

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
April 11, 1995

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have today from the town office in the town of Maple Creek, a petition that I will read the prayer of:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated towards the double-laning of Highway No. 1; and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program towards the double-laning of Highway No. 1, rather than allocating these funds towards capital construction projections in the province.

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

And these are mostly from the town of Maple Creek and the residents therefrom, and I'm happy to table these today.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The prayer on my petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to unequivocally oppose changes to present legislation regarding firearm ownership, and instead urge the federal government to deal with the criminal use of firearms by imposing stiffer penalties on abusers, and urge the federal government to recognize that gun control and crime control are not synonymous.

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

These petitions come from the Alida, Wakaw, Carnduff, and Kerrobert areas of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have petitions as well with regard to the gun issue in Saskatchewan. These petitions come from the Kerrobert, Dodslund, Regina — a number of areas across Saskatchewan. And I'm pleased to present them on behalf of those people today, Mr. Speaker.

**READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

**Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 11(7) they are hereby read and received.

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to allocate funding toward the double-laning of Highway No. 1.

And of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to oppose changes to federal legislation regarding firearm ownership.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to other members of the Assembly, seated in the second row of the west gallery, my uncle, Mr. Ed Morgan from the city of Regina who's retiring from the Provincial Archives Board this year, and also my cousin, Valerie Howard, who's from Brandon. And she's visiting Regina and here to observe the proceedings today, and I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming both my uncle and my cousin. Thank you.

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

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**Canora Credit Union**

**Mr. Harper:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Canora Credit Union, which is in my new constituency, has just recorded its best year in its history. After paying interest, operating expenses, and income tax, the credit union has showed a surplus of \$468,000 which was allocated to the contingency reserve, a reserve that now stands at \$4.1 million, a very favourable level.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the entire provincial credit union system enjoyed a very successful year, and there has been very encouraging details included in the annual report. Total deposits were up. Sales of mutual funds, savings bonds, and RRSPs (registered retirement savings plan) were good. And this item which I find most interesting and most telling — there were 535 new memberships taken out in 1994. The total number of active memberships at the end of the year was 8,634.

Mr. Speaker, if our towns are dying and rural depopulation is the order of the day, someone better tell the people in Canora because I think this is very, very good news. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**National Wildlife Week**

**Mr. Scott:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each year National Wildlife Week is celebrated during the week which encompasses April 10, the birth date of the late Jack Miner, who is often referred to as the father of wildlife conservation in Canada.

This year's theme for Wildlife Week is: wildlife, yours to recover. This is particularly appropriate for Saskatchewan where many species of plants and animals have declined in numbers. For example, despite the best efforts of many people,

including landowners and conservationists, the number of burrowing owls continues to decline. In fact this unique prairie species should be upgraded from the threatened to the endangered category on Canada's list of species in trouble.

While a majority of species are declining in number, we have helped some species to recover. The Canada goose is once again a common breeding species throughout southern Saskatchewan, thanks to the efforts of many. Mountain bluebirds and tree swallows have increased in numbers and have in fact expanded their breeding range, thanks to the hundreds of people who built and set out nest boxes.

Our cities and towns have become an oasis for many species of wildlife because of the water bodies, the planting of trees and shrubs in urban parks. Habitat is the key to the survival of wildlife. Landowners, conservationists, organizations, volunteers, and governments, must work together to secure habitat and natural areas in Saskatchewan. Only then will we ensure the opportunity for our children and grandchildren to enjoy and appreciate the wildlife that we have enjoyed and often take it for granted. Thank you.

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

#### Saskatchewan Indian Winter Games

**Mr. Knezacek:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems to me that one purpose of these statements is to inform the general public and ourselves of non-earth-shattering but nevertheless significant facts. Here is one such fact: Saskatchewan is defending champion of the North American indigenous games which are held every two years.

Partly as preparation for these games and partly for good fun and fellowship, the Yorkton Tribal Council this weekend is hosting the 10th annual Saskatchewan Indian Winter Games. The games are to be held this year in Kamsack. Last year they were held in Montreal Lake, sponsored by the Prince Albert Tribal Council.

Eight tribal councils in Saskatchewan will send teams with the total number of participants expected to reach 1,000. These games are for participants aged 8 to 17. The events are badminton, broomball, hockey, boxing, and volleyball.

As well as the athletic events, the tribal council will sponsor wellness workshops and provide powwow demonstrations. As I said, Mr. Speaker, these are contests designed to showcase ability and to provide education and fellowship. For those anxious for summer, the Indian Summer Games will be held at Poundmaker Reserve near Cut Knife.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Sports Commission for establishing and overseeing these games, and I wish each contestant the best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Milestone Holds Indoor Rodeo

**Ms. Bradley:** — Mr. Speaker, last weekend the fourth annual Milestone indoor rodeo took place and was a huge success. Over 200 contestants from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, Montana, and North Dakota, tested their strength, endurance, and courage, and put on a great show.

The Milestone rodeo is not simply a rodeo, it is a community get-together. During the three-day event, there were two dances, a bingo, a ranch rodeo, and a church service. And like last year, over 500 pounds of beef-on-a-bun were served to 2,000 participants and spectators.

A special, unexpected highlight this year was the escape of all the stock late Friday night. With great community effort, a round-up occurred, and all animals were recovered by early Saturday morning.

Events like the indoor rodeo are important to local economies, Mr. Speaker. Several businesses in my constituency benefited from increased sales due to the influx of people.

The rodeo of course does not just happen by itself. The hard work of the Milestone rodeo association, local fire-fighters, curling, hockey, and figure skating clubs, has made our rodeo one of the top 10 in the province.

I especially want to thank the association for what they bring to the community beyond the three days of fun. Last year, Mr. Speaker, the association donated more than \$4,000 to build new bleachers at the Milestone recreation complex. Over the past three years, the association has given back \$23,000 to local charities, churches, and recreation associations. For their continuing work in making Milestone a great place to live, I want to congratulate the rodeo association and all of its volunteers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Saskatchewan Landing's New Marina

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Rosetown-Elrose, which I'm honoured to represent, probably has the longest shore line of any constituency in Saskatchewan. The entire western and northern shores of Lake Diefenbaker bound my riding.

Lake Diefenbaker is one of Saskatchewan's treasures. The potential for recreation and tourism development on Lake Diefenbaker is tremendous.

Last summer we announced the development of a new marina at Saskatchewan Landing, a new idea for us landlubbers. This project will make even more attractive the access to this wonderful lake by fun seekers and nature lovers from as far away as the northern States and from the southern half of Alberta. This project is creating jobs and supporting local businesses in my riding. The great news is that the project is

two weeks ahead of the most optimistic schedule.

I'm looking forward to saying to the people of Kyle, Swift Current, and the great south-west, ship ahoy.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### GRIP Premiums

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again the opposition has the opportunity to bring the views of Saskatchewan citizens to the Legislative Assembly. Over the course of this session, Mr. Speaker, we have been inundated with literally tens and dozens and hundreds of individuals who wish to take part in the democratic process. And today I have the opportunity to ask the very first question of the Premier, and this comes from Mr. Adolph Sushko of Pelly.

And, Mr. Premier, Mr. Sushko says: I want to know why you changed the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) program and had no monies to help out the farmers and now all at once you have excess GRIP money, which you are putting into the diversification program, for one. If there was no money when needed, where did it come from now?

**Hon. Mr. Cunningham:** — Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. The money we put into GRIP was there. As much money as we could afford, we put into the program. It was designed to pay out if grain prices stayed where they were or had they gone down. What happened was grain prices instead went up and farmers got more out of the market-place and therefore it didn't trigger the pay-out.

We redistributed the farmers' share back to them. We took our share and put most of it into ag diversification and value added, which is, we think will be, the future of rural Saskatchewan. And that's the reasoning that we put that money there.

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

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too have a question. And this comes from John McKnight from Saskatoon who puts his question very succinctly, I believe.

Mr. Premier, I want to know why the bureaucratic bafflegab? Pay the GRIP surplus directly to farmers. Please respond.

**Hon. Mr. Cunningham:** — Well again for the constituent who wrote in, this was a program that was designed to pay out if grain prices had stayed the same or gone down. Instead they went up, and there therefore was a surplus in the program.

We distributed the surpluses the way we did with all other agriculture programs, the way we wound down the tripartite programs. Farmers got their share of the GRIP surplus back, based on what they contributed. Provincial government got

back our share of what we contributed and we put most of that back into agriculture. The federal Liberals took more than half of their surplus without putting it back into agriculture.

We in this province, because of our commitment to agriculture and to rural Saskatchewan, put our money back into agriculture. We put it back in where we thought it would do the most good and get the most bang for our buck. And that's the reason for the distribution of the surplus.

#### Crown Construction Tendering Agreement

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question comes from Keith Bartlett from Regina. Mr. Premier, I want to know why, after doing a fairly good job of balancing the budget, you would cave in to the interests of organized labour. As a businessman who was leery of your government in the beginning, but who started to see some merit in your government, I have now decided you are nothing more than a reincarnation of Allan Blakeney and company.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I can't resist that question because after 11 years of government, Mr. Blakeney's government, a government which is characterized by 11 years of good employment and balanced budgets and tax reductions and programs for people, if I could be cast in that mode as compared to, without putting too fine a point on it, other previous governments, I would be very, very pleased indeed.

This is not a question of caving in, this is a question, as the hon. member knows, of making sure that there is a sensible policy in place for a limited field of Crown corporation activity so that there is skilled workforce around and a level playing-field in the bids for contracts that are available for people to bid on.

#### MLA Term Limits

**Mr. Britton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a question for the Premier. Mr. Premier, this question comes from Shirley Lomheim from Saskatoon. Mr. Premier, I want to know if legislation could be considered to limit the length of time an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) can serve.

It was suggested by the member from Regina Albert South and the member from Wilkie that two terms should be the limit. This would allow other citizens to represent their communities, offering fresh views and insights into affairs.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — I think, Mr. Speaker, I don't know the answer to the question from a legal or a constitutional point of view. I would simply say, perhaps parenthetically, that under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the right of people to elect and to be elected, there probably would be some charter prohibition against term limitations, if I can put it this way.

But quite frankly, this is an importation of an American value to the parliamentary system — term limitations — which, by the way, the Americans themselves just recently turned down after an extensive debate. We hear lots about Newt Gingrich

and his contract with America. I'm not sure if it's contract with America or contract on America. But none the less, Gingrich's approach is one of term limitations.

And this, I think, is one which is flawed because — while I know the Liberals provincially here and the Conservatives provincially here are vying each other in this context — it's flawed because what it does is it basically says the intelligence of the average voter cannot be trusted. Every election time is a time when MLAs comes up for term limitations. The public either elects you or defeats you. And why not leave that in the court of the most important body, the court of public opinion, to decide. I have faith in the people of the province of Saskatchewan; I think the hon. member does as well. And I think that while we might be able to learn some aspects of the United States system, let's not get carried away with the kind of strait-jacketing which has resulted in what obviously I think is a less desirable form of democracy than we have.

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

#### Saskatchewan Pension Plan

**Mr. Devine:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is also to the Premier and it comes from Margaret Frizzell from Strasbourg. Mr. Premier, I want to know why the NDP (New Democratic Party) government took the provincial spouse pension away from farmers' wives like myself, and did not do anything about the pensions to civil servants. We had paid into the pension until I was 65 and I thought it was great, but now I get \$24 a month.

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for bringing that question forward. As we had to do when we became the government, we had to ensure that all of the programs that the government was providing to the people of Saskatchewan were affordable.

Unfortunately as we looked at the cost of providing that program as it existed at that time, we had to modify it to ensure that in the long term the program could remain affordable. I would remind the member opposite the Saskatchewan Pension Plan is still in place, and because of the changes that we made, we can ensure that people will have the confidence it will be in place at the end of this century as well.

#### MLA Pension Plan

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question comes from C. Richardson from Kindersley. Mr. Premier, I want to know when you are going to do something about the gold-plated pensions enjoyed by the MLAs of this province. I don't agree that they should be such privileged individuals when the rest of the population is struggling.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the member opposite on this very issue in a very similar question, we await the call of the Board of Internal Economy committee which will look at the proposals that Mr. McDowell's

committee has put to that committee.

I'm not sure whether the Leader of the Opposition is on that committee or not. I know the Leader of the Liberal Party is and we look forward to discussing this issue at the earliest opportunity.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, keeping track of the Premier's pension is a little bit like watching Telemiracle — every day we get a new total and it just keeps getting higher and higher and higher. The difference is, the difference is, Mr. Premier, Telemiracle is a good cause, and the people choose to contribute. The Premier's pension is a lousy cause, and the people are forced to contribute.

Mr. Premier, don't you think that Saskatchewan people have contributed more than enough to your retirement fund? When are you going to simply do the right thing and roll back your obscene pension?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to respond again because this has become a daily event and I'm pleased that the Premier is back in here today — his pension hasn't gone up by \$20,000 — which it was daily as the members exaggerated while he was away doing the business of government.

But I say to the member opposite, obviously the problem that you speak of is obviously not a problem today because the Premier who is doing the work running the government of this province, balancing the books of this province, working with businesses to create jobs, has no intention for the foreseeable future of collecting any pension, so I wouldn't worry about it today.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier, with all the bonuses, the Premier's pension now stands at over \$122,000 per year. This is the first time I've ever heard of someone's pension being higher than their salary.

This must be part of the NDP's election strategy. I guess the Premier's going to tell the voters that it's cheaper to re-elect him than to boot him out.

Mr. Premier, I don't think that the taxpayers should be penalized for booting you out of office; I think they should be rewarded for doing that.

Mr. Premier, we recently had an independent commission set up to ensure that MLAs' salaries were fair to the taxpayers. Mr. Premier, do you think it's fair that your pension plan is now higher than what your current salary is?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well as the member obviously

knows, the pension of the Premier, if he were to retire today . . . which I'm sure his wife Eleanore is encouraging him to do, given the vast exaggerations that are going on in the Assembly here today.

But I say to the member opposite that again, as the deputy leader indicated last Friday already and we answer for the umpteenth time, if there are inordinate increases which occur as a result of the McDowell commission, we will obviously want to discuss and meet on this issue.

I say again in all fairness, the members of the press and the public will know that when the meetings were held in the Board of Internal Economy, not one member across, including the Liberal leader who now raises it as a hopeful election issue in the dying days as she tries to get some issue going, having failed to get anything going on jobs, misleading the Assembly . . . now comes to the House on a daily basis misleading the public again, or attempting to, on yet another issue.

So I say we will meet, hopefully within the confines and the openness of the committee, and discuss what it is that is bothering you on that issue. But for you to continually exaggerate about what the Premier might get if he ruled in the province for another 40 years and then lived to be 147 or whatever it is today that you're talking about, is ludicrous.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier, we don't need legislation to roll back these obscene pensions. We don't need the Board of Internal Economy to deal with this at all. All we need is for the Premier and his colleagues to show a little self-restraint.

In fact under section 28(2) of the MLA superannuation Act . . . allows members to voluntarily opt out of the old plan and to opt into the new plan after the end of their political career. All they have to do is sign a letter.

We've even gone further than that for you, Mr. Premier. We've gone to the trouble of preparing that letter. Will you, Mr. Premier . . . And I'll be tabling this at the end of my comments and certainly sending a copy across to you, sir. All you need to do is sign a letter that will allow your pension to be rolled back.

Will you voluntarily, Mr. Premier, will you voluntarily roll back your pension by signing this letter today that I'm tabling and will be sending across?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I say again to the member opposite, I can quite understand why the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party are so concerned about pensions. But the fact is, is that the roles are here reversed. Because quite honestly I have not heard or seen the Premier worrying much about his pension because he doesn't intend in the near future to be collecting it.

Now you people may be concerned about your pensions because you haven't been around long enough to pay very much in, but I say to you that there is an important issue here, and that is where members of the former Conservative government, Mr. Eric Berntson for example, is double-dipping — is double-dipping — taking a pension as well as collecting a senator's staff . . . senator's salary.

My challenge today is not to the Leader of the Opposition because I don't think he has much hope of being around here or being appointed to the Senate. But I would challenge the Liberal leader to swear on a stack of bibles today that if she is defeated in the future, she will promise not to double-dip, taking a salary of a senator and a pension from the legislature at the same time. I challenge you to make that commitment here today.

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

### Gaming Expansion

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The NDP has implemented policies on gambling that will have a lasting impact on individuals, communities, and society as a whole. And they've done so without any credible research, selective consultation, and virtually no follow-up.

My question is to the minister of Gaming: can you explain why not one question — not one — was asked in your most recent government polling about the impact of your gambling policies and what they are having on individuals and charitable organizations and local communities in Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd be pleased to answer that question for the member from Greystone. I do however find it interesting that she's not speaking about her \$1.1 million pension, instead rehashing the old gaming issue that's been ongoing for many, many weeks, many months.

Let me say to the member from Greystone that the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority is well aware of the expenditures on different forms of gaming in this province, whether it be bingo, whether it be break-opens, or whether it be the video lottery terminals. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that there has been an ongoing monitoring of gaming as it has evolved, since we took power in 1991 — and as a matter of fact, even before.

But what I really would like the member from Greystone to clarify is, for once and for all, does she support gaming? Doesn't she support gaming? Does she have a policy or doesn't she have a policy, as her officials say.

I mean I recall, Mr. Speaker, in the legislature a short time ago she tells us to hurry up — we forgot about \$60 million in video lottery terminal revenue; get on with the program. The next day she's up saying it's no good.

Mr. Speaker, she really should clarify what her position is.

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

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. These people have been completely irresponsible in this province. Now the NDP have determined to ignore not only the research that predicts the fallout from expanded gambling, they don't even want to deal with the evidence that happens to be staring them right in the face.

Now Professor Robert Goodman, a renowned gambling researcher, and I've raised this time and time again in this House, who produced the definitive study on governments in the gambling business said, and I quote: pathological gamblers tend to engage in forgery, theft, embezzlement, drug dealing, and property crimes, to pay off gambling debts.

Now my question to the minister today: precisely how is your government today monitoring the relationship between expanded gambling and increased levels of crime. You say you're doing it, sir. What is your system of tracking this?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying that this government has put more into social impact funding than any jurisdiction in Canada, and the member knows it. And I want to say all she needs to do to confirm whether or not we have a responsible policy is to pick up the telephone, phone the Liberal leader in Alberta whose critic is urging the Alberta Tories to introduce and implement the Saskatchewan model because it's working; it makes some sense. Just pick up the phone, phone your counterpart in Alberta, and you may have a little bit of enlightenment on the issue.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now the government may choose to spend tax dollars polling for political information instead of gathering useful data. But do you know what? The truth is coming to light anyway, Mr. Speaker. The facts are showing up all across Saskatchewan in crime statistics.

In January the Saskatoon city police reported break and enters were up 67 per cent; the mayor of La Ronge says crime is up by 50 per cent; now the Regina city police report 64.6 per cent increase in breaks and enters over last January and February.

And we have learned, Mr. Speaker, the Regina city police has compiled a report that shows the correlation between increased gambling and increased levels of crime and law enforcement costs. Obviously the police in this city see the connection, even if the government does not.

My question: Mr. Minister, what studies has your government done on this issue, and will you agree to table your studies and the conclusions immediately? Obviously the police care enough to do this, do you?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying that the law enforcement agencies keep statistics, and have kept statistics over a long period of time, with respect to break-ins and other issues. And I want to say, and the member will know, that those figures have been very static over a long period of time.

I also want to say to the member that the fact that this government has put a million and a half dollars towards dealing with gaming addiction, would quite clearly indicate that we do have concerns. We're concerned about pathological gaming; we're concerned about people who have that problem.

But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, we're also concerned about pathological liars and we're concerned about . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. Order. Order. Order. I ask the minister to please withdraw the unparliamentary statement. I ask the minister to withdraw the unparliamentary statement.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the statement.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. All that the people of Saskatchewan want is a direct answer, Mr. Speaker. And I want to know the correlation between these increased crime statistics and increased gambling after a more prolific video lottery play in Saskatchewan.

I have one question, sir: will you table today the full range of studies that your government is doing on gambling? And if you aren't doing any, why aren't you?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member from Greystone that quite clearly this government is concerned with gaming addiction. We have done a lot of analysis with respect to other jurisdictions and what we might expect when we introduce the video lottery terminal program. And that is why, madam, we have put forth a program funded with a million and a half dollars, administered through the Department of Health, to train counsellors, to have programming in place to deal with people who have that problem.

And I want to say though to the member from Greystone, you can't have it both ways. One day you urge us to hurry up and get on with the program and the next day you're suggesting that the program shouldn't be around. It's another example of your flip-flopping; it's another example of your indecision. It's another reason why people in Saskatchewan don't see you as a prospective premier of this province, because frankly, madam, they don't know where you come from.

You can't be on both sides of an issue; you need to at some point in your political career make a decision, take a stand — are you for it or are you against it? Let us know today if you

would.

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

### MLA Pension Plan

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've been listening to much debate over the last month pertaining to MLAs' retirement pensions. It has been difficult to listen to the opposition parties playing politics in their attempt to mislead the public that certain MLAs that belonged to the old pension plan, prior to 1979 . . . is such a lucrative plan.

Mr. Speaker, these MLAs and the media should research their statements before making them, because if they checked with the Public Employees Benefits Agency like I did, they would find in most cases, the MLAs that chose the new plan in 1979 or since, have the more lucrative plan. I was also informed of other benefits the new pension plan has prior to the one in 1979.

Mr. Speaker, my question will be to the Premier or whoever wants to answer the question. I have a letter from the Public Employees Benefits Agency in answer to my request to explain the two plans. I will read you a short sentence of the letter and . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. The member must put his question. I've been generous with him in the time, and I want the member to put his question.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — My question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister, will be pertaining to the letter that I received effective June 1, 1995: your monthly pension benefit from the old plan would . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order. Does the member have a question? The member is to ask his question.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Speaker, if I could just . . . my question won't mean anything if I can't read . . .

**The Speaker:** — The member is to ask his question, otherwise I'll ask another member.

If the Government House Leader has any further comments I wish he would get to his feet and direct them to the Speaker at that time rather than from his chair.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then my question will be: seeing that the difference in my pension plan from the old . . . or new is only \$300 a month, I ask you if you agree with me that the opposition parties have misled this House and the people of Saskatchewan pertaining to the pension plan benefits; and if you do agree with me, would you explain why?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I tried to follow the question as closely as I could, but with all the interruptions . . . I want to say clearly to the member opposite that it shows the

complication, I guess, of the pension plans and the individual circumstances that might be around.

I have no idea whether you are better off or worse off under one pension plan or the other. But what the member should do is table the letter so that we could see . . . or better yet, because the Board of Internal Economy is an open committee, come to the committee, take part in the discussion. But one thing the question does, I think, is outline the complicated nature of the pension plans — new and old — of the members of the legislature.

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

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

##### Protection of Endangered Spaces

**Mr. Scott:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise today and speak about our progress towards the protection of representative natural areas in Saskatchewan. At the end of my remarks, I will be moving the following motion:

That this Assembly support the work of the Minister of Environment and Resource Management, his department, and conservation organizations, in their efforts to achieve the goals of the World Wildlife Fund's action plan for endangered spaces; and go on record during National Wildlife Week as being in favour of protecting our province's natural heritage, specifically efforts to complete a representative areas network across the 11 ecoregions of Saskatchewan as part of our commitment to maintain the province's native biological diversity.

I would like to begin my remarks by quoting a recent message from Monte Hummel, president of World Wildlife Fund Canada. I quote:

April 22 will mark the 25th Anniversary of Earth Day — a time to celebrate the wonders of our natural world and renew our commitment to protecting our fragile planet. The need for that commitment has never been greater.

Shrinking fish catches, disappearing natural habitat, declining bird populations, and the depletion of fresh water supplies are now affecting every corner of the earth. For example, data compiled by Birdlife International of Cambridge, England shows bird populations dropping on every continent. Of 9,600 species, only 3,000 are holding their own. The other 6,600 are in decline. Of these, the populations of some 1,000 species have dropped to the point where they are threatened with extinction.

Mr. Speaker, biologists estimate that there are from 5 to 30

million species inhabiting our planet. Only 1.4 million species have been identified. We are currently losing over 100 species per day in the tropics.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has not escaped the worldwide trend of a deteriorating environment and declining wildlife species. Here in Saskatchewan we have lost 40 per cent of our wetlands, 80 per cent of our aspen parkland has been destroyed, and 75 to 80 per cent of our native grasslands are gone. In summary, southern Saskatchewan contains one of the most modified landscapes in the world.

From 1976 to 1981, in a five-year period, we lost another 2 million acres of habitat, working out to over a thousand acres a day or 44 acres an hour day and night. On the Regina plains, for an example, over 99 per cent of the habitat is gone.

Because of the loss of habitat, many species here have declined in numbers; 20 per cent of our native plants are listed as rare and endangered and disappearing further.

Our duck numbers in the 1950s numbered 20 million returning to Saskatchewan each spring. In recent years, less than 4 million have returned, a decline of over 80 per cent.

At the current rate of decline, the once familiar burrowing owl will be extinct in Canada in less than 10 years.

In our lifetime we have witnessed once common species like jackrabbits, yellow lady-slippers, and killdeer, and hundreds of other plant and animal species steadily decline in southern Saskatchewan.

Northern Saskatchewan is not exempt from this decline either. Whole families of birds, including wood warblers and thrushes, are disappearing. And native species such as woodland caribou numbers are precariously low.

But despite the dismal statistics, Saskatchewan is still looked upon as a leader in wildlife habitat conservation programs. Ducks Unlimited, formed in 1939, began its work here on the prairies to conserve wetlands. In 1970 the wildlife development fund was created, at the request of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, to purchase habitat.

In 1974 the wildlife federation again came to the forefront and recognized landowners who agreed to protect habitat on their private land with the introduction of the acres for wildlife program. Today this program, now called wildlife tomorrow, contains over 370,000 acres signed up voluntarily by landowners.

In 1981 the heritage marsh program was launched in Saskatchewan to conserve some of our last large wetlands.

From 1982 to 1992, The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act was implemented, and added to over a 10-year period. As a result, we have 3.4 million acres of our Crown land secure from sale and being broken up. And meanwhile, ranchers and farmers

continue to graze livestock on these lands, but they will not be sold by the Crown or be allowed to be broken up, drained, or bulldozed.

More recently, in 1989 the North American waterfowl management plan was launched here in Saskatchewan. A number of other jurisdictions throughout the continent are looking to Saskatchewan for its leadership role, with some of our habitat programs being adopted and implemented in other provinces and states.

Despite our impressive achievements, if we consider all of our natural areas that have some form of protection, including parks, wilderness areas, wildlife lands, etc., we have only managed to secure about 6 per cent of our natural landscape. This falls far short of the recommendations contained in the Brundtland Commission report on the environment and the economy, which states a minimum of 12 per cent of an ecoregion must be maintained to ensure species diversity and survival.

(1415)

The member from Saskatoon Sutherland will be providing more comments as to where we stand with regard to protected areas in our 11 ecoregions in Saskatchewan.

I would like to identify specific areas that we must focus on in the next few years if we hope to achieve a system of representative areas throughout Saskatchewan.

With 75 to 80 per cent of our native grasslands gone, it is imperative that virtually all remaining native grasslands, on public and private land, be retained in a natural state. Grasslands evolved over millions of years with grazing undulants, a major species or group of species on the grasslands.

Controlled grazing is a compatible use for native grasslands. We commend the vast majority of livestock producers for their good stewardship of the range. Rotational grazing regimes in recent years further enhances the productivity of grasslands for both wildlife and livestock. Many prairie species, however, do thrive on heavily grazed areas. We must work hand in hand with ranchers, farmers, and biologists, in managing and protecting our grasslands.

The Grasslands National Park, first proposed 38 years ago in 1957, is still not a reality. This park should be completed as soon as possible, with the controlled grazing regime an integral part of the management plan for the park.

It is Parks Canada's policy not to permit grazing in national parks. Probably for most other national parks this is a good policy; however, grazing and fire are natural management practices for a grasslands park here in Saskatchewan.

Our federal and provincial community pastures contain some of the last areas of native grasslands throughout the province. It is

essential that the native flora be maintained and managed sustainably in these pastures. Range management in government pastures has improved in recent years, and this is a tribute to those in charge of our pastures.

Our aspen parklands continue to disappear at an alarming rate. With 80 per cent or more of this productive ecosystem gone, habitat fragmentation is a serious problem, resulting in pieces of habitat too small to support species, and too scattered to allow movement from one piece of habitat to another.

Much of the remaining aspen parkland habitat is located on private land. Since the beginning of agriculture, government incentives have promoted the conversion of natural areas to cultivated farm land. These incentive programs must be reversed so as to reward landowners for maintaining habitat, not penalizing them.

Most landowners appreciate wildlife and would be glad to receive a little recognition and reward for protecting habitat on their land. Long-term easements, tax refunds, adequate waterfowl and big game crop damage compensation programs, permanent cover programs for erodible land, will all help farmers and wildlife together.

Our wetlands are considered to be one of the most productive ecosystems in the world, and as mentioned earlier, 40 per cent of them are gone. The North American waterfowl management plan was launched in the late 1980s as an 11th hour effort to conserve our vanishing waterfowl resource.

This program again is being launched in Saskatchewan because of our leadership and conservation efforts and because of the important of Saskatchewan to our wildlife and wetlands in general.

On one hand we have governments and conservation organizations contributing money to the North American waterfowl plan to protect wetlands; on the other hand, we have Sask Water, a part of government, using government funds to drain wetlands. It is imperative that we very quickly get a water management policy for Saskatchewan so that we do not have one arm of government conserving wetlands and another arm of government draining wetlands.

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

**Mr. Scott:** — We can also restore some of our wetlands that have been drained that have not panned out for agriculture production. It is much easier to restore wetlands than it is for aspen groves and grasslands to be restored. Many people are saying that we do not need to drain more wetlands; instead we need to conserve them because there's many benefits of our wetlands.

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

**Mr. Scott:** — A third area of concern is our northern forests. The most common use of our forests is logging. Like elsewhere

around the world, logging on a long-term basis has not been sustainable. Gone are the days of selective tree harvesting, which was sustainable, and it has been replaced with clear-cutting. Clear-cutting is not acceptable to many people and has not proven to be sustainable in Saskatchewan and many other parts of the world.

The statement has been made that clear-cutting mimics forest fires. This is like saying summer-fallowing mimics prairie fires. It just isn't so. The management or mismanagement of our forests over the years leaves a lot to be desired. There is an area of cut-over forest the size of P.A. (Prince Albert) National Park in Saskatchewan that remains to be reforested.

The forest along the east side of the province has been harvested to the extent that a long-term forest management agreement may not be possible. It is imperative that representative natural areas in all ecozones be identified and excluded from cutting before an east side forest management agreement is reached. We also need to look at the other areas of our forests and work with existing forestry companies in establishing representative areas in these regions as well.

Like agriculture lands in the South, forest lands in the North must be managed on an integrated approach with all interests being considered in a long-term, sustainable management policy. Mr. Speaker, as decision makers in this Assembly, we must make long-term, economically viable and environmentally sustainable choices when it comes to managing and protecting our natural resources for future generations.

One of the first steps in this process is to identify and protect a network of representative areas covering all ecozones of the province. These benchmarks will ensure species diversity and survival.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that landowners, industry, first nations, conservationists, governments, and the interested public, all work cooperatively with an eye to the future as we pool our resources and expertise to achieve a network of representative areas throughout the 11 ecoregions of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it is therefore my pleasure to move the following resolution, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Sutherland-University:

That this Assembly support the work of the Minister of Environment and Resource Management, his department, and conservation organizations, in their efforts to achieve the goals of the World Wildlife Fund's action plan for endangered spaces; and go on record during National Wildlife Week as being in favour of protecting our province's natural heritage, specifically efforts to complete a representative areas network across the 11 ecoregions of Saskatchewan as part of our commitment to maintain the province's native biological diversity.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to speak to this resolution today, all the more so because last year we had essentially the same resolution that came to the floor of the House and it never was voted on due to time constraints.

And that in a sense typifies some of the problem in terms of dealing with endangered spaces in our province and in our country, that time marches on and in some respect very little happens. And so I think it's important to get beyond talk and to emphasize the importance of action to secure representative areas and ecosystems across our province.

And that's why it's so important to revisit this resolution this year, to increase public awareness of this important issue, and more than that — to secure a common consent of the House to act to implement the endangered spaces plan and to complete our representative areas network here in Saskatchewan.

I want to begin by quoting from a professor emeritus of the University of Saskatchewan, one of the deans of ecology here in Saskatchewan, Dr. Stan Rowe, on the importance of conserving systems, ecological systems. And he writes:

What is important today is to change our understanding of the world, to focus on ecosystems rather than on the individual species and organisms that are parts of them. Such changed understandings of the realities around us will affect fundamentally how we live on our planet home.

And I think that's very well said. And we're beginning to understand the importance of living in ecosystems and having human activity that is in concert with biological activity and life.

And that's why the province has recently worked to complete the representative areas network here in Saskatchewan, a network that has 11 different ecoregions; four different ecozones: the Taiga Shield, the Boreal Shield, the Boreal Plain, and the Prairie regions. And this is further broken down then into 11 different ecoregions, and then beyond that 150 other subdivisions of ecological zones across the province.

Some people might be saying: well wait a minute, when we're talking about the World Wildlife Fund's action plan for endangered spaces, aren't we really talking about 12 per cent — protecting 12 per cent of natural spaces?

And there has been an evolution, both with the World Wildlife Fund and with federal and provincial governments, that says the 12 per cent figure isn't the be-all and end-all; it's only a guideline or framework for securing representative areas.

And therein is the rationale for the representative areas network. We need to not just secure a 12 per cent land base, but more

particularly we have to look at the scientific base for identifying certain representative areas in our province that need protection.

And then, in order to do that, we need to do what is called gap analysis — to map out in a very deliberate fashion those areas that need to be protected and are not presently protected.

And we can see, if we look at the protected areas, the ecosystem plan for the province, that an area such as the Taiga Shield has absolutely no protection, no formal protection, in Saskatchewan right now.

Other areas will have more protection. The mid-boreal upland forest has substantial protection. But this is an area of the province that is under increasing threat, as the member from Indian Head-Wolseley indicated, from clear-cutting.

And so we need to take a very studied, scientific view of what it is we're going to protect here in Saskatchewan before it is gone and we lose the opportunity to protect it.

But I think the good news in this regard is that in the course of the last year the province has produced the ecosystems region map. And the Department of Environment and Natural Resources deserves immense credit in this regard because for the first time we really have a comprehensive framework upon which planning can proceed.

On this framework we can identify areas that need to be protected, as I said. We can expand our knowledge and integrate the knowledge of plants, animals, ecological processes, and the impact of human activity and development in these ecoregions.

The percentage of areas that need to be protected really is not the most important issue at this stage. At this stage of the game we need to complete the protection of ecoregions in our province.

And I want to quote from the director of . . . the Saskatchewan coordinator of the World Wildlife Fund here in Saskatchewan, Alan Appleby, when he writes:

The World Wildlife Fund Endangered Spaces Campaign has made a difference in the planning, designation and management of our remaining natural areas and wilderness over the past few years. It will take a continued effort by all of us to ensure that we meet the goal.

We are now at about the halfway point in the World Wildlife Fund's endangered spaces campaign. It was initiated in 1989, I believe, and the goal was to have the areas protected by the year 2000. The province, I must say, is committed to this plan. In the new forest management policy framework that was issued by the Government of Saskatchewan just a few months ago, there is expressly an ecosystem approach to planning based on the ecoregions of the province.

And I can say from my contact with groups in northern Saskatchewan who are concerned with clear-cutting and harvesting operations, that we need to apply integrated planning and ecosystem planning to the forest community here in Saskatchewan. There's an urgent need to protect our land base while we have it. Clear-cutting in northern Saskatchewan clearly threatens some of the ecoregions that have not been protected yet adequately. We have an obligation to future generations and we need to honour that obligation by acting now.

(1430)

As is indicated in the World Wildlife Fund's endangered spaces book, which really kicked off the endangered spaces campaign a number of years ago, there really are only three basic or fundamental options for us. The first, that we consciously decide that the wilderness is important and we plan our future accordingly. A second option would be to muddle along in our present state, having made no conscious decision, and let whatever shakes out constitute what we get in the end. And the third option of course is to consciously decide that wilderness is important and to plan our future accordingly.

We don't have for ever to make such decisions. We need to act now, not just for ourselves but for future generations. And that's why I urge all members of the House this year to vote in favour of this resolution, to send a clear message to people across Saskatchewan that the preservation of our 11 ecosystems regions is a very important priority, not just for government but for Saskatchewan people as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to join in the debate this afternoon on what is a very significant and rather important feature of Saskatchewan and indeed of the entire world, when we start talking about our environment and the management of our environment.

It seems to me that this Assembly is seeing an instant replay from last year, because the government members have the same motion as last year; they have the two same speakers as last year; and if I am not incorrect, I also was following along in *Hansard* as they repeated the speeches from last year, essentially.

But I say that in a little bit of jest because we also have the same speakers as we had last year, because our objective, Mr. Speaker, is still the same. And essentially we agree. We agree with the sentiments that were being expressed by the members opposite.

One thing, before I get into my remarks, that caught my attention is that, Mr. Speaker, I, as an outdoorsman, as a hunter, as a naturalist amateur type of thing, I am somewhat concerned about the clear-cutting that goes on in our province in the forest

industry as well. I abhor the degradation of the beauty of the North, when you drive along on the roads and there's the road and there's the ditch and there's the ploughed-up field that used to be forest. And that's essentially what we're seeing.

I noticed, Mr. Speaker, in passing, that both members opposite expressed concern about that very same issue. And I would remind those two members that they do have the reins of power, they do have the reins of government. They are in a position to do something about that.

I'm not saying that clear-cutting is something that has to be eliminated, but certainly kept on top of. And I still want someone to prove to me that indeed, as the member from Indian Head-Wolseley said, that people are telling us that clear-cutting in a forest is like a forest fire, and comparing that to summerfallow and a prairie fire, that they're akin to each other.

And I would suggest also, and agree with you, that that's a little bit of a stretch of the imagination, I think, and is drawing a long bow.

But because we are limited, Mr. Speaker, I should get on with some of the salient features of my remarks, and that is that the member from Indian Head I think should be commended for his commitment as an individual, as a member of the wildlife federation and so on, as he tries to live up to a commitment of preservation of Saskatchewan's wildlife and wildlife habitats and wildlife spaces. And I know he's involved with many organizations for that end.

And being that it is National Wildlife Week, at the same time, Mr. Speaker, it's very appropriate I believe that we're talking about this particular topic today because you cannot isolate wildlife from the spaces as such.

So I'm not opposed to the member's motion. However, I think it can be improved upon and I will be moving at the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, an amendment to his motion.

Now it's the official opposition's opinion that the minister has not done enough to assist conservation organizations and the World Wildlife Fund in achieving their goals. And I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that he has done enough to achieve unanimous support of this Assembly, so therefore we will be making that amendment that I referred to.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, during National Wildlife Week, it was my pleasure to speak to the similar motion. But prior to that debate, I had the opportunity to meet with a gentleman that the member from Saskatoon Sutherland referred to, Alan Appleby, to discuss with him Saskatchewan's endangered spaces. And I was able to hear from him firsthand about the goals and aspirations of the World Wildlife Fund and its endangered spaces campaign.

And after our meeting, Mr. Speaker, it was obvious that an amendment was necessary because Saskatchewan's marks on the endangered spaces campaign report card were essentially

quite poor. The goal of the endangered spaces campaign is to establish protected areas representing all of Canada's natural regions by the year 2000. And that campaign, I might add, is supported by not only the members of this legislature, I'm sure, but 550,000 other Canadians — all of these supporters have signed the Canadian wildlife charter.

Now last year in my meeting, Mr. Appleby informed me and other members of our caucus that the endangered spaces campaign supporters included the Premier and most of his caucus, and that's good to hear. However, it's strange that a government whose members publicly support the endeavours of the World Wildlife Fund have actually done rather little to live up to that commitment.

Every year a report card is handed out by the World Wildlife Fund. They prepare a report card and, Mr. Speaker, do we live up to our 12 per cent of our spaces? No, we do not, Mr. Speaker. We had less than 5 per cent of the land area in Saskatchewan that has been protected.

So Saskatchewan's grade did go, because of the areas that we have, Saskatchewan's grade did go from C to B, to B minus actually.

But today I'm afraid and I suspect that we're not very much better off, Mr. Speaker. The report card hasn't been issued yet. I understand the report card is only coming out next Wednesday, and I certainly hope that by that time that I will be proven indeed that Saskatchewan has improved. Last year we only had 3 of the 36 natural regions that were fully represented by protected areas.

Now what I'm concerned about — and I was last year, and I am again this year — is a government that says yes, we believe in protecting our endangered spaces. However in the Meadow Lake area and the Bronson forest area, we've got 58,000 acres that were put under a parks plan in order to protect it that is now going to be sold off to the Thunderchild Band. And to me, Mr. Speaker, the reason it was put under the parks plan was because that was the proper thing to do.

So there's a whole host of questions that could be asked on that particular aspect. The minister says that he has the right to do that according to section 4.07 of the land treaty entitlement that gives him the authority to do that, as I quote: that the land can be sold in exceptional circumstances.

And because this is part of the land entitlement situation, that's a special circumstance that warrants the selling of this land to the Thunderchild Band as I understand it. For what purpose, Mr. Speaker? I don't know for sure. And therein lies the danger. We would like to think that they will continue to be good husbands . . . or practise good husbandry practices. But there is no definition. Is it going to be used for logging? Is it going to be used to put in more oil wells?

Those are areas in that region that it could very well be, Mr. Speaker. So I just raise that as part of the concern perhaps that

instead of making progress, we might indeed, and in fact, be taking a step backwards. And we certainly intend to ask the minister for update of those negotiations, and we understand they're still going on. So hopefully that it will happen that way.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, as I'm running out of time here, I will make an amendment, a motion now, an amendment to the original motion. I move:

That all the words following the word "Assembly" and preceding the phrase "conservation organization," be deleted and substituted with:

"encourage the Minister of Environment and Resource Management to live up to commitments made to."

And that section will be inserted, and this is going to be seconded by the member from Souris-Cannington.

We're not objecting to the main motion, Mr. Speaker. We think it's a little bit too kind. What it is doing is complimenting the minister. What we're saying is, you've still got a ways to go, and that's the intent of the amendment, Mr. Speaker. I will sit down so that you don't have to get up. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Draper:** — . . . permission to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker, sir.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Draper:** — In the west gallery is seated my daughter, Ingrid Fedorof, who is visiting us from Toronto. She's just completing a Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Toronto.

She's accompanied by my wife Erica, of course, who doesn't even have a grade 12, but nevertheless she's the best psychologist I know. And I'd like you to welcome them to the proceedings this afternoon.

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

## SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

### Protection of Endangered Spaces (continued)

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to second the motion by my colleague from Rosthern.

As the member from Indian Head-Wolseley has pointed out, the World Wildlife Fund endangered spaces campaign is an important organizational move. The World Wildlife Fund is the largest private conservation organization in the world, with over 5 million members around the globe.

The endangered spaces campaign is a cooperative effort to establish protected areas representing all of Canada's natural regions by the year 2000. Specifically, achieving this goal involves setting aside at least 12 per cent of Canada's lands and water — a target in the federal green plan.

Since its inception in 1989, the World Wildlife Fund's endangered spaces campaign has been endorsed by 11 of Canada's 13 senior governments. In fact one of the first public discussions of endangered spaces was held in Regina in 1989 at the federal-provincial parks conference.

There are over half a million Canadians who have signed the organization's charter, Mr. Speaker, and is also supported by such organizations as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the United Church, the Girl Guides, and the hundreds of environmental and conservation organizations.

The goal for the endangered spaces campaign is simple, straightforward, and measurable. This goal is to conserve our biological diversity by ensuring that a representative sample of each of Canada's 340 natural regions is saved as a park or other protected area by the year 2000.

We have to remember that the year 2000 is only five years away.

So how is Saskatchewan doing so far, Mr. Speaker, in reaching this goal? The most recent numbers show that less than 5 per cent of the land area in Saskatchewan is protected, and only 3, only 3 of our 36 natural regions, are fully represented by protected areas. As my colleague mentioned, new numbers will be released next week, and I also hope that our province will have made an improvement over last year's efforts.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the World Wildlife Fund states that in our province, there are no long-term plan in place to ensure the completion of this task. No long-term plan, with only five years to go, Mr. Speaker.

(1445)

Those words sound familiar, very familiar, Mr. Speaker, when speaking about the Saskatchewan NDP's government. They also have no long-term plan. Instead of developing long-term plans, the government is sending very mixed messages when it comes to endangered spaces.

Evidence of these mixed messages appeared last year, Mr. Speaker, on March 17 when a Canadian Press story stated that the Saskatchewan's provincial government, quote: wants to ease its park system into one that emphasizes wilderness protection over recreation.

An admirable goal — we'll protect the environment over recreational needs. Yet five days later we learned that the provincial government was negotiating to sell large tracts of the Bronson forest and recreation site to the Thunderchild Indian Band.

How does such a move emphasize wilderness protection, has to be the question. How does that enhance the amount of territory within Saskatchewan that will be protected as a wilderness wildlife area? How does it fit into the goals of the World Wildlife Fund's endangered spaces campaign? Will it become a logging area, Mr. Speaker? Will there be natural gas drilling? Just what is the government doing to ensure that the Bronson forest and other areas will continue to be protected?

Originally the Bronson forest was designated as a recreation site so that it would be under the umbrella and protection of the park system, which made sense, Mr. Speaker, because then we had another ecological biosphere that was being protected.

Evidence like the Bronson forest sale goes directly against the goal of keeping 12 per cent of our surface in its natural state, even though the minister said last year, on March 22, that his government is committed, with every other country around the world:

to helping to establish that 12 to 13 per cent of the earth's surface in its natural state so that our biodiversity on which all life is based can be maintained.

That's out of *Hansard* last year, Mr. Speaker, page 1072.

Mr. Speaker, this government has on many occasion stated that they are out to create wilderness areas and recreation sites in Saskatchewan. Just how great is that commitment when the same areas that the minister claims to be committed to are in the process of being sold off? It doesn't make any sense, Mr. Speaker.

The endangered spaces campaign operates through the affiliation and cooperation of many groups and people across Canada. The actions necessary to meet the goal of this organization, in their own words, are, and I quote: largely the responsibility of governments.

It's important to note that a national Environics poll asked Canadians whether their federal, provincial, and territorial governments should be held to their original commitments to complete a representative network of protected areas by the year 2000, be given more time, or be required to complete this goal even faster. In response to this poll, 48 per cent of Canadians polled, representing a wide range of occupations, education, and income, said do it on time. And 21 per cent said, step up the pace. Only 28 per cent were prepared to grant any extension.

Further, Mr. Speaker, a second national survey by Statistics Canada indicates that over 90 per cent of Canadians contribute to spending 5.6 billion annually on wildlife-related activities. And over 60 per cent are willing to pay increased taxes or higher prices if these were needed to conserve the wetlands, forests, and other habitats on which wildlife depends. Now any time taxpayers say they are willing to pay higher taxes, the government should be listening.

When fishing expenditures and U.S. (United States) tourism spending is factored in, the annual direct total spending on wildlife-related activities in Canada exceeds \$9 billion. This is what StatsCan dispassionately calls a significant outlay.

Mr. Speaker, not only is completing a network of protected areas official public policy in Canada, with clear commitments and responsibilities acknowledged in writing, but there is a widespread, popular mandate to deliver on these promises. Therefore I urge the Minister of the Environment and Resource Management to work toward achieving the goals outlined by the endangered spaces campaign.

In addition I urge the elected members from all levels of government, concerned citizens, and volunteers, to work collectively to ensure this goal is met. It might help us all to keep the slogan for this year's Wildlife Week in mind: wildlife, yours to recover.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to second the motion moved by my colleague from Rosthern.

**Mrs. Bergman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak to the motion put forward by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

Recent news events about Canada's fish wars have driven home a point about our environment and our economy. That point, Mr. Speaker, is that our economic fortunes are often tied to our environment, and when we abuse our environment in the short term, it means that we have jeopardized ourselves economically in the long term. In the example of the Atlantic fishing industry, that point is, where there is no wilderness, there is no work.

The tragic consequences of a declining fish stock should be a loud and forceful message to us about the importance of protecting our natural resources. These resources, which once seemed endless, have proven to be finite and irreplaceable. For this reason, we must not only respect our environment and our wildlife, but in many cases we must protect them.

The endangered spaces campaign of the World Wildlife Fund was born in 1989. The goal of the campaign is to conserve our biological diversity by ensuring that a representative sample of each of Canada's 340 natural regions is saved as a protected area by the year 2000.

According to the most recent report of the World Wildlife Fund, only 3 of Saskatchewan's 36 natural regions are fully represented by protected areas, and there is no long-term plan in place to ensure the completion of the original goal with only five years remaining.

Today's debate is perhaps a week premature, since Wednesday — that's this coming Wednesday — the World Wildlife Fund will release its fifth endangered spaces progress report, the first one since September 1993. In the last report, Saskatchewan's progress received a grade of B minus. Also, as I just mentioned, this last report indicated that only 3 of Saskatchewan's 36 regions

have been adequately represented with protected areas. An additional 13 are either moderately or partially represented, and 20 have little or no representation.

We will watch, with much anticipation, next week's announcement about our province's progress toward its endangered spaces goal.

According to a statement just three months ago by the World Wildlife Fund president, Monte Hummel, there is still no plan or strategy as to how Saskatchewan Department of Environment and Resource Management intends to achieve the goal of protecting the province's natural heritage. How much has changed in three months? We shall see next week.

I want to say in closing that the Liberal caucus encourages the government to live up to its agreement and commitment to protect Saskatchewan's biological diversity.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Ms. Murray:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to stand in support of the original motion from my colleague, the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, and just say a few words about this motion.

It's often been said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, and I think that we as a government have taken some significant steps to ensure that the endangered spaces in this province are protected. We all realize — the people of Saskatchewan and this government — that Saskatchewan has a tremendous diversity and a variety of landscape. And we all understand that it's important to protect and to preserve them.

Saskatchewan in fact is most fortunate in its variety. And I'd just like to read a little description which is from the introduction of *Ecological Regions of Saskatchewan* about the variety of regions that we have here:

Saskatchewan exhibits a variety of landscapes from the 49th parallel to its northern limits at 60 degrees latitude, for nature over many years has created characteristic zones that reflect a specific relationship between climate, soils and vegetation.

The southern prairie grasslands gradually blend into aspen parkland. The latter then merges into mixed deciduous and coniferous forest that extends to the southern part of the Precambrian Shield. Farther northward lies a complex of lakes, rivers, bogs, patchy forests and rock outcrops. Deep wind-modified sands occupy a large area south of Lake Athabasca in the northwest. The northeast corner is characterized by subarctic forests on a coarse drift plain.

As the landscape changes, the communities of mammals, birds and other animals also vary. Man's

occupations also change, from a rancher in the south, to a farmer or woodworker in the central area, to a fisherman or trapper in the north.

Mr. Speaker, the government is working very hard to preserve Saskatchewan lands. We have a system of parks that works towards protecting our lakes, our streams, our wildlife. And preserving our natural resources is a very high priority.

We're committed to developing a comprehensive system of representative areas, and my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Sutherland-University, has talked a little bit about the recently completed project of Environment and Resource Management which was the release of the Saskatchewan ecoregions map, the first step towards developing a representative areas network. So progress is being made.

Having a representative area system will help us preserve and protect the province's native biodiversity as well. Biodiversity, while a relatively new concept, is a priority for our government. It's a complex concept, but in basic terms it includes not only all the species we have, but also their genetic variability and our ecosystems. If one part of an ecosystem is damaged, it affects the interconnected world of which biodiversity is a part. So it is very important to Saskatchewan and its people that our province's natural biodiversity be preserved.

Mr. Speaker, the World Wildlife Fund has challenged each province to protect 12 per cent of its natural heritage by the year 2000. It sets annual goals and issues a yearly report.

We're very pleased in Saskatchewan to be able to talk about our park system plan which has adopted and gives high priority to protection of Saskatchewan's natural heritage. We've endorsed the Canadian Wilderness Charter and committed Saskatchewan to substantial progress by the year 2000.

In 1992 we added 24 per cent in land and water base to the park system, and an additional 1.5 million hectares of Crown land were designated as wildlife habitat lands. We were very pleased in 1994 to establish one new provincial wilderness park, Clarence-Steepbanks Lakes; a new protected area to protect watercourses within Grasslands National Park; and we added another 203 hectares to three provincial parks.

Our park system focuses on natural area representation, protection, and recreation. The parks are of great importance to the people in this province. And while I haven't had the opportunity to visit all of them, those I have visited are truly beautiful and very representative of Saskatchewan's diversity. You can canoe or kayak in Saskatchewan's great rivers. You can fish or sail on her lakes. You can ride in the grasslands, and you can spend many hours walking in the forests. And in all of these parks, you can study and learn about the various plants and animals.

Mr. Speaker, the challenge today is to find ways to preserve and protect Saskatchewan's natural heritage. Educating people about Saskatchewan's wonderful variety is important, and our schools

and teachers are doing that. Encouraging people to visit our parks and see this variety for themselves is equally important.

Working with other groups and organizations to achieve this common goal is commendable. And, Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure last week to open an art show at the Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery which was entitled: Save our endangered spaces.

Saskatchewan artist Darlene Hay created 20 canvases which represented selected special and ecologically important areas in Saskatchewan. And what was so interesting about this art show was that it combined the scientific and abstract idea of endangered spaces and it brought it to life in the beautiful paintings that Darlene had painted. She had representation there of the Matador hills, the grasslands, the rivers, the Athabasca Sand Dunes, and other areas.

Mr. Speaker, we all have to make a commitment to work hard and work together to preserve Saskatchewan's incredible diversity. And I believe we are doing that. So I'm very pleased to support the original motion before us this afternoon. Thank you.

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

(1500)

**The Speaker:** — All those in favour of the amendment . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, I am sorry. You are absolutely right. Under the new rule . . . I thank the member from Saskatoon Sutherland-University for reminding me. Under rule 17, unless there are more speakers, we will now begin the question and answer period up to a maximum of 10 minutes.

**Mr. Koenker:** — Mr. Speaker, I just want to clarify my remarks here. I understand from last year's debate that a member does not necessarily need to ask a question, but they can further elaborate? Yes. I'd just like to comment on the inconsistency in the amendment that is being made. On the one hand, the official opposition moves an amendment to encourage the Minister of the Environment to live up to commitments to conservation. And on the other hand, they say that there is no plan and that there is no commitment.

They can't have it both ways. I mean either there is a commitment that the minister does need to live up to or there is no commitment. But they can't have it both ways.

I would say today that there is a commitment on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan to live up with the plan. As the main motion itself indicates, the government is working on a representative areas network system. As I indicated in my remarks, the government is doing gap analysis, which is essentially finding the pieces of the puzzle that are still needed to complete the ecological picture and the protection here in Saskatchewan.

And so I think it's very clear that the Government of

Saskatchewan and the department of environment and natural resources is committed to a representative areas network. They have taken the first step in publishing a comprehensive map which is really a framework or touchstone that we've never had before. And I don't think it's good enough to say that nothing is happening. There is a lot happening.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again whether it's in rebuttal or whether it's a question or a comment — I'm not quite sure — I don't think . . . I didn't hear all of my colleague's speech on this side, but I definitely know that I was not at any point suggesting that nothing had been done and nothing was being accomplished.

We know that 5 per cent of Saskatchewan has already been declared an endangered space. The goal is 12 per cent. What I'm suggesting is that there is a big difference between 5 per cent and 12 per cent as a goal, and what we're looking for is a plan where their commitment is going to be met. That's all that we're looking at.

And then when I see some such things as Bronson forest being sold out from under the plan, then I am . . . that is the part that we are questioning. We're hoping that their commitment is solid and we're hoping that there is a plan in place to achieve that, and we're going to support that, Mr. Speaker.

That is our situation, that's what my comments were intended as, and so that is my response to you.

**Mr. Scott:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have some brief comments. I'm certainly very pleased that all members that have spoke today are very supportive of the principle of establishing and securing representative areas of our ecosystems here in the province. And so that is certainly encouraging.

I guess I would also like to add, as we get into the implementation of the plan, there will be a number of issues that will have to be dealt with, third-party interests and so on and so forth. So hopefully we can also have as equally a cooperative atmosphere as we've had here today as we proceed on this agenda to identify and secure these natural areas.

The department has done an excellent job in producing a map of the areas, the various ecoregions of the province. So we do have a framework to build upon and it's a matter of getting on with the job. And this will only be successful with the cooperation of all political parties, but more importantly, industry, landowners, first nations, conservation groups, local communities. It's going to be a very difficult task but I think it's one that we all believe firmly in, that we must achieve.

And as the hon. member from Rosthern said, 5 or 6 per cent of our natural areas protected in one form or another is not sufficient. A minimum of 12 per cent has been identified by the Brundtland Commission. And so I encourage us to pursue on this path to identify and get these natural areas established throughout the province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Amendment negated.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. By leave of the Assembly, I move that we turn our attention to the Committee of the Whole, Bill 33, An Act respecting the Donation of Food.

**An Hon. Member:** — Permission to make a comment, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — All right, I'll permit the member to make a comment, if that's all right with the House. I assume that the member can make a comment.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Yes, we are certainly prepared to give leave; it's on the understanding that when this matter is over, we'll return to the private members' business as we were proceeding.

**Mr. Neudorf:** — It is so understood.

Leave granted.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**The Chair:** — Before we proceed to business of the committee, I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With leave, for the introduction of guests.

Leave granted.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To you and through you to members of the Assembly, I would with great pleasure like to introduce Mr. Ed Bloos who is sitting in the Speaker's gallery. He is from the Regina food bank and he has joined us this afternoon as he is very interested in the proceedings this afternoon with respect to The Donation of Food Act.

So I'd ask all members to please welcome him here this afternoon, and I'm sure he'll be enjoying what we're going to be doing here in the next few moments. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Mr. Chairman, I would ask leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to join with the Leader of the Official Opposition to welcome

Mr. Bloos on behalf of the government members. And of course we all have a great interest in the work that Mr. Bloos, his board, staff, and volunteers are doing. And I had the pleasure of spending some time with him recently, so I would like to join the hon. member and again invite Mr. Bloos and I know all members will give him another round of applause.

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

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

#### Bill No. 33 — An Act respecting the Donation of Food

##### Clause 1

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to make just a couple of comments, and I have a couple of questions for the Leader of the Opposition, who is the sponsor of the Bill.

I think the leader knows and the opposition know that we have commended him for at least coming up with an idea that could make a difference for low income people. And we've also . . . we respect that, and we've also of course did our own consulting with the food banks and with other jurisdictions as to whether or not this has made some difference in terms of bringing in additional food supplies.

In some cases this has made a difference, in our survey, and in some cases it hasn't. But if of course there is any chance that additional food will go to the food bank, then we're very supportive of that.

One of the points I would like to make before I ask my questions to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is to indicate that of course this is an immediate response. This is not a long-term solution. This is not an intermediate solution. This is an immediate response that may make some difference, and to that degree we're supportive.

The key of course is to providing low income people with the needs that they have and with the hope that they need to have, is providing good economic development climate, is getting the fiscal house of the province in order, which I think most would agree is the case in the province today, and of course making sure that meaningful, long-term jobs are created.

And the strategy of the government, which is working very well, Mr. Chair, is the strategy of the *Partnership for Renewal*, complemented by shorter-term programs like the initiatives of New Careers Corporation where some 6,400 opportunities for jobs, training, and education are provided for people on assistance — also, Mr. Speaker, programs like Future Skills and JobStart, designed to support people on assistance, young people, and low income people to access employment options which again that is the long-term solution to this.

And I know that the Leader of the Opposition wasn't here as late as 1990 when his party would not acknowledge that poverty existed in Saskatchewan. I don't hold him accountable for that, but certainly poverty in this province grew tremendously during the 1980s. Where in 1982 there were no food banks in the province, by the time the previous administration left office, there were 10 food banks in this province and growing rapidly.

We're trying to of course reverse that trend. And there's good news, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, that the case-loads are down across the province in 8 out of the 11 district offices in Social Services.

(1515)

Mr. Speaker, I guess what I want to challenge the Leader of the Opposition to think about is, in the past you will know, last year you will know — we don't know how you're going to vote this year — but last year you will know that you voted against, in fact your entire . . . all of your members voted against the child development and nutrition program which provides \$1 million to school lunch programs, some 47, 48 school lunch programs across the province. Now you voted against that.

You also voted against the budget of Social Services last year which gave an increase of about 9 per cent to low income families. And I think it's important to know, it's important for the public to know, that you, sir, voted against that increase, that increase which lifted the cap off utilities for low income people, where we are paying now the actual costs for utilities for people on assistance so that they don't have to subsidize their utility costs by dipping into their food allowance. You voted against that budget.

You also voted against a budget whereby we're giving the . . . where you take single parent families on assistance, we're giving the oldest child in the single parent family a food allowance as equivalent to if they were an adult. You voted against that, sir. You also voted against the northern food allowance of \$50 per child in northern Saskatchewan.

Now you voted against all of those initiatives designed to help low income people. And so what I'm asking . . . The first question I'd like to ask you is: unlike last year and the year before where you voted against those initiatives, to be consistent with this Bill, which we're supporting, will you promise me, will you promise low income people, will you promise people who use the food bank, that you will not vote against those initiatives this year which give them more money to put more food on the table?

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Mr. Minister, we're trying — very difficult — on this side of the House to keep this debate at a level that doesn't involve politics, doesn't involve politics, sir. And you're trying your very best to score some political points on something that is very, very fundamental to the people of Saskatchewan, and that's to have good, adequate food services available to them.

This is part of a long-term solution and we recognize that, and that's the reason we brought it forward. We would ask you, we would ask you if you can for a moment, to set aside your partisan leanings and do something that is good for the people of this province and be a part of the solution to this. Be a part of the solution rather than trying to score political points on this. You can save that for another day, and you know very well that you can do that.

I respect your opinions and your judgement and all of that when it comes to all these other issues. We're dealing with this at the moment. And I would ask you if you could just for a moment, Mr. Member, please try and set aside that. Take the high road on this for one opportunity in your career here and take the high road and let's just get this done. Let's just get on with it and get it finished.

We are prepared to pass this immediately. We believe this will help deal with the problems of hunger in this province. We believe that the people are waiting for this kind of thing. We believe that the food banks across this province are in need of this type of measure. We believe that people are waiting for this, sir. And they are not waiting any longer for any political speeches from the minister who I think is just trying, as I said, to score some political points on this.

All across Canada there are food banks. We all have to recognize that. Jurisdictions all across Canada, whether they are under any political stripe, are all faced with the same types of problems, sir. In Saskatchewan, the same thing exists. And that's why in other provinces they have brought about something of this nature to deal with it. And that's why we are bringing it forward in Saskatchewan.

We are not trying to score any political points on this. They never did right from the very outset. You can try as you like, but the fact of the matter remains, this is good for Saskatchewan, this is good for Saskatchewan people. This does not cost one dime for the people of this province in terms of taxation.

What we are saying to you is, join with us now, join with us now and get this finished, get this Bill completed this afternoon so that the food banks will have food to give to the needy people of this province.

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

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Mr. Chairman, I obviously touched a nerve. All I'm saying to the hon. member — and he didn't answer my question — all I'm saying to the hon. member is I told you we supported the Bill. And I tell you if that's the high road, we support the Bill.

All I'm saying to you is this is one Bill. The agenda for low income people is a whole package. All I'm suggesting to you is, will you be consistent? Will you support ... I'm going to support the Bill. I'm asking you: will you support the child development and nutrition grants which give \$1 million to feed

hungry families? Will you support that? That's not a political question.

Will you support the Social Services budget which, as I outlined, gives special provisions to low income families over and above which was the case a year or two ago. That's all I'm asking you. Will you be consistent and support that?

I could say to you, would you also withdraw your Bills that ask the government to reverse the labour legislation where we're trying to give some part-time benefits to part-time workers. I mean if you're consistent and concerned about low income people, I would hope that you would admit most working people want part-time benefits for part-time work.

So all I'm suggesting to you is we're going to support your Bill, but I asked you, and I guess you're not prepared to answer it, I asked you would you be prepared to be consistent and to support the other measures that make a difference to low income people? That was my question.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Yes, I'm finding it very difficult, Mr. Member, to try and trade off — and that appears to be what you're doing — trying to trade off support for this, trying to trade off support for this Bill, with trying to get support for some of your initiatives. We will be very happy to look at your pieces of legislation, all of your Bills as they're presented, and we'll judge them on their merits at that time, as we would similarly wish you to judge this on its merits now.

**Mrs. Bergman:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the third party caucus would just like to support the intention of this Bill and urge that it be passed as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you and, Mr. Chairman, Madam Member, we certainly welcome your support for this initiative. We welcome the non-partisan nature that you've given us that support this afternoon.

As I've said earlier, we are very sure that this will help. We do not believe it is the total solution but we believe it will help. And that's what we are trying to do with this piece of legislation this afternoon. We believe it's good for Saskatchewan, and we just say that with the support of the government and the third party, I think we can move on and finish this up here.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

### THIRD READINGS

#### **Bill No. 33 — An Act respecting the Donation of Food**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

#### **Motion No. 5 — Young Offenders Pilot Project**

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in this Assembly today to move a motion addressing the problem of young offenders in our society. And I'm going to move this motion at the end of my speech, remarks, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it will be seconded by the member from Souris-Cannington.

Mr. Speaker, the motion I'm presenting to this Assembly reads as such:

That this Assembly urge the government to immediately establish a young offenders pilot project based on the programming recently implemented in Manitoba, where young offenders are sentenced to serve time in boot camps (closed custody facility), work camps (open custody), and intensive custody; and that after a predetermined time the pilot project be studied and the degree of success be determined in terms of the potential for rehabilitation of young offenders in comparison to the current system we have in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that many people are very concerned with the Young Offenders Act and the fact that so many young people, minors if you will, are becoming involved in more and more aggressive criminal activity and abhorrent crimes against society.

And this past weekend was just another example of where young individuals who haven't received . . . and I'm not exactly sure, but I would suggest they haven't received the love and care and attention at home. And because of that, whether it was peer pressure or what it was, three young children, ages 13, 14, and 15, in Montreal, bludgeoned to death an elderly couple in their early 70s. And that was a story that was right across this country on news media on Friday evening and I'm sure shook the people across this nation.

And as I've heard over the weekend, as people have been bringing to my attention, there's a real concern as to how we treat individuals who would abuse the rights and the livelihood of other individuals. And in this case, two senior, retired people who were probably enjoying life and enjoying their time together, resting after the fruits of their labour, only to have it abruptly ended by three young individuals, individuals that under our present system and under the present Young Offenders Act will not be named.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm not exactly sure what process the law is going to follow as they would try these individuals, in view of the heinous attack and the murder that was committed. But I know that many people across this nation, and certainly in the

province of Saskatchewan, are becoming very concerned and would like to see different methods implemented that would allow and, if you will, rehabilitate many of our young people who may become, in many cases, Mr. Speaker, not necessarily involved in a criminal activity because they themselves thought it up, but possibly because of the peer pressure or the crowd they're with, or even the fact that maybe there isn't that home environment that they would dearly love to have and that so many of our young people are privileged to have.

(1530)

Mr. Speaker, I would dare say that one of the problems in our society today is the fact that we have a society that is made up of families who feel it more important to have both members at work, both members out drawing an income to have as substantially high an income as possible with the idea, it seems, that they can buy their children happiness just by generating enough activity, income activity, and then buying the things their children need rather than . . . failing to realize that what most children are looking for is a home environment where there's love and there's friendship.

And in most cases where you will find, Mr. Speaker, where children have the opportunity to come home and they open the door and there are nice, warm aromas flowing through the house, of fresh bread or fresh cookies or something in the oven for supper, and the greeting of, hi Mom, and the mother responding — or if it happens to be the father who happens to be home that day — and just saying hi to their children, those are things that children are looking for.

As well, Mr. Speaker . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Guidance.

**Mr. Toth:** — And my colleague just raised it — young people are looking for some guidelines, to establish some guidelines. They're looking for, if you will, even discipline.

And the interesting part about the events in Montreal, Mr. Speaker, when the cameras went and interviewed a number of young offenders in a camp — and I believe it was in Ontario — one of the young offenders who I don't believe was any more than 18, may not have even been 18, indicated that he felt if there were more stringent laws, he may not be in the situation he was in. He said young people commit crimes because there's basically no punishment.

And, Mr. Speaker, I believe that doesn't speak well for our society when as parents we neglect our responsibility to train up our children. There's a biblical principle that says you train your child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

And I believe parents have a responsibility to teach their children how to grow up and respect not only their elders, but other people in their society regardless of who they are — regardless of their race, religion, nationality, or creed.

And because we lack that ability to discipline, because parents have given away that opportunity and that responsibility to discipline their children, because they haven't set any guidelines for their young people, many young people find themselves looking to others for that discipline, looking to others for that love, looking to others for that acceptance. And unfortunately many young people end up in the wrong crowd, committing criminal crimes such as we've seen in the past week. And certainly even, I believe, just last evening there was a major chase with the police in this city with a number of young people who had stolen vehicles again and wrecked them.

So what it basically speaks of is young people really have no respect for other people's property, and that's unfortunate. Mr. Speaker, I realize that the day and age when I grew up and possibly the day and age when you grew up, Mr. Speaker, and many others in this Assembly, we all grew up when parents believed in applying discipline, administering discipline, setting some guidelines for us. And if you crossed the threshold and were disobedient, there were penalties. There was punishment involved.

And some of that punishment may have been you missed your supper for the evening or other forms of punishment. I'm always reminded of the fact that my dad used to love that portion out of *Proverbs* where it says, if you spare the rod, you spoil the child. And I guess maybe it didn't do me all that much harm. But I think there are still places for those type of principles.

And while I suggest that families, that parents administer discipline, I'm not giving parents the ability to turn around and take advantage of their young people, take advantage of their children, and abuse the rights of young people as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, what do we do with individuals who may lack that feeling of love, may lack that feeling of friendship, or feeling of being accepted? What do we do with young people who feel they have no alternative but to be out with the crowd and at the end of the day find themselves in an activity that breaches the laws of the land and breaches the rights of others?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not personally believe that we incarcerate everyone who breaks the law, especially as young people. For minor offences, I believe there are better ways of teaching children and of helping them grow and develop in our society.

And I want to bring to the attention of this Assembly what the Manitoba government has done to try and address the problem with young offenders in their province. Last year, Mr. Speaker, the government in Manitoba implemented some bold and innovative changes to the young offender program. Mr. Speaker, what they did was they revamped the entire system which now focuses on rigorous confinement, austere conditions, defined expectations and consequences, highly structured activities, and a release preparation and supervision program.

Young offender programming was radically changed in Manitoba because of community concern. Mr. Speaker, I know that Canadians across the country share this same concern and fear that the citizens of Manitoba were feeling.

And this morning I had the privilege of stopping in at Moosomin at a customer appreciation day at one of the dealerships. And it's interesting to note that that was one of the subjects that was brought up by people I talked to — the concerns they have and the fact that there seems to be no lack of . . . or no respect from our young people; and that there seem to be so many people, young people just aimlessly wandering in our society, and we've got to find ways in which we can reach out and help them.

Mr. Speaker, I think the only difference between Manitoba and Saskatchewan is that the government in Manitoba has indeed made a move and changed the system. Saskatchewan residents also want changes to the rules and regulations governing young offenders.

And of course we've had a fair bit of debate in this Assembly with some of the recent happenings in our Assembly regarding the Young Offenders Act and breaches of that Act. And certainly I've raised that concern, not just recently but even in the past as we've debated with the Justice ministers in this Assembly about how we change it.

And I trust that at the end of the day as the federal government reviews the Young Offenders Act, we come up with some strict and straightforward guidelines that would set up a policy whereby we address problems created by young offenders more fairly.

I realize that the province's hands are tied to federal legislation. However, I also know that the province may administer the programming so that it follows federal guidelines. The federal government does allow latitude as far as how young offenders programs are offered within these facilities.

Mr. Speaker, because the province must abide to sentencing brought down by judges in our courts, it is necessary to take full advantage of the leeway allowed the province once the young offender is committed to a facility like the North Battleford youth centre.

Many will argue that youth crimes are not on the increase, but I beg to differ. The Social Services '93-94 annual report shows otherwise. It shows that the average number of youth on probation increased by more than 20 per cent over the past five years, and that the average daily count of youth in custody in '93-94 increased by 8.9 per cent over the '92-93 period.

Mr. Speaker, any increase indicates to me that the rate is much too high and the offenders' attitudes are too brazen for the province to sit idly by and do nothing to treat the problem.

Mr. Speaker, let's consider the problems experienced recently in Regina with the Oldsmobile gang. The individuals being caught

for these offences, Mr. Speaker, were repeat offenders. What it tells me is they didn't learn from their mistakes or the punishment dispensed by the courts for previous offences of the judicial system and of the law.

Consider the actions of the young offender who participated in the attack on Mr. Dove from Whitewood, or the repeat offences of youth in the country stealing gas, and random acts of vandalism.

And as I indicated the other day, Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate where young offenders are involved and where residents in, whether it's in urban or rural settings or in the country where gas is stolen or buildings are ransacked, where property is damaged, the individual at the end of the day has had all this damage done to his property but doesn't face the opportunity of restitution.

And we may fine the young offender or offenders, and they aren't even really brought to a position of understanding the consequences of their actions. I believe it's high time for Saskatchewan to take a look at what other provinces are doing to address the problem.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I say this, I'm not suggesting that the government go full speed and adopt all methods implemented in Manitoba. I'm suggesting that a pilot project be implemented in Saskatchewan, a project where the results can be tracked in terms of rehabilitation of the offender.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's system is made up of three components: boot camps, work camps, and intensive custody. The boot camps replace the secured or closed custody programs previously in place in Manitoba. The young offenders are involved in community service work, structured educational programs, and intense intervention programs designed to modify the attitudes and beliefs which lead to criminal activity.

Mr. Speaker, the offenders are not immediately granted privileges. They must earn privileges that they currently take for granted. They have very limited recreational activities. They cannot spend an hour or two playing billiards or watching television. They spend time taking classes, clearing bush, gardening, and assembling mailings for non-profit groups. They participate in community service work.

Some examples of the type of community service work that has been conducted by young offenders in Manitoba includes assisting in the set-up and clean-up of events such as the muscular dystrophy bike-a-thon; participating in the adoptive highway program where youth clean and maintain a stretch of highway; preparation of information kits and similar projects for non-profits groups such as UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) and the multiple sclerosis society; and making wooden toys for the Christmas cheer board. Also gardening work that supplies fresh vegetables to other correctional institutions and helps defray food costs; working in the purple loosestrife elimination program; and providing yard clean-up and snow shovelling services for needy seniors in Portage La

Prairie.

Mr. Speaker, their behaviour and attitudes are closely monitored, and they must earn, Mr. Speaker, they must earn the right to secure privileges. I don't think that these conditions are too harsh for young offenders in closed custody facilities. I think that they should adhere to a rigorous schedule of work, educational classes, and counselling. Every opportunity should be granted to these young people that will enhance their opportunities upon their release.

Mr. Speaker, in these camps, unacceptable behaviour is not accepted in boot camps. In fact it may mean the loss of privileges if you do not follow the guidelines of the camp. Consequences include a loss of privileges, additional work assignments, or even further confinement.

Mr. Speaker, these youth are not put in solitary confinement for unacceptable behaviour, which I know happens here in the province; that it is not right to be confined without any rehabilitative treatment available. Additional duties and an extended term is acceptable.

The Manitoba model also includes work camps and intensive custody. The work camps are distinct from closed custody and are designated for low risk youth. It prepares the youth for release into the community and allows more choices to the youth. On the other hand, intensive custody is for those youth who refuse to accept the limits and responsibilities of boot camp.

Mr. Speaker, I think that all members of this Assembly will agree that there is a value in making changes to our young offender programing. I think it would be a valuable exercise for the provincial government to consult with Manitoba and embark on a process toward implementing a pilot project here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, I believe this is a very important, very fundamental issue. And I was pleased the other day, as we were addressing a number of concerns in Justice, that the former minister of Justice, the member from Churchill Downs, indicated that the federal government is presently reviewing the young offenders legislation, and that we do have a member from the department who is on this committee reviewing this legislation. I believe it's very important that we take the time to review it very closely and very clearly.

(1545)

I also am very supportive, Mr. Speaker, of programs that help and assist young people to determine who they are, to determine what they are, and how they can become a benefit to society.

I believe, as we've seen and as we see in the Manitoba example, the fact that they have educational programing available is very important. And it's fundamental to the basis of helping young people to understand who they basically are and their

responsibility in our society. I believe, as well, it gives them an opportunity to look ahead to the future by giving them an education that will allow them the opportunity of a job that may be available when they are released from a closed custody situation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe many young people are looking for options. I believe many young people are looking for alternatives. And it's imperative that we give them those alternatives. And I would like to cite an example of a camp in our area, down at the Kenosee Park. There we have a young offenders camp in the park and the individuals who are brought out to the camp are individuals who are considered young people who have committed minor crimes and certainly people that you can feel you can trust. And they are brought out to the camp and they actually assist in clean-up in the park, and in many cases, cutting down of old trees and trying to beautify and beautify the park area.

And it's a program . . . while some people would really question — especially those who live in the park may question — who comes there and would like to know that there are some very stringent guidelines as to the type of young person that will be brought out to the camp to work in the camp, on the other hand it is also been a very beneficial program to many young people.

And I can remember myself personally going out to pick up some firewood. And when I drove into the camp and talked to the camp director, and he called a couple young people, the young fellows were there right now, just ready to go and help unload this firewood. In fact I hardly had to lift a finger to load firewood. They were just, bang, ready to do it right now. And I was quite impressed, Mr. Speaker, with the way these young people just pitched right in.

And it seemed to me that there appeared to be a feeling of acceptance and a feeling that they finally had an idea of what was expected of them. And they were ready to show society that they could provide and have a very positive influence in our society if given the chance.

So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I believe that a number of the programs that have been implemented by the province of Manitoba should be seriously looked at by this province. And that indeed we should take the time to possibly address a pilot project and see how it works, compare notes. And maybe there are other ideas that we could bring forward as to addressing the needs of young offenders in our society and in our province. And we could add those too, and we could build upon that program that Manitoba has already brought forward.

So that at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, what we are doing is we are returning to society individuals who will feel that they have something to offer, will feel that they have something to give, and individuals who can become wage-earners, that can become family members and have families and raise families in our society and provide a positive contribution to our society.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from

Souris-Cannington:

That this Assembly urge the government to immediately establish a young offenders pilot project based on the programming recently implemented in Manitoba where young offenders are sentenced to serve time in boot camps (closed custody facility), work camps (open custody), and intensive custody; and that after a predetermined time the pilot project be studied and the degree of success be determined in terms of the potential for rehabilitation for young offenders in comparison to the current system in the province of Saskatchewan.

I so move.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today in support of my colleague's motion.

We have seen quite a number of problems across the country in the last few years, Mr. Speaker, dealing with violence of young offenders. Most recently we have heard of the dreadful case in Montreal, of the youth who killed an Anglican minister and his wife. Last night we heard of another circumstance in Edmonton where a taxi driver was murdered. Mr. Speaker, it's, well perhaps not rampant; it's certainly well-known amongst the public, the events that are happening.

In Saskatchewan we have usually been able to feel safe and distant from the crime problems of the country's larger urban centres. However, as we have already heard, that's no longer the case. From the Oldsmobile gang to the Dove case to sexual assaults by youth, the cases of youth violence across this province is increasing.

We seem to have been infected by the same virus that has long since ravaged the rest of the country but to which we thought we were somehow immune. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, at this rate it will not be long before incidences of stabbings and beatings on our school grounds become common.

The examples of other jurisdictions show us that we must act now before we reach that point. The disease of youth crime is growing so quickly that we have no time, no time, Mr. Speaker, to sit on our hands and worry but do nothing, Mr. Speaker.

Statistics Canada figures show that last year violent youth crime rose by 8 per cent; sexual assaults, rapes and indecent assaults by youth rose from 2,076 in 1994 from 1,793 in 1993, Mr. Speaker, an increase of almost 300.

Assaults by youth involving a weapon rose to 3,836 from 3,685. And I'd like to point out, in reference to those last statistics — violent crime with a weapon — that in most cases the weapon involved was a knife, Mr. Speaker, a knife, not a firearm.

It's rather ironic, Mr. Speaker, that the federal government is bent on turning thousands of innocent, responsible gun owners

into criminals while the youth offenders Act protects the very real criminals. This irony was displayed this past November when two groups, two groups held rallies on Parliament Hill on the very same day, November 4.

The first rally called for mandatory firearm registration. The second one was in support of tougher youth offenders legislation. It had been initiated by the parents of Joshua Baillai, a four-year-old boy who had been killed in a car accident.

A young offender who was fleeing from the Ottawa police had struck the van in which Joshua was riding. Joshua's mother recalled the night of the accident, and I quote:

I see Josh in his grandmother's van getting crushed, covered in blood, broken and bruised. I see him lying in the intensive care unit — bloody bandages, neck brace, stitches, casts, staples holding him together, tubes everywhere.

Well the national firearms registration is now before the parliament, but Joshua's killer walked after a year in custody and is probably already out stealing cars again. That's a disgrace, Mr. Speaker, a disgrace.

But this action clearly spells out the government's agenda — the federal government's agenda in this particular case — of politics before solutions. The federal government seems to believe they have found a simplistic diversion for voters in their gun control legislation, rather than providing solutions to the actual, real problems — the real problems of poverty and crime, Mr. Speaker, the real problems of unemployment which leads to poverty.

Although the Young Offenders Act, Mr. Speaker, is a federal matter, we on the provincial level must do what we can to use the custody system to prevent cases like Joshua's from happening here.

These obvious public safety concerns are the most important reasons we have brought this motion to the House. Other reasons include the costs and efficiency of the system proposed. As criminology professor Tony Doob has pointed out in the *Leader-Post* on October 28 of 1994, the biggest problem with the young offender system is that it can't distinguish between violent crimes and petty crimes. We have a system where kids who sneak into the movies can end up at the same facilities as hardened criminals and they all cost the taxpayer between 2 and \$300 a day.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear that we need to find new ways of dealing with this problem. The Minister of Justice, along with the mayor of Regina, have been making speeches to the press about how they will push the federal government for tougher sentences for young offenders. But, Mr. Speaker, we all know how much success the Minister of Justice has had in his speeches with Allan Rock to date on other matters.

We say that the provincial government, Mr. Speaker, has to take some responsibility and has to act on these particular issues before more and more crime becomes the case. We have seen the case of the Oldsmobile gang in Regina, Mr. Speaker, how the situation just seemed to perpetuate itself.

We have seen, Mr. Speaker, a solid example of how creative solutions can be found through the actions of the Manitoba Conservative government in bringing in a boot camp/work camp system to deal with young offenders.

The justice system, when you are directed to a youth custody centre, at present not only gives light sentences, but the terms of the sentence, Mr. Speaker, can hardly be considered to be any kind of a deterrent. At these youth centres, offenders hang out, they watch TV, play pool all day long. There they can wear their own clothes and do almost whatever it is they wish with their own time.

These are the dire circumstances that they have to tolerate, Mr. Speaker, for one or two years to a maximum of five years for crimes as serious — as serious, Mr. Speaker — as murder. And actually, Mr. Speaker, for some this particular environment, physical environment, is an enhancement of what they face in their own homes.

This system, Mr. Speaker, under the Young Offenders Act, clearly does nothing at all to deter the young offender. It neither provides a deterrent nor does it do anything towards rehabilitation of youth, nor does it provide any serious protection for the community.

The boot camp model, Mr. Speaker, is very different. Its focus is first and foremost on deterrent and rehabilitation. For youth in Manitoba's boot camp system, they are kept in secure, closed custody.

Mr. Speaker, I think an old maxim has some merit for these young offenders — it's that idle hands lead to mischief. In the boot camp system they are expected to work on community service projects like clearing brush or charity work such as building toys for children. There is very little time allowed for recreational activities.

And for some youths, even this system is too loose. And for those cases, Manitoba has instituted what is called intensive custody. That is, in essence, maximum security for youth offenders.

At the other end of that spectrum, Mr. Speaker, many youth can be trusted with greater responsibility and are allowed more privileges than under the boot camp system. For these there is a modified institution called the work camp.

This is not just a lock them up and throw away the key system; it also includes measures that keep young offenders who have committed minor offences to stay in the community under intense supervision. It is a balanced approach, a balanced system, and one that should be emulated and considered here.

This is what we're proposing today, Mr. Speaker, and what we're asking members to support. And it's just not us, Mr. Speaker, that are asking that this type of system be considered. I have some quotes here I'd like to read. And this is from the *Saskatchewan Valley News*, November 16, 1994, and I quote:

The Saskatchewan Valley School Division wants the SSTA to ask the provincial government to provide increased support to schools having to deal with young offenders.

Well, Mr. Speaker, under the Manitoba system, that kind of enhanced educational opportunity is provided. In the Manitoba system, the curriculum is the same as the public schools, with more emphasis on individual needs and learning patterns. Emphasis is placed on basic language skills, including reading and writing, and the basic math. Courses try to provide the necessary skills needed to return to community-based schools for further training. Schooling will be held year-round.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's not only an opportunity for these youth to provide something in return to the community through their work efforts, it's also an opportunity for them to gain and to improve their education.

Another quote I would like to read, Mr. Speaker, from the *Leader-Post* of October 26, 1994, and I quote:

Older teenagers charged with serious crimes should be automatically tried in adult court without a chance to head back to youth court, says the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.

"If Parliament is really serious about addressing violent youth crime, then they can strengthen the section by providing simply . . . (an) automatic transfer for serious offences . . . without provision for return to youth court."

The Canadian Police Association, which represents police officers, seconded the proposal by the chiefs.

(1600)

Another quote, Mr. Speaker, again from the *Leader-Post*, September 14, 1994:

Young offenders like those in the so-called Oldsmobile gang should more often face closed custody, says Regina mayor Doug Archer. And Saskatchewan Justice minister, who met with Archer and Regina police chief Murray Langford for about 45 minutes on Tuesday to discuss what can be done about the city's rash of car thefts by juveniles, agreed.

Another quote from the Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker, *Leader-Post*, September 16, 1994:

"We've got a citizenry that is fearful and insecure. It's all

very well to be concerned about the rights of accused persons. I am just as concerned about that as anybody is, but I'm also concerned people in our communities, the elderly people living alone, feel safe in their homes."

Mr. Speaker, there are many people across this province who are concerned about youth crime and how it's going to be dealt with and what solutions can be found to discourage it in the future.

We've commented on some of the opportunities that are provided within the Manitoba system for the youth that are incarcerated there to spend their time. What do they do while they're sitting there, rather than simply playing pool or watching television?

Well, Mr. Speaker, under the community service work in Manitoba, the youth there are assigned to setting up . . . assisting in the set-up and clean-up of events such as muscular dystrophy bike-a-thon, the Portage fair, the Manitoba Development Centre annual fair, and other community-based activities; participating in the adopt-a-highway program where youth clean and maintain a stretch of highway; stuffing and labelling envelopes for preparation of information kits and similar projects for non-profit groups such as UNICEF and the muscular cirrhosis society; making wooden toys for the Christmas cheer board; gardening work that supplies fresh vegetables to other correctional institutions and helps to defray food costs; working in the purple loosestrife elimination program; participating in closely supervised warehouse work for Habitat for Humanity; helping with the annual clean-up of the Garrioch Creek in Portage la Prairie; and providing yard clean-up and snow-shovelling services for needy seniors in Portage la Prairie.

So, Mr. Speaker, while I'm sure that a number of people across this province view boot camps as forcing kids into uniforms and brush cuts, doing push-ups all day long, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot more involved in it than that picture people have in their minds. Under these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, in Manitoba . . . and since I live right on the Manitoba border, we hear comments coming out of Manitoba dealing with these issues . . . that the people there are supportive of this particular program because the youth are not simply waiting in a very loose custody situation, but rather they're busy. They're learning, and they're providing a service to the community, Mr. Speaker, and a very worthwhile service.

When they're cleaning up a stretch of highway, Mr. Speaker, we all benefit, and there is some repayment to society, Mr. Speaker. Therefore I am very pleased to second the motion as presented by the member from Moosomin. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The members from the official opposition have made a lot of good points and raised some serious problems on a serious issue here today. But I was struck, Mr. Speaker, by the impression, listening to members of the official opposition, that young people generally should be

tarred with the same brush, that is, that they needed to be put under better control because they're apt to commit crime.

And I want to say that I'm sure the members opposite in fact don't mean to tar all young people with the same brush because I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that young people today are every bit as good as people were 20 years ago when I was a teenager, and as they were a few generations ago, too. Most young people are very good, as we all know, and there are some that have problems and cause problems in society and those problems have to be dealt with.

I think that there are certain principles that should be brought to bear in dealing with those problems. I want to say at the outset that we support, on this side of the House, a review of the Young Offenders Act at the federal level because we know from talking to our constituents that there are problems with the administration of the Young Offenders Act, and people want to see some change.

Having said that though, I want to say too that I don't think it's a good idea for anybody to bash young people or talk about crime and youth crime in a political way — that is, as political window-dressing — in an effort to whip up support for their own political party.

I think that what we really need in our society is a balanced approach to crime. I think there are certain principles that should be brought to bear in any discussion of youth crime and what we should do about young offenders.

I want to say — going to get into this more, Mr. Speaker — but I want to say that many of the things that the members opposite are talking about as taking place in the province of Manitoba are, guess what, taking place in the province of Saskatchewan, which actually pioneered most of the things that are being done in the province of Manitoba.

The members opposite didn't go into that, and I don't think the members opposite have familiarized themselves with what is being done with young people in the province of Saskatchewan.

I heard the member from Moosomin say, for example, that people who commit crimes should be accountable to the victims of their crimes. And I heard the member from Souris-Cannington talking about the Oldsmobile gang and what's happening with them.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, what is taking place with the people that were involved in the Oldsmobile gang situation is quite unique, because various community agencies and the police and the courts are getting those young people together with the victims of their crimes. And they're sitting down and talking about what they've done and the consequences of it, and they're making them accountable because there's going to be restitution.

And that's the sort of thing that should be done in our society. And some of the things that are being done are good things because they're getting people together, they're making young

people accountable, and making them account for what they've done by providing some restitution to the victims of their crimes.

And I don't say any of this, Mr. Speaker, in an effort to say that what the opposition members raise is not important. It is important. Or to say that these concerns aren't valid. They are valid. What I say is that when we're talking about youth crime and young people and trying to deal with what are difficult problems in our society, we should talk about the facts. And that's what I propose to do.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think we should have an approach to youth crime that reflects the fact that sometimes crime results because personal and family situations are such that the developmental needs of youth are unmet, or met inconsistently, inappropriately, or inadequately. And sometimes offending behaviour by youth occurs as a way of attempting to have his or her needs met or to bring attention to his or her situation.

And if we're going to talk about dealing with young offenders, then we should realize that reoffending is going to be less likely if a youth's developmental needs are appropriately and satisfactorily addressed and if young people are challenged and supported to identify problems with their attitude and behaviour and examine and change their attitudes and behaviour.

And there are several principles that should be brought to bear in dealing with young offenders. The most obvious is . . . or the primary principle, I should say, is that society, all of us, including members of society who are young people, and sometimes the victim of crime, not just by young people by the way, but sometimes the victim of crimes committed by adults, but society first and foremost has the right to be protected from dangerous offenders. There's no question about that. And if that means tougher penalties and a review of the Young Offenders Act, then that's what it means. Society has to be protected.

A second principle is that youth who commit crime, like adults who commit crime, should be held accountable for their actions.

A third principle is that young persons who commit offences require supervision, discipline, and control. There's no question about that. But they also require guidance and assistance and appropriate programming.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that what bothers me about the motion put forward by the member from Moosomin is not so much the idea behind it as the fact that it totally ignores what is actually going on in the province to deal with the problem of youth crime. This problem is not one that can be dealt with through simple solutions. It is one that is somewhat complex.

And I think in dealing with it, I said a few minutes ago, Mr. Speaker, that we should recognize that we should not generalize about young people and say that they're prone to commit crimes or that this generation is worse than the last generation, which

was worse than the generation before it, which is something that I think has been said by every generation probably for the last 2,000 years, if not longer. I don't believe young people are inherently bad; I think they're inherently good — probably getting better if the truth were known. But I also want to say that everybody, including young offenders, as everyone is part of our community . . . But I want to talk about what the province is actually doing in this area.

The province of Saskatchewan has developed a youth model for delivery of services to youth in conflict with the law. The model is based on the knowledge that youth who break the law have often been raised in family situations wherein their developmental needs have not been appropriately, consistently and/or adequately met. And many, Mr. Speaker, have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused. Others have been neglected from a very early age. And I believe that offending behaviour by youth is quite often the visible result of other problems in the youth's life. Consequently I believe that to reduce the long-term likelihood that youth will reoffend, you have to address the underlying problems.

(1615)

Many youth have grown up in families where they develop very antisocial values and beliefs. And until they're encouraged and insisted, Mr. Speaker, to have a serious examination of those values and beliefs and begin to change them, it is likely there will be little long-term change in their behaviour.

The motion we're presented with today ignores the reality of what is taking place in Manitoba and ignores the reality of what is taking place in Saskatchewan. It ignores the reality of what is taking place in Manitoba because when the opposition uses the term boot camp, they really want to appeal to a sentiment out there that says, we're going to get tough on our young people and our young offenders. It's political window-dressing because they want to garner public support by saying, tough on crime, tough on young offenders, by using the term boot camp.

But the boot camps established in Manitoba — which are called boot camps by the Government of Manitoba because it has its own political agenda coming into an election this year, and last September the Minister of Justice announced they were going to have boot camps — actually don't bear much resemblance to the military style programs in the United States, as I think the member from Souris-Cannington pointed out.

The Manitoba programs are designed for male youth convicted of serious crimes and sentenced to secure custody. And the interesting thing is, Mr. Speaker, that basically they're quite similar to the programs taking place in Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan's secure custody facilities. What's the difference? The difference is, they're called boot camps in Manitoba; in Saskatchewan they're not called boot camps.

The opposition wants to say to the public, oh we're going to do something different for you. We're going to bring about boot camps in the province of Saskatchewan, the same as they have

in Manitoba. They're not telling the people that the programming that they've talked about, available in these so-called boot camps in Manitoba, is already available in Saskatchewan in facilities that we have here. So I say let's talk about the facts. Let's talk about what is going on and not ignore the reality of what we're doing in Saskatchewan with respect to young offenders.

We already have in this province, closed custody and open custody facilities, which the motion calls for. And these facilities are not places where, as the member said, there would be idle hands. They are places that are very structured, very disciplined, and which essentially stress a disciplined daily work schedule, which is what a boot camp also does. And I want to refer to the daily schedule from the Paul Dojack Youth Centre which is a secure custody, in other words a closed custody facility.

At 7:30 a.m. wake-up begins; 8 o'clock, complete wake-up — breakfast, personal hygiene, institutional chores; 9 o'clock, shop and school, work programs, life skills, cultural programming, sex education, intervention programs.

Now the members opposite were talking about having qualified teachers working in the so-called boot camps in the province of Manitoba. Yes, so what? There are qualified teachers working in the closed custody and open custody facilities in Saskatchewan. There are certified teachers. They run the same kind of disciplined regimen of personal hygiene, chores, work, personal development, school, vocational counselling, as they do in Manitoba.

That was just the morning I referred to. Then it's noon. They have lunch, then clean-up. After that, more shop and school work programs, life skills, cultural programming.

At 3:30, individual counselling, passive recreation, resident phone calls, and some short free time until supper at 5 o'clock, after which again they have to clean up; 6 o'clock, study time, individual counselling, and intervention programs; 7 o'clock, group meetings to try to deal with some problems; 8:30, mandatory group activity; 9:30, personal hygiene, facility chores, individual counselling, resident phone calls, passive recreation; 10:30, everybody in their rooms; and 11 o'clock, lights out.

Now I don't know why the members opposite have to go to Manitoba to find a program to deal with young offenders that puts them into a daily schedule and forces them to deal with some of their problems and to try to improve their schooling and so on, because you don't have to go that far. At least you don't have to go that far unless your intention is simply to raise some political points or make some political points by saying we need boot camps to do this and that, when actually we don't.

Now these programs in closed custody facilities in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are mandatory. They're mandatory for anybody who's sentenced to one of those facilities. Residents in them are required to participate in

academic or vocational education or work training and work placements; structured active sports and recreational activities; cleaning of the facility, which we heard a bit about; food preparation and gardening; group meetings and counselling by staff.

There are intervention programs to try to deal with the problems some of these young people have because, as I said before, there are often underlying causes for the fact that someone is acting out. Sometimes there aren't, but often there are. And the residents in closed custody facility have to participate in intervention programs like anger management, substance abuse education and treatment, budgeting and life skills instruction, AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) and STD (sexually transmitted disease) awareness and education, access to elders, and cultural awareness programs.

Now because of that kind of programing, the kind of programing the opposition says we need to import from Manitoba even though we had it before they did, and their Minister of Justice decided last September to announce to the world that she was implementing boot camps with this kind of programing, the result of that kind of programing, which we have and we have pioneered and we're a leader in, is that unstructured time available to residents of closed facilities in Saskatchewan is limited to two short periods once or twice a day.

The facilities operate using a system with consequences for breach of rules, something the members again called for which is already in place — consequences like loss of privileges for a variety of possible infractions. This is how the system operates. This is what the members say we needed to implement. Interesting.

The members opposite should visit the closed custody facilities we have in the province of Saskatchewan and the open custody facilities we have. The member from Moosomin said he had been to the Kenosee camp, I think, and I commend the member for that. And I think he said that there were some worthwhile activities going on there.

There are a lot of worthwhile programs going on. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that to improve the level of knowledge of members of this House, and myself included, I'm willing to go with the member from Moosomin and the member from Souris-Cannington and anyone else in the House to some of these facilities, like the Paul Dojack Centre in Regina which I've never been to, or the Yarrow Youth Farm near Saskatoon which I'm sorry to say I've never been to, since I live in Saskatoon and I probably should have.

I'm willing to visit those facilities with the members opposite and get the facts about what's going on, and talk to the people running those facilities and talk to the young people too about how they're doing and what their problems might be.

And I don't want anybody to think, Mr. Speaker, that any of this has anything to do with condoning people murdering other

people, as the members referred to. Young people are being raised to adult court every day for those kinds of violent crimes, and so it should be. And those kinds of violent crimes have to be dealt with in an appropriate way. And we need to reassess the Young Offenders Act, or the federal government does, and we're participating in that process.

But not every young person that comes in conflict with the law is guilty of that kind of offence. And there's lots of hope for people that have minor brushes with the law and can be dealt with in an appropriate fashion.

The member from Moosomin, I wonder if he knows that the Echo Valley Park Correctional Camp here in Saskatchewan for youth is really about the same as the Manitoba Youth Centre in Winnipeg in that it has a structured-type discipline approach. And I think we should visit that camp too and see it, and I invite the member from Moosomin and any other members that want to go. I'll go with them to Echo Valley Park Correctional Camp and Paul Dojack and Yarrow Youth Farm in Saskatoon at any mutually convenient time.

But I think the members should know and the public should know that what is being done at the Echo Valley Park Correctional Park in Saskatchewan is the same as what is being done in Manitoba. In fact they've probably been at it longer, and yet people are being told that we need to have something called boot camps because they have something called boot camps in the province of Manitoba, which are essentially no different than the programing we have available here.

I talked about people in closed custody facilities, Mr. Speaker, and now I want to talk about youth in open custody facilities here in Saskatchewan because they're involved in a variety of programs. I'm a bit surprised because the member from Moosomin talked about being at Kenosee and seeing the youth there do some work in the park and so on. And then the members are asking that we have programs to make young people do worthwhile things even though that's taking place already.

But in any event, youth in open custody are actively involved in a variety of programs, including community service work such as wood cutting; park maintenance; home maintenance and sidewalk shovelling for seniors; activities related to the operation of a rural acreage like raising animals, gardening, maintenance of outside buildings and pens; school attendance for those who need to continue their education; and other programing designed to meet the developmental and ongoing needs of adolescents.

Now I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that these day programs for young people which are structured also involve a fairly tight schedule that the young people are required to follow. And I want to bring to the attention of the House the schedule of the Kenosee youth camp that the member from Moosomin was talking about: 6:30 a.m. — wake up, room clean-up, showers; 7 o'clock — breakfast; 7:30 — facility chores; 8 o'clock — assigned work projects with provincial park, community service

work, community-based school program; noon — lunch. That's after chores starting at 7:30. Not bad . . . 12:30 — assigned work projects, community service work, school; 4:30 — clean-up; 5 o'clock — supper; 6 o'clock — quiet time, reflection on day's activities; 6:30 — mandatory recreation, group meeting, life studies, AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) meetings, and sweats; 8:30 — night lunch; 9 o'clock — passive recreation, weight lifting, personal laundry, letter writing, phone calls, problem resolution, studying, showers; 10:30 — quiet time; 11 o'clock — bedtime, lights out. And then the next day, up again at 6:30 a.m. That doesn't sound to me like a situation where there's a lot of opportunity for idleness.

(1630)

And I wonder why the members didn't refer to what's actually going on in youth facilities, instead of saying we needed something they have in Manitoba, other than the fact that Manitoba happens to have a Progressive Conservative government and we, thank God, don't.

I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that an informal review of sentenced admissions to the Paul Dojack Youth Centre during the period May 1990 and May 1994, which of course is a four-year period, revealed that out of 551 admissions involving 419 youth, 78 per cent served only one secure disposition; 14 per cent had two dispositions while only 8 per cent of all youth had more than two secure dispositions within the four-year period. In other words, almost 80 per cent of the young people going through this closed facility once did not re-offend. And I think that's not a bad record.

The day programs, like the closed custody facilities, are structured, and they offer community-based alternatives for youth at serious risk of reoffending. Those programs are designed to encourage development of healthy self-esteem, a feeling of accomplishment, and a sense of personal responsibility — things that are important to any young person.

Youth participating in those open custody day programs may be involved in vocational or employment training, training on the job, community service work, educational upgrading, counselling, and/or development of effective interpersonal and life skills. Many of these programs are operated on a contract basis by non-government organizations, Indian bands, or individuals and may take place in an urban setting or on reserves.

One of the problems with the Young Offenders Act, which I believe was brought in by the federal government in 1984, Mr. Speaker, was that when the federal government . . . I don't know if that was the Liberals or the Conservatives, but it doesn't seem to make much difference, except that the Liberals turn into Conservatives when they replace the Conservatives, but I digress, Mr. Speaker.

But in any event, when the federal government brought in the Young Offenders Act what they did not do is, they did not stress community-based programs to deal with some of the

family problems that young offenders have.

**An Hon. Member:** — Major failing.

**Mr. Cline:** — And that was a major failing, as my colleague says, Mr. Speaker. And what we're doing now is trying to pick up some of the pieces and pick up the ball dropped by the federal government and have some programming for young people. That's what we're trying to do.

And we need the support of the opposition to do that because this is a matter that goes beyond politics and shouldn't be a political football. This is a serious matter that all members of society need to address.

One example of what we're trying to do is we're developing programs targeted toward selected 12- to 15-year-olds who are in custody or at high risk to receive sentencing to custody. The programs are being designed to hold youth accountable for their unlawful behaviour while allowing them to remain in or close to their home communities wherever reasonably possible.

And a major thrust of the program, Mr. Speaker, is to deal with the youth and his or her family as a unit. And that approach is taken because we believe it's necessary to encourage and support the family to address individual and family factors which might be contributing to the youth's offending behaviour.

I want to say something about the boot camps in the United States. I want to point out that when . . . you know, I heard the Leader of the Opposition speaking around the province, and he's quoted in the media once in awhile calling for boot camps, and now they're referring to Manitoba.

The boot camps in the United States are not the same as what goes on in the province of Manitoba. In the United States, they have 65 adult boot camps and 19 youth boot camps. And these don't fall into one model; there are different models. But in March of this year a criminology professor, Doris Layton McKenzie of the University of Maryland and head of a research team which evaluated the eight adult boot camp programs released a study which reached the following conclusions.

One, a boot camp atmosphere will not succeed in either reducing recidivism — in other words, repeat of crime — or positively changing offenders. Two, in the three states of 27 states with adult boot camps where the boot camp graduates had a lower repeat crime rate, the custodial phase of the camp was followed by six months of intensive supervision in the community. In other words, they had some programming to work with these people, which is what we're trying to do.

Three, the boot camp graduates and young males released on parole from traditional custody facilities did equally well in terms of positive activities during community supervision. Four, the more intensely offenders were supervised in the community, the better they adjusted. In other words, you can't just put somebody into some boot camp type setting and get tough with them and beat them up for awhile and then release

them in the community and expect that they're not going to reoffend. You better have some kind of more intelligent and meaningful programing for them to try to integrate them into the community.

There's been some research into the prevention of youth crime, Mr. Speaker. And the research tells us this, that preventing youth crime greatly depends upon family functioning, the family's values and beliefs, and appropriateness and consistency in parental supervision. This is something the member from Moosomin referred to. I think he's correct in that regard.

Secondly, specific personal family and environmental factors place youth at increased risk of engaging in unlawful behaviour. So we have to look at our communities and some of the things going on in our society, Mr. Speaker, unlying causes of crime, if we're going to deal with it.

Thirdly, the probability of a youth engaging in crime increases as the number of family problems or risk factors increases. And I think what that says is we have to address some of the underlying factors which precipitate unlawful behaviour and not just have a simplistic analysis of the situation.

Research has been done in Canada by some of our leading experts on crime, and some of the conclusions support the research in the United States that getting tough without proper community programing and integration with the community — helping people get jobs and counselling where they need it — doesn't deter crime.

But interventions are necessary that look at the family, the way people think and challenge the way people think and get them to examine their own attitudes and beliefs.

In short, Mr. Speaker, I think we need a holistic approach, not just facilities that keep people locked up or that they have to report to in the day, but proactive and preventive programs and counselling that actually help people. And I reject, as I think even the province of Manitoba rejects, the idea that all you need to do is put people in boots and march them around, as the clarion call to start boot camps would suggest to all those who wish to believe that.

So I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that the motion is all that well thought out; and what we need to do is to look at what's happening in our facilities and evaluate the success of our facilities and make appropriate changes. I think that that's what we have to do. We've got those facilities in place and I think actually Saskatchewan is a leader in that regard, Mr. Speaker. We're doing a lot of things they're not doing anywhere else in the country. Manitoba is trying to catch up. We just need to bring the federal Liberals along in terms of having them look at the Young Offenders Act and trying to get some kind of appropriate community support and community programing into place. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I think I will sit down so that other members can participate in the debate. Thank you.

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

**Mrs. Bergman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I understand the official opposition's suggestion of a boot camp pilot project in today's motion is their attempt at addressing a growing problem of crimes committed by young offenders, and I agree that it is critical that young people learn a sense of personal responsibility and develop a sense of respect for people and their property, Mr. Speaker, that personal responsibility and respect are learned at a very young age. Recent studies indicate that the violent attitude and lack of respect frequently encountered in young offenders has its genesis in the early years of a child's life.

Mr. Speaker, in my work as a play therapist, before I took on this hat, I worked with many preschoolers who without therapeutic intervention would have ended up as young offenders. Indeed the program that I worked in was developed by parents of teens who were young offenders and had problems. They knew that if they had had help with those problems with their children when they were preschoolers, they would not have faced the same problems when they were teens.

In that context, I will move on to a series of ideas concerning solutions to the problem of young-offender crimes and rehabilitation.

Who is responsible? The federal government is responsible for the Young Offenders Act through its constitutional jurisdiction over criminal law. The provinces however are responsible for the youth detention centres. Under the Young Offenders Act, sections 4 and 14, the province is solely responsible for recommending sentences, types of custody, and alternate rehabilitation programs for young offenders. With so many repeat offenders, the province needs to start taking responsibility for the failings of its justice system.

The federal government is currently amending the Young Offenders Act to meet public concerns. Changes will allow better sharing of information between authorities, schools, police, etc., with more 16- and 17-year-old violent young offenders being moved to adult court. Lastly, the Act will emphasize protecting society rather than young offenders.

(1645)

Federal amendments and a 10-year Canada-wide review will be wasted, Mr. Speaker, if the NDP government does not commit to reforming its own youth justice programs. Money is not a major impediment as federal officials are willing and have discussed the issue with the provinces. The federal government recognizes that special laws for young offenders also require special facilities and programs which the provinces are responsible for running and funding.

Regina has a crime problem which the government has done nothing about. In car thefts alone, over 160 vehicles have been stolen by the so-called Olds gang, while one police officer and two civilians received injuries — very serious injuries for one of those people. Insurance claims exceed \$500,000.

Auto thefts in Regina have risen by 610 per cent since 1993. In fact when I visited with the Moose Jaw police, they indicated this Olds gang was not — it was my neighbourhood where many of these things happened and some of the offenders come from — they indicated that the Olds gang was not just in Regina. They indicated last year during May, for two weeks every night, five Oldsmobiles were stolen in Moose Jaw. So this is not something that's just happening in Regina.

Closed custody and longer sentence are not proving themselves to work. Research indicates that young offenders finding themselves in closed custody for long periods are placed with criminal peers. Instead of being rehabilitated, they build strong relationships with their peers and often improve their law-breaking skills.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's youth detention centres are crowded and understaffed and expensive to operate. I have visited both the Dojack Centre and the centre in Saskatoon. What I'm told by staff and by those who run the program is that they have good programs, as outlined in some of the schedules from the Saskatoon member. But what I'm told is they are so overcrowded and that young offenders move through the program so fast because of sentences, that they don't get the benefit of the programs that exist.

Mr. Speaker, most violent crimes committed by young offenders are committed by 16- and 17-year-olds. In the case of murder, 60 per cent; manslaughter, 50 per cent; aggravated assault, 68 per cent. Under new amendments to the Young Offenders Act, these dangerous offenders will be easier to move to adult court. And the majority of young offender crimes are property crimes.

In Minnesota many young offenders are being given sentences which involve victim restitution. These are proving more successful in rehabilitating the offender by making the sentence or disposition match the crime, by increasing the awareness of the effects of his or her crime on the victims.

The government does not provide enough support to crime prevention programs. In speaking with the chief of police in Regina concerning crime in north-west Regina, he said they had instituted a program when the thefts of automobiles first started called . . . where police officers stopped at people's homes and asked: do you know where your child is? He suggested this might be a good, preventative program to reinforce parental authority where children are left to run loose.

And these sort of programs have proven very successful in the north-west during the time that they were using them. Saskatchewan, like many other provinces, is ignoring its youth and not doing a good job preventing child poverty that gives rise to youth crime.

The Minister of Social Services says child poverty will just have to wait until the deficit is brought under control and the economy recovers enough to create jobs. Our economy is growing, but it a jobless recovery with fewer people working

than in 1991; 1995 has brought new crime problems to Regina. Last year it appears to have been car thefts. This year break-ins are above the normal highs.

Part of the problem is that there are often very few programs or supports for young people. At a time when guidance counsellors are already overstrapped, Fred Herron of the STF (Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation) has claimed that of the 700 teachers who lost their jobs in the 8 per cent cuts to K to 12 education, a significant number were guidance counsellors who play a key role in helping young people find jobs and avoid socially deviant behaviour.

And I'd like to remind you that I did visit both Saskatoon and Regina correctional facilities and did some research on the Manitoba proposals as well. And the Filmon government introduced those boot camps without doing any of the work to fight some of the social ills that gave rise to those problems in the first place.

The cycle of child poverty has to be beaten. Seventy per cent of young offenders were at some point a part of the child welfare cycle. We have 5,000 single mothers on welfare in this province, according to the Social Services statistics. If this situation is not addressed, the problem of youth crime will continue.

The government's youth job programs are not doing a great deal to alleviate youth employment. The economy is expected to slow, as announced by economists at the Toronto Dominion Bank today, from over 4 per cent growth to 2.8 per cent. And this is bad news for youth who need hope, because the last hired is all too often the first fired.

The recent escapes at the North Battleford facility are indicative of the failure of the provincial government's policy on handling young offender crime.

Before I close, Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments from my constituents. One person says:

Our justice system is very unfair and ineffective. Why are criminals who commit horrific crimes getting parole? For example, the one man serving two to four years for a hideous murder, the Dove murders, Legere. Our justice system has to see reform — the Young Offenders Act and alcohol and drugs are no longer an excuse.

Mr. Speaker, while I understand the intention of the opposition motion is to address the concern of crime of young offenders, I cannot support the motion and their method of addressing the problem. And so, being nearly 5 o'clock, I would move that we adjourn debate, Mr. Speaker.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:53 p.m.