will be a big issue, so too will the frequent and intense heat waves.

With the longer heat waves come the dry spells. And I touched on that, Mr. Speaker, how that will affect agriculture, will affect the way of life that we know and are familiar to here in Saskatchewan.

Decreased snowfall. And while many individuals here might not have a problem with shovelling the driveway less often, Mr. Speaker, the reality is that we need that moisture. And it's important that the snowfall that comes down, it's part of the entire ecosystem. And it's part of the moisture in the winter that we need to ensure that we have a good spring and a summer that is not too dry.

More extreme events, Mr. Speaker. So more instances where what was once complete one-offs that people might talk about once in a lifetime or some type of extreme weather event that would maybe be passed down through the generations, we will see extreme weather events at a greater frequency.

This makes me think of a situation in my own constituency in Saskatoon Massey Place in the neighbourhoods of Westview and part of Dundonald, Mr. Speaker, where there was a great deal of flooding in basements, Mr. Speaker. I went to the community consultations that were organized by the city because the damage that occurred to the homes had to do with the sewer system backing up, and it had to do with the stormwater system getting into the sewage system and then it getting all mixed up and coming back into the homes. I remember, Mr. Speaker, when the city engineers gave their reports and they plotted the extreme weather incidents over the last 100 years, Mr. Speaker. That summer, where we had a number of these quick instant flash floods almost, where the amount of water coming down was so great that the stormwater system could not handle it, when you saw that on the map or on the graph over the years, Mr. Speaker, they truly had been at one time very extreme.

But we were in a situation where it occurred a couple of times — in July I think it was, and one in August. And members opposite will know that, through the assistance that was provided by the government in terms of the disaster relief through Corrections and Public Safety, I believe, the program. I remember helping a constituent with his claim. This is the type of greater frequency that we'll see of these types of incidents.

And so it has implications for homeowners. We're not removed from these extreme weather events, whether we're a homeowner in Westview. It truly does matter when the extreme weather events are happening more often. And as we saw in that one example of these flash floods a couple summers ago, as we saw, it has implications for government as well because it meant that the program that was in place to help with the relief and the disaster assistance had a greater demand and needed to respond to individuals faster and more effectively, and those changes needed to occur.

So we can just imagine, when we have that one example, is a bit of foreshadowing of what we can expect when extreme weather situations happen at a greater frequency in increased parts of the province more often.

Drought as well obviously, Mr. Speaker, obviously tied to the issue of heat wave and availability of moisture and less snowfall. But droughts will be a reality as well. And that of course has implications for everyone, but to agricultural producers who need the rains to come, and a drought over a number of growing seasons, how that adds up. And, Mr. Speaker, clearly that too will have a big impact on

Saskatchewan people.

Increased peak wind events. So it's not only the downpours of rain that we'll see, but researchers also say that we're going to have increased peak wind events. And anyone who's been in a windstorm and trying to secure something in their yard or their house or their farm during a windstorm knows that the power of wind is great. And a lot of damage can be done by peak wind events. So again, implications for how we organize our communities, how we organize our homes, and the government programs that might be in place to respond to those types of disasters will be called upon more often, and we'll need to react more effectively.

And I touched on rainfall and flooding, Mr. Speaker. So these were some of the projected effects of climate change here in Saskatchewan according to the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative, some of the realities projected that we will face by the increased temperatures that we'll experience, or by the changed climate we will experience here in Saskatchewan.

It's incredibly simplistic to think climate change will simply mean milder winters, which would probably be welcomed by many Saskatchewan people. It's important to look at the full range of projected effects and to consider how climate change will affect Saskatchewan people in important sectors like agriculture and forestry. So a few of the examples I gave were about agriculture, Mr. Speaker.

Forestry as well, I mean, forestry has been an issue of considerable debate here in the legislature over the past months. And the state of the forestry industry at present is not strong, and we've certainly had debates here in the legislature in terms of who is responsible and who is preventing a re-emergence and a strengthening of the forestry industry.

That's not the debate tonight, Mr. Speaker. But we do know the forests that we have in this province, the forests that we treasure, I think that all people would consider a very important part of Saskatchewan. Looking at the flag, Mr. Speaker, beside you, we see the green for the North and all of the trees and the forests. It's a huge part of Saskatchewan, and it's something that we all treasure, certainly because of the economic benefits but also for all the cultural and the social meaning that forests have for people. It is more than simply the economic value that it might have, Mr. Speaker. But we know that a changed climate, we know that the types of droughts that I referenced and extreme weather events will have implications for forests. We know that rising temperatures will have implications for forests as well.

And we've seen this in other parts of the country quite clearly. We've seen in parts of British Columbia the spread of the mountain pine beetle. Now, Mr. Speaker, the mountain pine beetle is an animal that attacks pine trees in the forests here in Canada, and it's an animal that's been around for some time. But the difference between then and now, Mr. Speaker, that in the past we've had cold enough winters to kill off the pine beetle. There is a certain number of days where the temperature needs to be below a certain level in order to kill off the larvae and the pine beetles themselves.

And when that doesn't occur, Mr. Speaker, when we have

warmer winters, what it allows is the pine beetle to multiply and attack the forest and spread further and further. So as we see the pine beetle spread from BC [British Columbia] into Alberta, and then as it will inevitably become more and more of an issue, here and across the entire forest across the country, Mr. Speaker.

It's a big deal because it's about economics, but it's also about a way of life. It's about all the other important attachments we have to forests. And I've seen this first-hand myself, Mr. Speaker. I tree planted many years in northern BC. And I can recall going, the first time I went down a mountain valley where I saw where the pine beetles had been very active over a couple of winters. And it truly was shocking because it looked, when you looked at the mountainside down this valley and you just saw a carpet of red. And it looked like almost like the photos that you might see of fall in eastern Canada where you have all the different trees changing colours. The contrast was so sharp between the dead, red pine trees up against the fir and the spruce trees, the other trees that were on that slope.

So while we might not . . . And even driving through the community of Prince George, you can see how it's changed the landscape of that community so much by the complete absence of pine trees.

So we already see, Mr. Speaker, how a changing climate has a direct implication and has direct effects on our landscape, on the things that we hold near and dear to us as a province and as a people, and has a direct implication to our economic strength and well-being. Well, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to touch on that little intro and comments on climate change in a global perspective, as well as what it means for us here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, because I think it's important to have that mindset when we examine closely what the government motion that we're debating is all about.

And as I said earlier on in my comments, the government motion talks about balancing environmental protection, economic growth, and talks about the Saskatchewan Technology Fund. And it talks about the work that is planned, the conference in Copenhagen. But, Mr. Speaker, too often we've heard comments in this Assembly by members opposite, comments that would call into question the scientific research and underpinnings all around the issue of climate change.

Now I appreciated the comments made by the member who spoke before me from Last Mountain-Touchwood, a member who gave a very thoughtful speech, talked about his own reading that he's done, his own concerns for his family. Talked about his experiences in meeting people, and how the issue of climate change is truly one that we should all be concerned about because we obviously all care about the generations that will come after us.

The member didn't talk a whole lot about what their government isn't doing. And I understand how a government member can't get up and talk about the failures and the broken promises that the other side is engaged in. But he certainly did give a thoughtful overview and presentation of the issue of climate change, and talked a lot about the science behind it, Mr. Speaker. But sadly, what we've seen over the years here in the Assembly for members opposite is a lot of doubting about the

science, a lot of doubting about the validity of climate change, a lot of naysaying about whether or not this issue is an important one.

There's one quote, Mr. Speaker, and it says, "Scientists don't agree. They can't assure us that there is a trend to global warming."

Well, Mr. Speaker, the individual who said that is the current member from Estevan who . . . I'm not making these up. I'm not pulling them off of non-credible sources. These are coming straight out of *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker. The member from Estevan calling into question whether or not scientists agree on this issue at all, and whether one should even be concerned about it.

Well I think when we saw the initial comments, and when I talked about the IPCC — the 194 member states, the consensus in the global community about the issue of climate change, Mr. Speaker — I think for the member to question the consensus around this issue, to question the validity of what scientists might be saying about it, Mr. Speaker, is certainly disconcerting.

Another comment, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about those who might doubt whether or not this issue of climate change is a concern, we can look to, Mr. Speaker, the current member from Thunder Creek, who said in *Hansard*:

. . . not that the scientific community can even agree as to whether or not any global warming is occurring outside of normal cyclic temperature swings or, if so, if it is man made or caused by natural events.

Well, Mr. Speaker, again my comments earlier on in the evening where the IPCC received the Nobel Prize for its work in stating that there is consensus among the vast majority of scientists that temperatures and climate change has been occurring. There is consensus, Mr. Speaker, that these changes are due to human actions due to greenhouse gases. So to have a former cabinet minister, Mr. Speaker, make that kind of a remark, to me calls into question the commitment of the cabinet and the commitment of the government to fully tackle the issue of climate change and to come forward with a plan, to come forward with an approach that addresses the issue.

Another member, Mr. Speaker, of the Sask Party:

I'm beginning to wonder, Mr. . . . [Speaker], if this whole idea of the ozone layer and the environment is not one big hoax that we're all getting caught up in . . .

. . . one of the things we hear about is global warming. Well, if we've got global warming, it certainly was nice to have a nice winter this past winter . . .

[21:15]

Mr. Speaker, a sad statement that talks about whether or not the issue of the ozone . . . I didn't know the ozone was up for debate. But the issue of whether greenhouse gases are in fact causing an issue here on the planet, whether global warming is real — additional statements by members, Mr. Speaker, that

climate change is likely not a reality in their opinion.

Another member, Mr. Speaker, the current member from Biggar, Mr. Speaker, who said, “There’s also significant debate within the scientific community about the validity of the conclusion that made greenhouse gas emissions, that man-made greenhouse gas emissions are causing climate change to global warming.”

Again, Mr. Speaker, all of these quotes from *Hansard*. All of these quotes from sitting Sask Party members who would now like us to believe, Mr. Speaker, who would now try to convince us, would now try to convince the Saskatchewan people that this government motion that came forward addressing these various issues on climate change, Mr. Speaker, that they would now have us believe that their commitment to addressing climate change is sincere.

Mr. Speaker, we have denials from members opposite that climate change is real. We have denials from members opposite that the scientific community agrees that there is a thing called climate change. We have denials from members opposite that this is anything more than just better winters, Mr. Speaker, anything more than the opportunity to leave that parka in the closet a little longer, and not actually do something about it.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, my initial skepticism, where it is rooted and how I think it is well-founded. When we have sitting members of the Sask Party government, individuals who have sat in cabinet, individuals that have prominent positions within the Sask Party caucus, Mr. Speaker, individuals who denied that climate change was a reality, individuals who said it was a hoax, individuals who said that it’s a man-made-up idea, Mr. Speaker, these are the same individuals now that would tell us that this motion that they’ve put forward is a sincere one. It’s a motion that is urgent, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they were deniers about climate change. They were deniers about the majority of scientific opinion on this issue. And now suddenly, Mr. Speaker, they would have us believe that they are sincere in their commitment to address this issue. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think as I go on in my speech, we’ll see by their actions, Mr. Speaker, that I think there is an absence among members opposite to fully appreciate the severity of the situation, the seriousness of the situation, and how this will have implications for Saskatchewan people.

And so when we see these types of statements being made, and I know they’re shocking to me. And I’m sure they’re shocking to many other members in the Assembly and likely members on the opposite side as well — members on the other side who do believe in science, members who do believe in the majority of scientific opinion, members who do think that this is a concern. But sadly we see, Mr. Speaker, those voices on the other side are silent. Well I shouldn’t say that. The member from Last Mountain-Touchwood certainly talked about the seriousness of the issue and how this is an issue of concern.

But, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to statements made by individuals who — on the other side — can really do something about it, I don’t see the evidence that there’s a commitment there. And we see that, Mr. Speaker, come out in their actions now currently. And the Sask Party’s environmental record is

extremely bleak. And that’s why, Mr. Speaker, the member’s speech before me talked about a lot of great things, but you’ll note that it didn’t talk about their record to any great extent.

They clawed back hundreds of millions of dollars that were set aside to help our province meet the climate challenge. They shut down the Office of Energy Conservation and the Climate Change Secretariat. They broke their promise to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and didn’t even express any regret doing so. And I’ll get to a quote, Mr. Speaker, that talks to the cavalier fashion in which the minister broke that election promise.

They purchased brand new, gas-guzzling SUVs [sport-utility vehicle] for cabinet ministers to drive around in. And, Mr. Speaker, members opposite might say, oh what’s the big deal? It’s just a Jeep. But, Mr. Speaker, and in fact some of the members said, well actually we could have bought Hummers. You know, the mileage on a Hummer would be even worse than the Jeep Patriot. You know, it’s better off than the Jeep Patriot. But clearly their actions on the small things, Mr. Speaker, don’t add up. So we see the breaking of large election promises, and we see the breaking on the small issues as well.

They’ve also, Mr. Speaker, they’ve sided with Ed Stelmach in Alberta every step of the way, even when the rest of the country was trying to actually do something about climate change, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we also saw the axing of the \$320 million Green Future Fund. Mr. Speaker, we know in recent months when we’ve seen the fiscal mismanagement, Mr. Speaker, and how money is being clawed back all over the place and how cuts are occurring in various departments, Mr. Speaker, we understand why they would want to get their hands on that fund as well, Mr. Speaker.

Shut down the Office of Energy Conservation that was created in 2002 to develop, encourage, and support cost-effective energy conservation, activities that can be implemented by the public and industry.

The Climate Change Secretariat was announced in June 2007 as part of the Saskatchewan energy and climate change plan. The aim of the secretariat, which was located within the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan, was to be a central agency dedicated to climate change. It coordinated and oversaw government’s climate change agenda in the Crowns and executive government, Mr. Speaker. So what we’ve seen by the Sask Party government is the elimination of both the Office of Energy Conservation and the Climate Change Secretariat.

But, Mr. Speaker, while we’ve seen these cuts and we’ve seen the grabbing of these funds, the most alarming broken promise, Mr. Speaker, that we’ve seen, one of the most alarming broken promises that we’ve seen, Mr. Speaker, is in the 2007 election. The Sask Party promised to meet the greenhouse gas emission reduction target set out by the previous NDP government.

And here’s what the Sask Party said. And I quote from the Sask Party’s 2007 platform under the heading “Meeting Saskatchewan’s Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Targets” and it says:

A Saskatchewan Party government will invest in environmental innovation and energy conservation measures while working with industry and the province's Crown Corporations to meet the province's greenhouse gas emission reduction target to:

Stabilize greenhouse gas emissions by 2010 [very soon approaching];

Reduce greenhouse gases by 32 per cent from current levels by 2020; and

Reduce greenhouse gases by 80 per cent from current levels by 2050.

Mr. Speaker, but in the spring, the Minister of the Environment announced the Sask Party was breaking that promise, Mr. Speaker. And it was a very clear statement, a very clear admission that they were breaking the election promise, Mr. Speaker, a very clear indication to the people of Saskatchewan that they were turning their backs collectively on this issue, Mr. Speaker, and that instead they were going to do what was convenient to them.

In *The StarPhoenix* on April 29th, 2009, a columnist wrote:

Were Heppner's admission at least a regretful-sounding one with the faint hope of one day doing better, it might be palatable. But the environment minister was not exactly sounding regretful . . . or frankly, much like an environment minister at all.

Mr. Speaker, a quote from one individual within the press who commented on the attitude, the tone of the breaking of this promise, the retreat from a clear commitment in their election platform, Mr. Speaker. An approach where it was, you know, to me would indicate that it's just simply a shrugging of the shoulders and saying, well we broke it. Let's move on. Let's try to forget about it. Let's pretend it didn't happen. Let's find something else to talk about. Let's look for a photo op. Let's just do anything else but focus on this issue as it needs to be focused on and addressed — the broken promise that we made, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier also has taken the opportunity to defend Alberta's environmental record and continually sides with the premier there, Premier Stelmach.

In June of this year, several US [United States] governors and Western premiers gathered in Utah. One of the speakers at the Western Governors' Association meeting was President Obama's Energy Secretary, Steven Chu. Secretary Chu is a Nobel prize winning physicist. According to the June 17th issue of the *Calgary Herald*, Secretary Chu told the delegates: "The news has been getting scarier."

The article goes on to say:

Chu . . . said the entire world must do more.

Half of the northern polar ice cap has been lost during the last decade, a rate "significantly faster" than what scientists predicted, Chu said, while sea levels have risen

five times faster over the last 20 years than initially believed.

Pine beetle proliferation is destroying lush forests and producing more forest fires, he said, noting 40 per cent of the pine in B.C. is dead, with 80 per cent expected to die. What's more, "severe water stress" is predicted for the western U.S. in the first half of the century.

So, Mr. Speaker, many of the things that I touched on earlier in terms of what the implications will be for Saskatchewan people in dealing with climate change, whether it's things like the need to fight forest fires more because our forests will be dying at a greater rate and level, whether it's the extreme weather situations that we'll have to deal with as well, Mr. Speaker, clearly what Mr. Chu was talking about is a reality here on the ground.

The article then quotes Chu as saying this:

The most scary thing in my mind is the (scientific) observations. People can be entitled to opinions, but they're not entitled to their own facts.

So, Mr. Speaker, from Mr. Chu, really siding with the majority of public and global opinion on this issue, Mr. Speaker, saying that, you know, it's fine to have your own views, but you can't just make up random stuff. You can't just have opinions because they might be convenient to you at the time. It needs to be better founded than that. One needs to look at the science. And based from the comments from members opposite, Mr. Speaker, we see a clear reluctance on their part to do that.

What did the Premier do after listening to the US Energy Secretary, a Nobel prize winning physicist, express serious concerns about climate change and the need for the world to do more? I quote from the *Calgary Herald* of June 17: "Wall, however, defended Alberta's environmental efforts . . ."

The Premier defended Alberta's environmental efforts, not Saskatchewan's environmental efforts and not even Western Canada's environmental efforts. No, the Premier defended Alberta's, Mr. Speaker. And we see that because what we've seen here on the ground, Mr. Speaker, is a retreat from the election platform, a retreat from their own action or claims of their own action, Mr. Speaker, on the environmental front. So when the Premier's put on the spot of talking about climate change, just reverts to defending Alberta's actions as opposed to even mentioning Saskatchewan's. The unfortunate reality is that under the Sask Party government, Saskatchewan has not had environmental efforts to defend.

Perhaps it's not surprising that the Premier would jump to Alberta's defence. After all the Premier has repeatedly chosen to stick close to Ed Stelmach in Alberta. In fact the July 26, 2008 issue of the *Leader-Post* says this, and I quote:

Saskatchewan and Alberta are increasingly the "odd men out" in the climate change debate currently raging in the corridors of power across the country.

That much was painfully obvious at the three-day Council of the Federation meetings in Quebec . . . last week.

The article goes on to say:

Messrs. Wall and Stelmach can boast all they want about carbon storage and clean coal technology. But these are useful tools and techniques, not comprehensive policy solutions, to the problem of man-made climate change.

And, like they say, if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, we see that Saskatchewan's record under the Sask Party government is not a proud one. We see that our actions by the government on the issue of climate change has been a retreat, has been an abandonment of their election platform. And I think that that's concerning to many people here in Saskatchewan.

A Canada West survey last year found over 62 per cent of Sask residents say reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a high or very high priority — 62 per cent, Mr. Speaker, a very large percentage of the population. Only 5.8 per cent say it's a very low priority. The survey went on to show that 80 per cent of Saskatchewan residents think climate change is a very serious or serious problem, Mr. Speaker.

So on the one hand, while we see Saskatchewan people viewing climate change as a real concern, on one hand we see Saskatchewan people wanting action on climate change, on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, we've seen a record of the Sask Party government, one of failing to live up to their commitments, one of abandoning the targets that they ran on. One of not having much to hang their hat on, Mr. Speaker, whether it's speeches of members opposite who can't really provide a whole lot of examples of the things they're doing, or whether it is the Premier's fondness and default position to simply defend the position of Alberta as opposed to defend the actions that have occurred in Saskatchewan. To me, Mr. Speaker, that is a troubling issue.

[21:30]

Mr. Speaker, so we've provided a bit of an overview of climate change as an issue for the planet, touched on what this will mean for people in Saskatchewan, what this will mean for us here, how this will change our lives, Mr. Speaker. And we've seen, Mr. Speaker, how the Sask Party will say one thing in the election campaign but then, when given the opportunity to deliver on what they want to do, we see, Mr. Speaker, that they haven't done a good job. In fact they've abandoned their targets.

And when the Premier is out of province he has to defend Stelmach's position. And increasingly it's Wall and Stelmach against everyone else, Mr. Speaker. So when we look at . . . I think that's the mindset or the framework, I think, Mr. Speaker, that we need to look through when examining this government motion that was put forward on the environment, Mr. Speaker.

As I mentioned earlier, there's three main components to this government motion. The first part, and I'll talk about that now, Mr. Speaker, the first part of this motion. And this part of the motion reads — it's the first paragraph:

That this Assembly support the government's plan addressing climate change, a plan balancing environmental protection with economic growth, thereby ensuring the well-being and future prosperity of Saskatchewan families.

Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, whenever we read something, Mr. Speaker, there's certain words that jump out at us, certain words that speak to us. And when I read this motion, Mr. Speaker, when I read the first part of it, the words that really caught me was "a plan balancing," a plan balancing, Mr. Speaker. And a plan balancing is the language that all the members opposite have worked into their speeches.

Well, Mr. Speaker, at face value maybe members might think a plan balancing is okay language. And maybe members might think that yes, this makes good sense. But then it got me thinking and it reminded me, Mr. Speaker, of when else I've heard about their plan balancing.

And, Mr. Speaker, what it turned my thoughts to were a number of the debates we've recently had here in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. It got me thinking about the recent debate we had on the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, and really how I addressed in an earlier speech, Mr. Speaker, how the Throne Speech really was for the most part empty of tangible aspects that the government wants to do moving forward. Yes there were some, but we saw in this Throne Speech 50 aspects looking back, talking about their record, and about 10 looking forward.

And it's my opinion and position, Mr. Speaker, that that Throne Speech was nothing more than a channel-changing document, nothing more than an attempt by members opposite to draw attention from what is a primary concern right now in the province to something else.

And something else on any given day falls under a number of different patterns. You know, one day it's cakes. One day it's balloons. One day it's moustaches. One day it's this; one day it's that. Whatever the flavour of the day is, Mr. Speaker, that's what they would draw attention to.

But what they were drawing attention from, Mr. Speaker, was their horrible, horrible record, Mr. Speaker, in managing the province's books; their horrible, horrible record, Mr. Speaker, in having a fiscal plan; their horrible, horrible record, Mr. Speaker, in achieving a plan to balance, Mr. Speaker.

We have seen very clearly, and I think on Thursday, I know on Thursday, Mr. Speaker, we will get a clearer picture of the provincial finances. But it's obvious to all members at this point in time — and there has been some hints delivered by the other side, Mr. Speaker — that the plan balancing that they had for the provincial books, Mr. Speaker, didn't work out so well. It was not a good plan. It was not well thought out, Mr. Speaker.

It did not do a great job of balancing because now, Mr. Speaker, we learned that here in Saskatchewan we are in fact in deficit. We learned, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are spending more than they're taking in and we are in deficit. And now the province is facing some very serious consequences and some very serious decisions, Mr. Speaker.

So you can see my concern. You can see my reluctance when I read this motion, when it talked about a plan balancing, Mr. Speaker. The last time I heard about a plan balancing, Mr. Speaker, by members opposite, it didn't turn out so well. And we don't know how ugly it is yet exactly, Mr. Speaker, but we know it's bad. Mr. Speaker, we know that.

You know, we heard recent news that certain individuals might not be around for the Thursday update, Mr. Speaker, because it might not be a nice photo op. We want to find a nicer photo op, Mr. Speaker. We want to find something that doesn't draw attention to the horrible plan of balancing. We want to find something, Mr. Speaker that is lighter, you know, whether that be a moustache, whether that be a cake, whether that be a ribbon, whether that be a balloon. That's what we want to put our attention to, Mr. Speaker.

So when I see the talk from the other side about a plan to balance I'm worried because, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the track record; we've seen the evidence. And the balancing has been pretty lopsided and the balancing is to the side of deficit. It's not in favour of Saskatchewan people. It's not in favour of our economy. It's not in favour of our environment.

The plan has not been a balanced one. It's been a very skewed one. It's been one that has been hard on Saskatchewan people. So when they talk about this balanced plan, I simply have trouble believing it and I simply have trouble thinking that this will bring the results that members opposite want us to think it will bring.

So that's the first section, Mr. Speaker, of this motion and that's, Mr. Speaker, the first concern I have with this motion is that when members opposite talk about balancing anything, alarm bells go off for me because they've proven so far by their track record that they're not up for the job, up to the job.

The second section, Mr. Speaker, of this motion is:

That this Assembly support the Saskatchewan plan to direct offset payments into the Saskatchewan Technology Fund to fund research into the development of technology needed to help the world reduce and control carbon emission.

And that's the end of the first section, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, this ties into the earlier comments I read by one of the journalists talking about some of the initial short-term measures that members opposite may have done. And we can certainly have a discussion about the Saskatchewan Technology Fund and how that has importance for Saskatchewan, and I think that would be an interesting debate. But it's not, Mr. Speaker . . . In my view it might be one important part of a larger plan. It might be one important part of a larger strategy. It might be one important part of a larger piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, but it is not a strategy. It is not a global plan. It is not something, Mr. Speaker, that will in my opinion address the concerns about the environment, about the climate, address the action that needs to take place here in Saskatchewan.

So it might be one aspect of the plan, but it's not a plan, Mr.

Speaker. And members before me have talked about, well where is the plan? Where is the plan? And, Mr. Speaker, we had one plan that was presented by members opposite and that was the plan in the election platform, but sadly, Mr. Speaker, they've admitted that they're breaking their promise on that plan. So we can't rely on that plan, Mr. Speaker, because that plan, by their own admission, is a broken promise. That plan does not hold water, Mr. Speaker. That plan will not address the concerns of Saskatchewan people, the concerns of the high percentage of individuals who want action on climate change. That plan, Mr. Speaker, is a broken promise.

So the Technology Fund could be one important part of an overall strategy. And it would be great to have that debate, Mr. Speaker, but so far what we've heard from members opposite is simply an admission that they've broken their promise, that they've retreated from the targets that they agreed to. And now the Saskatchewan people are in a place where they can't trust them.

And I bring up the issue of trust, Mr. Speaker, because that's a very important one. And the members opposite would like us to believe. They simply want to say to us, well trust us. We have a plan, and trust us. We'll get that plan implemented. Trust us. We'll introduce that legislation in the spring. Well, Mr. Speaker, where is that legislation? The legislation they did introduce, Mr. Speaker, died on the order papers. The legislation that they were proud of, Mr. Speaker, has not been passed, Mr. Speaker.

So members opposite, they're the government. They have the majority. They control what legislation is brought into this House other than private member Bills, Mr. Speaker. It's within their means if they care about something. It's within their means if they are concerned about something. It's within their means if they actually want to pass some legislation, if they actually want to show that they have a plan for the Saskatchewan people, for this province, Mr. Speaker. It's within their power. It's within their ability. It's within their role and their responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to introduce that legislation.

And members opposite don't want to introduce that legislation or they haven't introduced it or they did introduce it but they didn't have their act together, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that the legislation would actually be passed. So now we're in a limbo state, Mr. Speaker, where we've seen some legislation. We've seen an election platform that was a broken promise. And we have a promise now, Mr. Speaker, in the future — even though they've broken the one promise — we have a promise in the future that they're going to bring in some comprehensive legislation that will show the whole plan that will be clear to the Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

Well you can see why I might have trouble believing that, Mr. Speaker, or that I can be comfortable simply taking members opposite at their expression of, trust me; it'll all work out in the end — don't you worry.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've seen an election platform that was introduced, targets that were adopted, and we've seen the broken promise and the abandonment of those targets. We've seen legislation that was introduced by a majority government,

a majority government that has the ability to pass the legislation that it wants to pass. If it's a priority, if its act is together, it can surely get it done. And now, Mr. Speaker, we have a promise. We have an IOU [I owe you]. We have a future pledge that, Mr. Speaker, at some point in time in the future, we'll introduce legislation. Just trust us, Mr. Speaker.

Well you can see, Mr. Speaker, why I might have problems with this notion of just trusting them because we can all recall, around budget time, when all the rhetoric from members opposite, all the over-the-top talk was about the best budget in the whole universe and how things were just great, Mr. Speaker, and how they had a plan to balance the books. They had a plan to take care of the resources. They had a plan to take care of fiscal management. After all, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite who supposedly are good at business, members opposite who supposedly have this great track record at investment, members opposite who supposedly can run businesses, members opposite who were going to just whip this province into shape, Mr. Speaker.

And what have we seen? Well we've seen a huge train wreck with the books, Mr. Speaker. We've seen a financial mess-up with the budget, Mr. Speaker, time back, mess-up that we haven't seen since 1986.

So when members opposite say, just trust me on the environment; when members opposite just say, oh I'm going to introduce some legislation, just trust me; when members opposite say, I'm going to have a plan of balancing the environmental protection and economic growth, Mr. Speaker, we can see with their brutal track record on the economy, we can see with their brutal track record on their fiscal know-how, we can see on their brutal track record on taking from the rainy day fund, their brutal track record of stripping in the Crowns, Mr. Speaker, we can see how I don't trust them when they put forward a motion on the environment where they talk about a plan for balancing environmental protection with economic growth and then goes on to talk about other things.

And, Mr. Speaker, instead of providing a comprehensive plan, instead of introducing legislation — legislation that was within their ability, legislation that is within their right, legislation that supposedly is within their know-how, legislation that should address the issue of climate change — we don't see anything. We're on day 14 — what's the day now of the session? — 14, 15, something like that and no legislation, Mr. Speaker.

A motion, a motion that was written perhaps by the Premier on a Saturday afternoon. Maybe he called up the Environment minister and said hey, not only did I have some great ideas on potash, not only did I have some great ideas about the budget, but I also have some great ideas on the environment. And I think, before we send you off to Copenhagen, we should pass a little motion in the House.

And I have these ideas that we could talk about. You know, we could talk about balancing because Saskatchewan people like balance. They certainly like a responsible government. I know they haven't had it from us. I know we've mangled the books. I know we've done a horrible job of managing the resources, but let's throw in the word balancing because that could be a good idea.

And you know, let's talk about Saskatchewan Technology Fund because that could make it sound like we actually have a plan. That could make it sound like we've actually thought this through. That could make it sound like we actually know where we're going. That could make it sound like we've done some concrete things other than simply break our promises on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

So I could see how this motion could come to pass. I could see how it could come into being, Mr. Speaker. My problem is, I can't trust the members opposite. When they say, just trust me. We'll bring in the legislation. Trust me. We'll bring in the plan. The evidence has not been there, Mr. Speaker.

[21:45]

We've seen it with the Finance minister talking about the budget, saying, well trust me. You know, I've got a rock. I'll build my province upon this rock. I've got a Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Everything will be fine. Just trust me. Well, we've seen, Mr. Speaker, in recent days how that fund has been gutted.

Mr. Speaker, it's an indication, it's an indication, Mr. Speaker, of the approach of the mindset that members opposite are encouraged to use. Not just members opposite, Mr. Speaker, but the approach that cabinet ministers are encouraged to use. We can think of, you know, this whole approach where the Finance minister said everything's under control. Trust me. Trust me. I'll balance the books. Trust me. I'll take care of the resources. Trust me. The Sask Party is great at business. We do really well at business. You can trust us. We know how to balance a chequebook. We know how to do things responsibly.

You can see, Mr. Speaker, that when that type of rhetoric is encouraged by the Premier, when that type of rhetoric is encouraged by the Premier for his ministers to state, when they're encouraged just to say trust me on everything. Just take my word on it. It's all going to work out. Hurry, hurry, we've got a photo here to gather for. Let's just make sure we're at this photo op on time. Let's just make sure we have enough balloons. Let's just make sure we've got three ribbons, not one ribbon. I want three ribbons at the next photo op. When that's the greatest concern, when the rhetoric over the top is always about just trust me, Mr. Speaker, you can see how I'm a little worried.

So we've seen how the Premier has encouraged this approach with the Finance minister. I can only assume, Mr. Speaker, that that same approach has been encouraged to the Environment minister, because this appears to be the MO [modus operandi] for members of cabinet, to simply say, trust me. The details are going to work out in the end. Trust me. I know how to balance the books. Trust me. I know how to run the province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're starting to see the chickens come to roost, or the crows as they say in the North, Mr. Speaker. And we know, Mr. Speaker, that the reality that we see in the province now on the ground is not. But sadly we continue to see the Premier who encourages his cabinet ministers, whether that's the Minister of the Environment, whether that's the Minister of Finance, to simply say, trust me.

Now members opposite, I don't think they're totally buying this

argument. I don't think they're buying the trust-me argument. I can see why, Mr. Speaker, because members on my side are encouraging me to sing the trust me. I'm not willing to sing the trust me, and I'm actually not even willing to make a poem about it, Mr. Speaker. Because the issue of trust me, while we can have some fun about it, it's also a very serious issue. It's also an issue that cuts right to the credibility. It cuts right to the moral authority the members opposite have to speak to issues.

So I've talked about the Finance minister and how this approach clearly must have a spillover to the Environment minister. We've also seen it from the Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing. Mr. Speaker, we've seen the same trust me approach used by the minister of CPSS . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker. Thank you. Members opposite are helping me out with the acronym.

We've seen this same just trust me. And the issue, Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about are escaped individuals or individuals who have been let out early from our correctional system. And when, Mr. Speaker, there were a number of instances where there have been individuals who have been released from jail early or individuals who have escaped, for whatever the reason might be that individuals are unlawfully at large.

We saw this with the previous minister of Corrections. We saw a clear statement from the ministry that the public was going to be notified. Trust us. We'll notify the public. Trust us. When something bad happens, we're going to let you know. Trust us. When a convicted sex offender is on the loose, Mr. Speaker, we're going to let you know. That's government policy. You can trust us. The public, believe me, when something like that happens, our position as government will be to notify the public. That's what they told us. The mantra for cabinet ministers opposite — trust us. Trust us. Whether it's the economy, whether it's policing or whether it's the environment, just trust us . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Exactly.

So we've seen, Mr. Speaker, from the approach that the Premier has taken to all his cabinet ministers . . . And this is why I'm alarmed by this motion that talks about the Saskatchewan Technology Fund. This motion that talks about, well trust us, we have a comprehensive plan. We haven't seen any legislation. We've seen a whole lot of breaking of promises, but please trust us.

With the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, what we see is the Premier condoning behaviour, the Premier condoning behaviour that has very dire consequences for all ministers within his cabinet, including the Environment minister, including the minister that has brought forward this motion.

We see from the Minister of Policing and Corrections and Public Safety, when asked his very first question in question period, Mr. Speaker, his very first question as a minister on an issue, he was asked whether or not there was someone unlawfully at large. He says, I'm not aware of that. Not aware of that, no. I know we have a policy — well he didn't say this, but he must have thought this — I know we have a policy about notifying the public. I know we have a policy about being upfront and stating what the situation is, Mr. Speaker. But did he do it? No. He said, I'm not aware of anything.

And it was only, Mr. Speaker, through further questioning, it was only, Mr. Speaker, through further questioning that the public was informed about an early-release sex offender, Mr. Speaker, at large.

It was only through additional questioning that the minister was actually . . . lived up to the commitment for full disclosure to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And this example that I use, Mr. Speaker, about the Minister of Policing and Corrections and Public Safety, how his behaviour is condoned, Mr. Speaker, by the Premier, how his behaviour was encouraged by the Premier . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I ask the member to stay on topic with the discussion of the motion.

Mr. Broten: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think if members opposite can just bear with me while I explain this case, Mr. Speaker. We see a clear track record with one minister, one member of the Crown, Mr. Speaker. And it causes me concern because it's a pattern of behaviour among cabinet ministers, including the Environment minister — the individual that brought this motion forward, Mr. Speaker.

We see a clear pattern of condoning behaviour, condoning behaviour that says upfront to the people of Saskatchewan. Trust me. Trust me. Everything will work out in the end. I have your best interest at heart. But when it comes down to the proof, when it comes down . . .

[Interjections]

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — What is your point of order? I recognize the member from Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe in this House that when you're in debate on a motion, that it needs to be somewhat relevant with the motion. And the member opposite has rarely touched the motion, Mr. Speaker. So I would ask that you rule, Mr. Speaker, that the member address the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To speak to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, there's been a long-standing tradition in this House to allow latitude when speaking about a motion or about a topic, Mr. Speaker. In this particular case, if you're listening very carefully, the member is relating the credibility of the intent to past actions of the government in saying that those actions are relevant to this motion. Mr. Speaker, I think it's very clear.

The Deputy Speaker: — I've listened to both the point of order and to the member voicing his concern on the opposition. I know that in this House there has been some latitude, but I would also . . . which we've given in debate on the motion. But I also warn members to, you know, to stay within the relevance

of the motion. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we've seen from the motion, we see in the motion, Mr. Speaker, there's been three sections to this motion. And, Mr. Speaker, we've seen from this motion, I initially talked about how, when looking at this motion, I have a hard time taking members opposite seriously because on every given opportunity with . . . Well not on every. The norm on the other side, Mr. Speaker, has been in the past to doubt the validity of climate change, has been to doubt the consensus among the scientific community that climate change is real. And the actions by members opposite have been contrary to the majority opinion in Saskatchewan that climate change is real and that action needs to occur.

And, Mr. Speaker, I've stated earlier that it's important to take that mindset and look at this motion, Mr. Speaker, because I think when we look at these three sections of the motion, the plan to balance environmental protection with economic growth, when the members opposite have done any balancing in the past, when members opposite have done some balancing with the books, it's turned out ugly. And on Thursday we're going to see just how ugly it actually is, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen with their Saskatchewan Technology Fund, their support of this position, the second section of the motion, Mr. Speaker, we've seen how members opposite have tried to pass this off as a plan. We've seen how members opposite have just said, trust me, I have your best interests at heart. Trust me. It'll all work out in the end. Trust me. We know how to do things well because you've seen how well we've managed the books, and you've seen how well we've notified the public about escaped sex offenders. Trust us on the environment; we'll get it right.

Mr. Speaker, so my opinion, we've seen how the second part of the motion that tries to pretend there's a real plan, but it simply asks for a blank cheque. Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, not a plan. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, it's not a part of the motion I could support.

The last part of the motion, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to address is:

That this Honourable Assembly encourage the government to actively promote the Saskatchewan plan at the United Nations COP 15 Conference in Copenhagen, in December of 2009.

And, Mr. Speaker, the interesting part that caught my attention and eye in the third part of this government motion, Mr. Speaker, is the talk of the Saskatchewan plan. Because, Mr. Speaker, the second part of the motion clearly shows that there is no plan. The second part of the motion indicates that they have some ideas. The second part of the motion indicates that, well we had an election promise and we broke it. The second part of the motion indicates, well we introduced some legislation, but we didn't quite get our legislative act together to actually pass it.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the Saskatchewan plan, what is this plan, Mr. Speaker? And what we've seen, Mr.

Speaker, about the Saskatchewan plan is that it's really the Harper government plan. It's not so much about Saskatchewan. It's more about appeasing and being in ideological agreement with our Conservative cousins in Ottawa, or in our backyard as it may be, or in our caucus as it may be, Mr. Speaker.

So what we see is, we saw a transition, Mr. Speaker. After the promise was broken, the promise that they committed to in the election platform, we saw a migration to the federal targets, Mr. Speaker. We saw a transition to supporting the federal Tories.

There's a quote, Mr. Speaker, from an article on May 12th, 2009. And it says:

It's bad enough that Premier Brad Wall's government now has to break its own election promise to appease the federal government, but Wall must also again deal with the perception his government is too closely tied to that of Prime Minister Stephen Harper. And about the last area in which the Sask. Party government should want to be tied to the federal Tories is the environment and greenhouse emissions.

Also, they've been tied to the federal Tories on this issue for months now. They just haven't been especially forthright about it.

Mr. Speaker, there was talk about, trust me, we have a plan. There was talk about, you know, we did break our promise, but I think in the future we might introduce some legislation that could have some bearing on this issue. Just trust me. Please write me a blank cheque. Everything will be okay. But what we see, Mr. Speaker, is that the language that has been used by the Sask Party government, this language about balancing, this language about taking care of a number of things at one time, is the same topic we see coming out of the federal Conservatives in Ottawa.

From an article, "Canada to push 'balance' in Copenhagen," "The Canadian government defends its 'balanced approach' to fighting climate change while not jeopardizing its economic growth." And it goes on to say, "Canada will undertake efforts to meet our global responsibilities in a way that balances environmental protection and economic prosperity for Canadians . . ."

Mr. Speaker, so this third part of the motion, this part of the motion that talks about a Saskatchewan plan, we haven't seen a Saskatchewan plan yet, Mr. Speaker. We've seen some Saskatchewan ideas. We've seen some Saskatchewan broken promises. We've seen some Sask Party ideas. But we have not seen a Saskatchewan plan. We've seen a Harper plan. We've seen a plan, Mr. Speaker, that's been convenient for them in the short term, but not a plan that addresses the issue.

[22:00]

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I will conclude my remarks. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will simply say members opposite have been doubters about climate change. Their actions haven't lived up to their supposedly new-found conversion to a concern about climate change. This motion, Mr. Speaker, this motion, Mr. Speaker, is not about government commitment to climate

change. Mr. Speaker, this motion is about a blank cheque to help out with a trip to Copenhagen.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin my remarks, I want to recite a little poem which I think is apropos for tonight's motion.

Copenhagen, Copenhagen, here I come
 A climate change plan to find.
 I know I have no clue what I want
 But I am sure no one will mind.
 Trust me, just pass the motion
 On climate change now.
 Trust me, it doesn't matter how.
 It's meaningless regardless.
 It's only my feel-good motion.
 As for climate change
 It really is a good notion.
 But I'm in it for the trip.
 So let's all get a grip.
 Let me go, let me go
 Let me go to Copenhagen.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a motion that's before the House and I've been thinking about this motion. Why would the government introduce a motion today talking about climate change? Well we learned earlier this week that that the minister and a couple of her staff are off to Copenhagen at a cost of \$24,700 — well one staff from her office and one ministerial staff.

We also know that the federal government needs a province to line up with them because there really aren't many governments in the Western world that has Canada's position. So we have a government, a Sask Party government that's very friendly with the federal Conservatives. They're all going off to Copenhagen. They need some legislature someplace in Canada to support the federal government. So we have this motion.

Now it's fascinating. Last spring the Minister of the Environment issued a press release saying that she was introducing legislation into the House, and it was going to be a piece of legislation that was going to reduce greenhouse gases.

And we did see a Bill. That's true. We saw a Bill. But the Bill died I guess last spring and we haven't seen a Bill since. Now the government says it has a plan, and this plan was contained in the Bill that hasn't been reintroduced. So we need a motion. We don't really have a plan because we don't have any legislation at present. We have this framework, but it hasn't actually been actualized. It means nothing.

So before the Minister of the Environment can go off to Copenhagen, she needs a motion to justify the \$24,700 dollar expense because she's going to go off and cheerlead one Stephen Harper and his "response to global warming" which none of the industrialized countries in the world support.

But let's talk about the plan that they have. Now their plan was to have *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouses Gases Act*. Now what this was supposed to do was establish the policy and regulatory framework in the province of Saskatchewan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and this was a made-in-Saskatchewan plan apparently. Now they said in the legislation that they were going to have these provincial targets to reduce greenhouse gases by 20 per cent by 2020, and they said that they have an agreement in principle on efforts to address climate change. This is an equivalency agreement that apparently they signed with the Harper government.

Now they also said that as part of this greenhouse plan that they were going to set up a technology fund. Well we haven't seen the technology fund yet. And they also said that they were going to set up a climate change foundation which was to support research and development. And we haven't seen the climate change foundation. And they also put on the Internet this thing called the framework for the management and reduction of greenhouse gases and adaptation to climate change.

Now what we're supposed to see in the province, which we don't see, but according to this piece of paper they've got a thing called *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouses Gases Act* and regulations, but we really don't have that. We're supposed to have a climate change advisory council, but we don't have that. We're supposed to have an office of climate change which is to be involved in the regulation and monitoring and verification and policy and planning and offsets admin and adaptation and education and awareness, but we don't have that.

Then apparently we're supposed to have a technology fund, which we don't have, and this technology fund is supposed to have something to do with the climate change foundation. It's a lovely little drawing and we should all be happy, but it's meaningless because it hasn't been implemented. So that's why we have the motion.

So for all of the listening public who think we have a climate change plan, we don't. What we have is we have a piece of paper. You can go onto the Internet to the Ministry of the Environment, it's dated May 11th, 2009, and it's a lovely plan. But we've had June, July, August, September, October, November — six months. Now I think six months represents six months of their four-year government and they have done absolutely nothing. And in fact when you think about it, they've been in office for two years and they have done absolutely nothing. But we're going to pass a motion so that the minister can go to Copenhagen for a cost of \$24,700 and be a cheerleader for the Stephen Harper government.

And we all know that the Stephen Harper government position when it comes to global warming is not supported by any, by any government in the industrialized world, but it will be supported by the Saskatchewan Party government. But they have a motion. But they have nothing to support this motion. They have absolutely nothing to support this motion. Well they laugh over there. You know, global warming is a real issue in this world. It really is. It's a real issue. And you know what? There are a number of people that would like to see something done about it. And why do they want to see something done about it? Because they travel the world; they watch television and they see what's happening to the climate. And they would

like to see some concrete action taken by a government.

Oh and the member says, well what have you done for 16 years? Well the reality is that we have the highest greenhouse gas emissions in the country, and I think that we should all take responsibility for that and we need to do something. And this is a government that has an opportunity to do something, but they want to pass a motion that is meaningless because they've had two years to start the process and they've done absolutely nothing. They've said, trust us.

Now the legislation isn't in the House. We don't have any kind . . . We have a target apparently, but we don't have a plan on how we're going to do this, how we're going to meet this 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

They've got a lovely framework. They've tossed about the legislation. They've talked about regulations. They've talked about . . . The Minister of the Environment apparently is responsible for this and her deputy, but they don't have a technology fund. They don't have a coordinator for climate change. They don't have a climate change advisory committee — I'm not sure, maybe they do. They don't have an inter-ministerial climate change committee. Now they don't have regulations. The policies, if you go onto their website, we don't see policies. We don't see how they're going to . . . about reducing emissions. We don't know how they're going to deal with adaptation. We don't know how they're going to deal with offsets.

And they talk about education and awareness. Now I do know that there certainly is awareness. But I think what the public would like to see is a concrete action plan in terms of how we're going to deal with something that is top of mind for the public, Mr. Speaker.

Now the minister will go off to Copenhagen and I know she will support the federal Conservatives in their plan. But what's really fascinating is that this is the government that in their election document, in the 2007 election, said that they were going to do a number of things in the province of Saskatchewan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that they were going to be green leaders. They were going to be green leaders in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now some . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It's not the Roughriders we're talking about. We're talking about green leadership in government. Today we're going to ensure that there was environmental education which would be taught in our schools as part of the curriculum. They were going to work with municipalities and institutions across this province to ensure that new public buildings in the province are constructed to the Model National Energy Code. And here's a funny. Here's a real funny. They were going to ensure that all new vehicles purchased by the provincial government are a hybrid or high fuel efficiency vehicles.

Well we know what that has led to. We see some Jeeps that aren't high fuel energy efficiency vehicles. And, Mr. Speaker, get this — they were going to ensure that all government departments follow the lead of Crowns in establishing measurable goals and targets to reduce their . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. There's starting to be a few more conversations going on other than the member that has the floor. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — And, Mr. Speaker, they were going to establish measurable goals and targets to reduce their environmental footprint and report publicly. Now, Mr. Speaker, we haven't seen much reporting publicly by our good friends across the way.

Now we know that they will . . . We do know this, that they're off to Copenhagen, that they're going to support the federal government. No one in the industrialized world is supporting the federal government, but they're going to support the federal government. And we do know that they have a piece of paper that we can all get on the Internet, but it means absolutely nothing, because they have a framework but they don't have legislation. And they haven't begun to implement any of the things that they say in this document.

Now I know that the members opposite are a bit touchy on this, but you know we do have a news release dated May the 11th and it was a big announcement by the Government of Saskatchewan that they were introducing greenhouse gas legislation. Now they said that this new legislation was going to “. . . establish a made-in-Saskatchewan plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to meet provincial targets and promote investments in low-carbon technologies.”

Now you know, Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen the legislation passed. I haven't seen the legislation in this sitting of the legislature. And you know what the minister said? You know what the minister said? “The time for talk is over.” That's what the minister said. The minister said, “Our government is taking real action . . .” Yes. Now this was in May. This is six months ago. “The time for talk is over.” “Our government is taking real action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” Very interesting.

And the minister said this: we'd be adopting the federal target of 20 per cent, and she said that she'd “. . . signed an Agreement in Principle to negotiate an equivalency agreement . . .” And this is what she said: “An equivalency agreement with the federal government is key to Saskatchewan retaining compliance payments in the province for investments in low carbon technologies.”

And maybe that's why we're having the motion. Maybe they . . . Who knows? Maybe we're having the motion because the only way we can keep the compliance payments is to pass a motion. Because we certainly don't have legislation, Mr. Speaker.

[22:15]

Now the time for talk is over. The time for talk is over, but we don't have any legislation. We don't have this Technology Fund. We don't have the Climate Change Foundation. Now they did announce the new parameters for the Go Green Fund. You know, they did announce that. Now I don't know what that means.

I did go on to the Internet and I did pull some things off. Now I don't know what go green means, but there are a number of

programs which I think were certainly in action before they came to government. You know, things like the EnerGuide for Houses, things like the PST . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Absolutely nothing. I think I was the minister when it was brought in. Absolutely nothing. I was the minister. So you know, nothing wrong there. But I think that's something that the NDP did. I think that net metering was also something that the NDP did, but it's not what I call a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the province. But the time for talk is over.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that the members opposite said that they were going to do is that they were going to help skating rinks in the province of Saskatchewan become more energy efficient. Now I haven't seen a lot of assistance for rinks in the province of Saskatchewan. In fact we daily get calls from communities that they can barely afford to keep the power and lights on because of escalating costs.

Now the other thing that they said was that they were going to do, have some sustainable community initiatives, including local recycling programs. Well I live in Saskatoon, and I've been waiting for a recycling program for some time. But you know, maybe that's part of their go green. Maybe someday we will have a recycling program. Maybe they can figure it out over in Copenhagen. I'm not quite sure.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that the Sask Party said is that they'd extend the current provincial initiatives to improve energy efficiency in homes and businesses for another five years. Well that's nice. But, you know, before they came to government, there were low-interest loans for people to install Energy Star furnaces. There was the rebating of the PST for purchases of Energy Star appliances. And you know what? There were energy efficiency initiatives for low-income people.

Now the one thing that they did say is that they were going to help Saskatchewan drivers go green on the road. They were going to lower the cost to register and insure a 2006 or later model hybrid or high fuel efficiency vehicle. Now apparently this was going to save the travelling public about \$200 a year. I do think, though, that SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] rates just went up. So I'm not sure how this particular promise of the Sask Party is working at the moment.

But apparently they wanted to increase the percentage of green cars and trucks on our roads over the next four years. Now I have noticed that there are some, I guess you'd call them jeeps, on the road — lots of those. I'm not sure they're green though. I'm not sure they're green even though they said that they were going to have high fuel efficiency programs.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they want to reduce, they want to reduce their environmental footprint. Now I was really pleased to see that, when the minister is going off to Copenhagen on her trip to support Stephen Harper, that apparently she is going to make sure that her environmental footprint is negligible. And you know, good for her. She has contacted some group and she's paying some sort of green fee to fly over to Copenhagen to support Stephen Harper, who isn't being supported by any other government in the industrialized world.

But we're going to spend \$24,700 to fly over to Copenhagen. But we're, you know, we're okay because we're not leaving a

footprint because we're going to pay for this flight over so that it's all environmentally good. But you know what? The plan that Canada is going to talk about in Copenhagen isn't supported by countries in the industrialized world . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Pardon me? Oh, I can keep going about this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, so we know this: the Minister of the Environment is going to Copenhagen. I've never been to Copenhagen and I'm sure it's a lovely place. The Minister of the Environment is going over to Copenhagen to support Stephen Harper's plan which none of the other governments in the industrialized world support.

The minister needs to go with something. She doesn't have her legislation. It didn't pass. She doesn't have her climate change office. She doesn't have her Technology Fund. She doesn't have her legislation. She doesn't have her regulations. She doesn't have anything. Even though she says the time for talk is over, she has nothing. So the way she's going to get over to Copenhagen — with I guess some semblance of support — is to have the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan pass a motion.

And the motion will indicate that this Assembly supports the government's climate change plan, even though we don't know what it is. That this Assembly supports the Saskatchewan plan to direct offset payments into the Saskatchewan Technology Fund, even though we don't have a Technology Fund. And this fund apparently is to do research into the development of technology needed to help the world reduce and control carbon emission, even though we don't have a Technology Fund. And that we are supposed to encourage the government to actively promote a plan that we don't have at the UN COP 15 Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I go back to my poem. I go back to my poem. I want to read it again:

Copenhagen, Copenhagen, here I come
 A climate change plan to find.
 I have no clue what I want
 But I am sure no one will mind.
 Trust me, just pass the motion
 On climate change now.
 Trust me, it doesn't matter how.
 It's meaningless, meaningless, meaningless regardless.
 It's only my feel-good motion.
 As for climate change
 It's really a good notion,
 But I'm in it for the trip.
 So let's all get a grip.
 Let me go, let me go
 Let me go to Copenhagen.

This motion is about a trip to Copenhagen, Mr. Speaker.

And with that I'll adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased tonight to be able to enter into the debate. Mr. Speaker, we have before us a motion talking about climate change and

we have the minister bringing forward what she calls a plan. And, Mr. Speaker, if you do an examination of the actual motion, what it talks about is a plan, but there is no plan.

We don't have anything comprehensive to identify, Mr. Speaker, what the government will do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We don't have any concrete plan showing what the government's intent is other than a 20 per cent reduction when their own Crown corporation, SaskPower, indicates between now and 2017, at most they'll be able to reduce about 9 per cent — more likely 3 per cent but certainly not any greater than 9 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have the government, we have the government asking the opposition to pass a motion without any substance, without providing enough substance that we in fact can look at this motion with any assurance or surety of what the future means if we agree to this motion.

So the minister will go off to Copenhagen where this issue will be discussed with leaders from around the world. But we don't know what our position will be when she goes to meet with those leaders around the world.

We know that this government's very closely tied to the federal Conservative government and the position of the federal Conservative government is one that is outside the parameters of the other nations of the industrial world. It's outside the European Union. It's outside of the position of the United States today. Mr. Speaker, they're an island to themselves basically in their position.

Mr. Speaker, so this motion before the House is a motion asking us to support a plan without any substance or concrete steps to achieve that plan, without any firm direction from the government as to how they intend to achieve that plan.

Now last fall, Mr. Speaker, we had a few glimpses of what a plan might be in a proposed piece of legislation, but that legislation was never implemented. And, Mr. Speaker, we don't see any intent today, or in this session of the legislature, to implement that piece of legislation or any piece of legislation that would give a clear framework or direction to move forward with.

Mr. Speaker, that's alarming because we're now in our 15th day of the sitting of this fall portion of the session, Mr. Speaker, and we've had ample time for the minister to reintroduce that piece of legislation if that was her intent. And, Mr. Speaker, we have had ample time to have debate on that piece of legislation had she introduced it. Now, Mr. Speaker, we're 15 days into the session. We don't see a piece of legislation. What we see instead is a motion saying, we have a plan — like out of the blue, they picked a plan out of the air — and support our plan.

But, Mr. Speaker, without any substance to that plan, without any clear understanding of what the steps are to implement that plan and how it will affect both the people of the province of Saskatchewan, our environment, and our economy, Mr. Speaker, because they're all three key, key elements of the well-being of our province, Mr. Speaker. Without understanding the impact on the environment, without understanding the impact on the people of the province of

Saskatchewan, and without understanding the impact on the economy and the business people of our province and the economic engine of our province, Mr. Speaker, how can we support something that doesn't have any substance from which we can judge whether or not this plan (a) means anything; two, will either hurt our environment, hurt the people of Saskatchewan or hurt our economic well-being, Mr. Speaker? All that is a mystery, and we haven't had the government provide us with any direction in the form of legislation or concrete steps to actually address the issue.

Mr. Speaker, what we do have is a government who had an environmental plan to deal with climate change in the last provincial election in 2007, a plan they took to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, a plan the people of the province of Saskatchewan judged this government on, elected this government, Mr. Speaker.

And what did we see shortly after that election? We saw the government say, no we're not going to keep that promise, Mr. Speaker. No we're not going to keep that plan and, Mr. Speaker, we're going to jump to the federal plan. Bang, we're going to jump on the same bandwagon as our federal cousins in Ottawa.

And, Mr. Speaker, so what do we believe or what do we expect moving forward, from this government? Well we don't know because they laid out a plan, they made a promise to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, and then they decided not to keep it.

So, Mr. Speaker, now they're asking us to support a motion without substance. They're asking us to support something without knowing what it means. Mr. Speaker, that's like buying a new car without looking at the car, without understanding what options that are on the car, Mr. Speaker, paying for the car, taking it home, and finding out it's got no headlights, no tail lights, and no motor.

The Deputy Speaker: — This House will now stand adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

[The Assembly adjourned at 22:30.]

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