

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to other members of the Assembly students from St. Goretti School in Saskatoon in the constituency of Saskatoon Westmount. They are in the Speaker's gallery, and I will be meeting them at 2:15 in the members' dining room for drinks. I'd urge members to welcome students from St. Goretti School.

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

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, for the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, 22 grade 4 students from White City School. They're located in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and they have had a tour and will be present in the Chamber. And Ms. Murray or myself will be meeting with them for pictures after and hopefully a number of good and interesting questions about their tour and the proceedings today. So I ask the members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming the 22 grade 4 students from White City School, their teacher, Marjorie Gross, and Joanne Vonau.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 8 cancer patients who are here with us today in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that these people are cancer patients who are staying at the cancer lodge on Dewdney Avenue and taking treatment at the Pasqua Hospital. I'm sure all members will want to join with me in welcoming them here. The member for Regina Wascana Plains will be meeting with them afterwards in your board room, Mr. Speaker. So I'm sure all members will want to welcome them here today and wish them a speedy recovery from a very, I might say, tragic situation. But we all wish you the very best.

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

**Mr. Wormsbecker:** — Mr. Speaker, I have two student groups visiting the Legislative Assembly this afternoon, and the first group is from Fillmore School — 24 students in grade 7 and 8. They are accompanied with their teacher Murray Bruce and bus driver Debbie Larose. I welcome the students to the Legislative Assembly. I will be meeting with the students shortly afterwards, and I'd like the Assembly members to join with me in welcoming the students.

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

**Mr. Wormsbecker:** — The second student group, Mr. Speaker, is from Weyburn and I'd like to introduce the group to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of the Assembly. There are 57 students from Weyburn Junior

High and they are attending grade 8. And they are accompanied by teachers Janice Bernard, Trevor Johnstone, and their chaperons Laurie Servetnyk, Mrs. Douglas, and bus drivers Gary MacKenzie and Roger Bellavance. I will also be meeting with these students shortly, and I'd like the members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming the students.

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

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I might I would like to join the Minister of Social Services in welcoming the students of St. Goretti School and as well specifically Jim Jelinski, their teacher.

Jim is a constituent of mine. He's a hard-working teacher. He dedicates himself thoroughly to his students. And for the term "that a teacher loves his students," I think that reflects the way Jim puts his heart into his school work and has all his career. So I'd like to welcome you here, Jim, and I know members will want to join me again in welcoming you and your students.

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

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that 11 p.m. last Friday evening that the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan and his wife, Mrs. Rolfes, became the proud, proud grandparents of Hanna Lenore Rolfes-Sherry, who weighed in at some seven and a half pounds.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Although I don't like losing a bet, I do want to congratulate you and inform you that as of 5:46 yesterday, I too am a grandparent — and a very proud one at that — of Carson Ramsay, seven and a half pounds as well.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on becoming a new grandparent. And I also want to congratulate the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member from Saskatoon Greystone, on becoming a grandparent as well.

The member from Saskatoon Greystone's daughter and spouse live in the constituency that I represent. I'm pleased to have a new constituent. I'm sure that that constituent will be a bright and intelligent young woman when she grows up and will become a New Democrat.

So congratulations to the member of the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, I have some good news on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan. I want to tell the students of this province that things are improving over at student loans.

I'd like to congratulate the Minister of Education in reducing the length of the student loan application form

from 20 pages to 10 pages. This is good news to students who are trying to get student loan applications processed.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I'm advised that student loan applications are now being processed within one week compared to an average of four to five weeks last year. We think this is good news for the students in our province. We're pleased to see that the student loan application process has been sped up and that students will be getting their student loans in a timely fashion.

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

**Ms. Stanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Co-operation and co-operatives have played a major role in the development of Saskatchewan. This government recognizes the important role co-operatives play in the Saskatchewan economy. We know that co-operatives will contribute to the economic recovery of this province.

There is an estimated 15,000 people employed by the co-operatives in this province with a payroll of \$361 million. Co-operative initiatives are an ongoing part of Saskatchewan life.

I would like to acknowledge a couple of projects under way right now. Saskatchewan Wheat Pool showed renewed confidence in the province's future by announcing plans to build major slip-form concrete elevators at Prince Albert and Davidson. Construction will start this week at these locations. Eight million dollars will be put into the economy through these projects.

I know that many communities are looking at setting up co-operatives in their areas. We can rest assured that this government will be receptive to their initiatives. The 1,400 co-operatives of this province are involved in the following areas, it's quite an extensive list: agriculture and resources; retail and wholesale; financial services; community development; child care and education; community services, which includes health services; and recreational initiatives.

Co-operatives are fine examples . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order.

**Mr. Roy:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and fellow members of the legislature. Mr. Speaker, Friday of last I had an opportunity to attend a constitutional mini-conference at Aberdeen at the Aberdeen high school, the Aberdeen composite high school, and this mini-conference was completely organized by the students of the high school and let me tell you they went to great pains to put this on.

The format of the conference was a round-table discussion. They broke up into panels and discussed the very important proposals that are on the negotiating table right now.

The objective of the conference was of course to sensitize, I think, the students to the importance of the current constitutional negotiations and also to enlighten themselves on what has been going on lately.

There was representatives, Mr. Speaker, from the federal government. I represented the provincial government. And also the universities were represented at this conference.

I think what really impressed me, Mr. Speaker, was the hard work and dedication that these students put into this conference, and also I think the amount of knowledge that they had on the constitutional affairs and the current negotiations.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the students of the Aberdeen composite high school on putting this conference on. It certainly demonstrates an interest they have in the future of our country.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to raise the issue of a concern of the constituency of Kindersley, the people of Kindersley constituency, and indeed the people of all of Saskatchewan.

I received a copy of a letter from the town of Kindersley that was addressed to the current Finance minister and it's very disturbing, Mr. Speaker. The government of the day has said that they will consult on a regular basis with people all over the province. But yet, Mr. Speaker, the town of Kindersley has been requesting for a over a month a meeting with the department officials and the Minister of Finance with respect to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and as yet they have no acknowledgement of even their letters or their concern.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is something of a critical nature. All they are asking for is an opportunity to speak with the Finance minister about the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and the concerns they have about the elimination of that plan.

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

**Ms. Lorje:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to focus my attention and direct my remarks on the arts in Saskatchewan. Because while Saskatchewan may currently have some fiscal problems, we certainly are very wealthy in the strength and the creativity of its people. And now more than ever, it seems to me we need to nurture our souls and our spirits, and that's what the arts does in Saskatchewan.

We've recently seen a new Arts Board appointed. I know many of these people personally. They are fine, talented, creative individuals who are committed to developing Saskatchewan excellence in the arts.

The unique thing about the recent round of appointments to the Arts Board is that in many cases these people were nominated by the arts organizations themselves. And this is a good example of self governance and direct and real, meaningful community involvement that this government wants to be promoting for various organizations including arts organizations.

The appointments and the process of appointments directly arises out of a recommendation that was made by

the arts strategy task force, appointed by the former government.

There are still meetings ongoing regarding implementation of many of the recommendations of that arts strategy task force and I'm confident that our government will be dealing with them in a very forthright and respectful manner.

We've had, Mr. Speaker, an excellent minister dealing with the Arts Board, Carol Teichrob, and . . .

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

**The Speaker:** — Order. The member's time is up. The member's time has run out and the member should also know we do not refer to members by their first or surnames in this legislature.

(1345)

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to talk today about an announcement made last Friday. The water supply situation in the most north-westerly part of my constituency is at a crisis situation. Water levels in lakes running east through the Cold Lake and Waterhen River basin is desperate. Resource owners on Lac des Iles and Pierce Lake are reporting water level drops of up to four feet. The Waterhen Reserve School has had to close several days due to lack of water. Compounding this has been the withdrawal of water by Esso Resources.

Since last fall water levels have dropped to where Esso has been restricted from withdrawing water from Cold Lake. They have applied for and received approval from the Alberta government to withdraw water from the Helene aquifer. Esso and the Alberta government argue that this has no substantial effect on the surface water. The users downstream of course argue that it does have substantial effect.

We have therefore set up a task force to examine the serious situation. The task force will be made up of the north-west Saskatchewan fresh water committee, the mayor of Goodsoil, local residents of the area, including Joseph Bighead and Waterhen Reserves.

I am confident that the task force will arrive at a satisfactory solution and am further very pleased that the department and Saskatchewan Water Corporation have taken the interest and initiative to involve local people in something that affects them so very directly. Thank you.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Relocation of Piper Aircraft Corporation

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Development.

Yesterday, Mr. Minister, it was discovered that the Ukraine had signed a deal with Ottawa to explore nuclear energy research; research which in a deal similar to that in Saskatchewan could have brought thousands of jobs

and millions of dollars of investment into this province. But you refused to look at it.

Now we see, Mr. Minister, that the Piper Aircraft deal and its potential for 500 new jobs may be slipping out from between your fingers while you struggle and dither about what you're going to do about it. Mr. Minister, you said in April that the delay in the bid shouldn't affect Saskatchewan's chances. I'm wondering if the delay is indeed affecting Saskatchewan's chances.

Mr. Minister, you've been working on the bid for some time. Can you update this Assembly on the progress of the new bid? And can you tell us when it will finally be unveiled, or indeed if you've already submitted it to the court in Florida?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on the member's initial comment about the AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.) agreement and to let him know clearly why we didn't go ahead with the proposed agreement that had been signed, as if deathbed repentance, by the previous government.

But the main reason was, two main issues. One, the commitment to a CANDU 3 (Canadian deuterium uranium) reactor which we believed, as a result of the power consumption in Saskatchewan not being in need of an extra 450 megawatts, that spending 1.3 or \$1.5 billion on a CANDU 3 reactor when you had already left a debt of 15 billion didn't make much sense. That's the first point.

Second point in the memorandum was a commitment to look at waste storage, nuclear waste storage in Saskatchewan. There again we didn't think you had done any consulting with the public on that, and we didn't think we wanted that in Saskatchewan at any rate.

When it comes to Piper, I think the comments of Mr. Hill last night on CK TV are appropriate: that they are working diligently, the private sector partners, who in fairness have consulted with the members of the opposition and I believe the Leader of the Liberal Party on ongoing basis as to the status of this negotiation; that we are still looking at the deal; that Kelowna actively is pursuing the deal and we hope in the end to be the recipients of the Piper Aircraft Corporation. However . . .

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — What the AECL agreement committed this province to was research and nothing else, Mr. Speaker. That's what it committed this province to, and it's shameful that this government wouldn't look at it, or indeed renegotiate the deal if they feel the original deal wasn't acceptable.

Mr. Minister, you announced in January with great fanfare and media attention that you'd secured the deal with the Piper Aircraft company. The former administration was acutely aware of the need to bring economic development and diversification to this province and we applauded the announcement at that

time. So the news that Kelowna may have the inside track is very disturbing news.

Mr. Minister, regardless of your wait-and-see attitude, that's indeed what's happened. They have submitted a bid and they are tomorrow going to be making announcements relative to that bid. Mr. Speaker, will you assure the people of this province that your new bid will be as attractive as the Kelowna bid which will be announced tomorrow?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Two things, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the member says that there was nothing in the AECL memorandum about a nuclear reactor. If you listen closely to what my colleague from Swift Current said yesterday and to what the federal minister said, Mr. Epp said, he clearly stated that it is the reactor or no deal.

Now we're actively working with the federal government on research. We have invited research to Saskatoon from AECL. I want you to listen and understand what we're saying.

We want research and we've invited them to come to Saskatoon. What we have said no to is a CANDU 3 reactor because it would cost an extra billion, billion and a half dollars, and we don't need the power so it doesn't make much sense to build a CANDU 3 reactor. And we don't want to turn Saskatchewan into a waste dump for nuclear waste. Now that seems clear. As it comes to research we have invited AECL into Saskatchewan. So let's get that point clear.

When it comes to Piper Aircraft, your comment that we should bid any amount for the corporation to get it here even if it means outbidding Kelowna, is lunacy. This is how we got to \$15 billion in debt, and we will not take your advice.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, what is lunacy in this province is a minister going around saying that they have the inside track on the bid for Piper Aircraft when indeed they don't have the inside track on the bid for Piper Aircraft. As we're seeing, Kelowna tomorrow will be announcing some details respective of that bid for the Piper Aircraft company. Mr. Speaker, the minister wants to continually talk about AECL. What indeed the memorandum of understanding talked about was research and . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Does the member have a question? I would like you to put your question.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the minister again: can you update this Assembly on the Piper Aircraft deal?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Yes I can. I would like to say to the member opposite that the provincial government's commitment, as you are well aware, is that we have offered \$35 million in bridge-financing for our private sector partners and the new company to purchase the assets of Piper Aircraft. We have also talked about

operating finances, and that's the deal as we have proposed to our private sector partners.

Now as you know, Mr. Hill and the private sector consortium, along with the government, are negotiating with Piper Aircraft and the creditors at this time.

I also understand that there have been discussions between the members of the opposition and the private sector people to keep them updated as this has gone along. So the perception that you are trying to create here, that you haven't been kept up to date and don't know what the status of the negotiations are, is not accurate. And I'm not sure why you're doing this, in light of the fact that we have kept you in touch from the beginning to the end.

In fact when the press conference came about a few months ago, the Leader of the Opposition was notified as to the detail in advance to the press conference. So for you to say . . .

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

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, indeed though, there has been no detail of what has happened since the original announcement of the Piper Aircraft deal. We have received no updates from you or anyone else about the Piper Aircraft deal.

Yesterday the Associate Minister of Finance was unable to tell us, this Assembly, what the Premier and himself are doing down East with the New York bankers. The credit rating has fallen due to the wrong choices made in the budget and a lack of economic vision for this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Minister, could you tell this Assembly if the province has any plan for bringing investment and jobs to this province? Besides this, the questionable Piper deal, what other projects is the government attempting to attract to Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I find it curious in passing that the member is now referring to the Piper deal as a questionable deal. And I am just trying to get clear in my mind . . . On the question before, he said we should bid any amount to get it here. And it is very difficult to know where this member is heading. But what is clear is how we got to be \$15 billion in debt with that kind of a thought process.

What I can tell you clearly, Mr. Member from the opposition, is that we are doing a great deal of work with the small-business and private sector in getting business in Saskatchewan. We have the firm belief that the idea that the only business that is done in this province is done by government and taxpayers dumping money in in great gobs is not the way to go.

And if you look at the number of private sector expansions in this province in the last six months, there

are many. That's why housing starts and sales in Saskatoon — in Saskatoon — are at record heights today compared to any time during your 10-year administration. The housing sales in April in Saskatoon were up by 23 per cent. That's juxtaposed the national average of a reduction of 6 per cent.

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

### Government Patronage Appointments

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Speaker, my question today is to whoever is willing to answer some questions on patronage in light of the absence of the Minister of Justice.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. The member knows that that is out of order. In the absence of the Minister of Justice — we do not refer to people being absent. He should just direct his question to the government.

**An Hon. Member:** — In question period they do that all the time.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Is the member from Rosthern arguing with the Speaker on his decision? I recognize the member from Moosomin.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the Minister of Justice recently stood in this House this very session and fielded questions on patronage appointments by your government, and he gave his solemn commitment to this House and to the people of this province that there would be no more patronage appointments by your government.

Mr. Minister, we now know that you have appointed Mr. Blakeney, Kim Thorson, and Nancy Hopkins — all high-profile NDP (New Democratic Party) supporters — to the board of Cameco. Will you give the commitment to this House and to the people of Saskatchewan that you will withdraw these appointments, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I say to the member opposite: if we were to withdraw that nomination, we would leave everyone angry, all of the partners in Cameco.

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Let me, Mr. Speaker, just review some of the trifling accomplishments of the person we appointed: a person who took over his father's bankrupt business as a teenager, put it back on its feet successfully before he left to go to London, England, on a Rhodes Scholarship; after Rhodes Scholarship returned to Saskatchewan; a distinguished career in two different governments before serving as premier of this province for 17 years; didn't just have a long career in the public service but spent 25 years in this legislature on centre stage. That's the quality of the person we appoint. We are very proud of that quality of appointment, I can tell you.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Speaker, to the minister, the Associate Minister of Finance: Mr. Blakeney was the first member of this Assembly to retire with the lavish severance package

of tens of thousands of taxpayers' dollars. Mr. Blakeney collects an extravagant pension from the taxpayers of the old, unfunded pension liability. Mr. Blakeney is collecting all this tax money. Do you think it is fair to the people that while he collects a government pension, he also gets another government job serving on the board of a uranium company?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — The members opposite decry the accomplishments of one of the most distinguished members of this Assembly. I can say to members opposite that I ought to read back to you the speeches of some of your colleagues when he retired from this legislature. You would think he was ready for canonization. I'm not sure he would claim that, but that was the tenor of the speeches that your members gave.

I say as well, Mr. Speaker, that he has been appointed to the board of directors of Cameco with the unanimous support and consent of all concerned. This was not just a Government of Saskatchewan appointment. This is a distinguished . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Canadian.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — A distinguished Canadian. Right. Distinguished himself in business, in politics, in law, and as an academic. He is precisely the kind of person we look for to appoint to these boards.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Minister, your Premier promised that this thing would never happen. In fact he told the people that never under an NDP government would someone collecting a government pension get another government position.

Mr. Minister, Mr. Kim Thorson is a former NDP cabinet minister and notorious for his patronage skill. Will you tell the House how much pension money your friend Mr. Thorson is collecting from the taxpayer, and how much he will receive in his new patronage position at Cameco? How much are you paying him off with?

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Yes, the member opposite may have overlooked the fact that Cameco was privatized by your party in the dying days of the election. This is not a government appointment. This is an appointment to a board of directors.

I want to say as well that Mr. Blakeney is not like Mr. Birkbeck, who left and took a government job. He's not like Mr. Andrew, who left, took his pension, took a job in Minneapolis. He's not like Mr. Taylor, who left, took a job in Hong Kong. He's not like Mr. Berntson, left, took a Senate job.

Mr. Blakeney, like other distinguished Canadians such as Mr. Lougheed, John Robarts, left, and have played a distinguished role in this nation but not at the taxpayers' expense unlike the litany of failures which you people put in government jobs when they left.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Minister, these appointments are still your appointments, Mr. Minister. While you were putting nurses on the street, you are finding nice cosy jobs for your friends. Nancy Hopkins is a long-time NDP financial contributor, and now you have announced her reward for the party work she did on the Gass Commission. She is to get a nice little position on the Cameco board.

Mr. Minister, is it not true that you made a deal with Nancy Hopkins that when she took the Gass assignment, that you would make sure she got her reward later?

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — All I can say to the member opposite is your last accusation was as absurd as all the others you've made today.

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

### Future of the Oil and Gas Industry

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of Energy and, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table an article referring to a market study done by Friedberg Mercantile Group of Toronto, who have consistently been accurate in their predictions of oil prices.

Mr. Minister, given that Russia is expected to increase its exports, that Iraq will soon resume its exports, and Kuwait is rapidly moving up to pre-war production levels, Saskatchewan oil producers can anticipate a dramatic decline in their prices. What are you prepared to do for this already hard-hit industry in Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Penner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to correct the hon. member that oil prices are exactly going the other way than she is predicting or that her article is predicting. In fact the futures for oil prices in September are up considerably over what they are now. So I don't know where the information you have is coming from, but we are doing everything we can to maintain the stability in the oil and gas industry as well as the mining industry in Saskatchewan. And unfortunately Saskatchewan cannot control world oil prices, but all the indications are that they are going up, and we anticipate that our activity will go up.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Mr. Minister, I would like to suggest to the hon. minister that he in fact refer to the Friedberg Mercantile Group of Toronto who have been the best predictors of oil prices of any group anywhere and have been accurate in every prediction they've ever made. So I suggest you look at the article that we have in fact tabled for you.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table an article as well that refers to the used oil energy Act passed this past month by the U.S. (United States) Congress, and, Mr. Minister, ask you if you're aware of this Bill which affects every aspect of energy.

**Hon. Mr. Penner:** — We are aware of used oil energy Bills and we have in Saskatchewan right now several organizations that are recycling used oil, and I understand that there's some interest in recycling used oil in Saskatchewan. Also they're interested in clean-ups of oil sites where there have been pump jacks and there have been spills and so on. A lot of this is going on. In fact this winter I visited a site in Kindersley where the people are doing exactly that and there's an interest in that in Saskatchewan right now.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Mr. Speaker, I think you've misunderstood that the used oil energy Act really does not refer just to using used oil. In fact what it in fact does is to give American oil producers \$1 billion in tax breaks, amongst other things, including a reduction in the period of time that it will take to put together nuclear reactors in the United States. It's very wide ranging.

Mr. Minister, Saskatchewan oil producers waited until your budget came down before deciding on drilling plans. You know that only six gas wells have been drilled since you've come into power. Now I understand that you have made public your intentions to do a royalty review. Just what is your review going to tell a sector that's facing increasingly stiffer competition?

**Hon. Mr. Penner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm curious. It's interesting to have the member from Saskatoon Greystone suggest that we spend another billion dollars. With that kind of economics she could easily join the members to her right over there and would fit in with the economics that existed in this province for the last nine and a half years.

I would just like to comment on the activity of the oil and gas sector. We can single out Saskatchewan if you wish and it's fair game, but all you have to do is look at Alberta whose oil and gas industry traditionally has been five, six, up to ten times as big as ours. There's six wells drilled in Saskatchewan, what, 25 drilled in Alberta? It's just not an active industry right now. I think you will see that the industry will pick up. And the fact that wells haven't been drilled has absolutely nothing to do with our budget because our budget didn't touch the royalties, the royalty regime.

My indication to the industry has been that I will ask them to submit to me suggestions for royalty changes so that the industry can pick up. It's not something that we're going to impose on the industry. We're going to ask them to submit suggestions to us.

Maybe there are some changes that are necessary. We're not sure that the regime that we have in place is the perfect one. In fact when I think of the people who put it in place, I know for a fact it's not the perfect one.

So we're simply asking them to bring input to us and we will also react to that input and we will also tell them what we want from the industry. So it's going to be a consultative approach, contrary to what members opposite think.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I wish to correct something. It's a billion dollars in tax breaks. If you think that that isn't going to have an impact on what happens to the oil industry in North America and particularly in Canada, then you're living in a dream world.

You used the future tense, sir, when you talked about: you are going to be asking them to have input. You have made public your intentions to do a royalty review. You've already stated that you're going to do this. It's done, is what you've stated.

And now you're saying that there's a future tense here, that maybe you'll just consult with these people. Your government also says that it's interested in new jobs, jobs for Saskatchewan people. And yet what we have is the highest royalty structure in Saskatchewan anywhere in the nation.

And I ask you this: is your intention to lower the royalties in order to stimulate the drilling industry? Because it's only two things that are going to create jobs, and that is through royalties and land sales in the oil industry.

**Hon. Mr. Penner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is quite right that I did say publicly that we would have a royalty review. But that doesn't say that we've already done it.

I also would like to tell the hon. member that I plan to go on a holiday this October, but that doesn't mean to say it's already done. But the plans are there that I do want to go. So don't give us that kind of nonsense, that just because we made an announcement, that it's already been done.

We are going to ask the industry, as I said before, for input into this royalty regime that we may change, we may not change. Maybe it is the best that we can do at this particular time. But the point is, we will ask them for their input. Are we going to reduce royalties? I'm not going to commit to that. Are we going to raise royalties? I'm not going to commit to that. We're going to wait and see what the industry has to say.

This province cannot afford to give away any more tax dollars. The members opposite, the former government, did that for nine and a half years. We can't afford to do that. We have to make sure that we have enough tax dollars in this province to maintain the services that the people of this province want.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is precisely, Mr. Minister, what I'm talking about. The province of Saskatchewan does need tax resources. Okay? We do need to be able to have some taxation in order to pay for health care and education. If you continue to make decisions or not make the decisions, as the case may be, whether they're small-industry people, whether it's Saskoil, these individuals are not doing the things in their industry that they can do to create jobs and

wealth in the province of Saskatchewan because you haven't given them any indication that they should go ahead and do these things.

Now when are you going to come forward, sit down with these people in the oil and gas industry and finally come up with some plans so people know how to go forward and create jobs for the people of Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Penner:** — I invite the member from Saskatoon Greystone to attend the IPAC (Independent Petroleum Association of Canada) tomorrow at noon. I'll be speaking at the IPAC meeting at noon tomorrow, so maybe you'll come there and pay attention and listen to what's happening.

This government has done everything it could under the circumstances to provide the industry with confidence to work in Saskatchewan. We have indicated to them that we are not going to change the royalty regime because they were used to the one, and they were going to continue their activity on the basis of the old regime. We said we were not going to change it. We lived up to that commitment; we did not change the royalty regime.

We did do some taxation and it was in consultation with the people that were involved in the taxation. We need tax dollars in this province. I understand that very clearly, that we need tax dollars in this province, but we're not going to take tax dollars from those people who can least afford to pay. This government believes that taxes should be based on the ability to pay and those who make money will pay. And if the oil industry makes money, we will be asking them to pay more as they become more prosperous.

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

### Legislative Review of Government Appointments

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One more question to the minister, Associate Minister of Finance. Coming back to this discussion we had earlier about partisan politics, Mr. Minister, while you're taking away the pensions of thousands of Saskatchewan Pension Plan members, you are giving jobs to many NDP politicians who are already collecting taxpayers' dollars.

During the election, Mr. Minister, and the question we're getting at, your Premier promised such appointments would be subject to review. And in the last session your Premier told the Assembly that there would be a process announced in the spring for a committee to review patronage appointments.

Mr. Minister, will you keep the Premier's commitment by bringing in legislation soon that provides for a legislative review of these kind of appointments?

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — There is a process for review of these appointments. It is this Assembly. And the fact that you would pick Mr. Blakeney as one of your first targets indicates perhaps that all is well. If this is the most serious abuse of patronage you have to raise, I for one am pretty

proud of our record.

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

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 48 — An Act to Provide a Charter of Environmental Rights and Responsibilities

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to Provide a Charter of Environmental Rights and Responsibilities be now introduced and read the first time.

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

**The Speaker:** — Why is the minister on her feet?

**Hon. Mrs. Teichrob:** — With leave, Mr. Speaker, for the introduction of guests.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mrs. Teichrob:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, Mr. Fred Herron, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, who is seated in your gallery.

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

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Also to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — You may proceed.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to, along with the minister, welcome Mr. Herron to the Assembly today. He should have been here last night when we were having discussions on education. He might have found it interesting and perhaps he'll be interested in coming back the next time we have Committee of Finance dealing with the Education estimates. I'd like to welcome him here today.

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

(1415)

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PRIVATE BILLS

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 01 — An Act to provide for the incorporation of Ukrainian Catholic Parishes within Saskatchewan

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Mr. Speaker, before I move the Bill I would like to take this opportunity to make a few comments regarding the Bill. I'm very pleased to present this Bill, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Ukrainian Catholic

parishes in Saskatchewan. And I want to mention a little bit about how this came about because it gives us a little insight into some of Saskatchewan's history.

Mr. Speaker, it would be quite interesting for most people who may have at some time perused some immigration records to go back to the immigration pattern back in the 1890s and the early 1900s, and you'd probably notice that there weren't any Ukrainians coming into Saskatchewan at the time. But you probably have noticed also that there were a great number, in fact tens of thousands of Ruthenians and Galatians and Austrians that immigrated to Saskatchewan. And if you take a look at any statistical analysis now that is done on the basis of ethnic origin, you will find that there are very few, if any, remaining Ruthenians and Galatians. And people may be quite surprised. Where did all these people that came to Saskatchewan go to?

What has happened, Mr. Speaker, is the people that came from that part of eastern Europe which is now known as Ukraine, were at that time under foreign occupation. And just in order to accomplish their life dream which was to emigrate from impoverishment, they were forced to use names of the occupying country or the occupying region. And now of course the times have changed and they're very proud to use the historic name from that region, and that is call themselves rightly and properly Ukrainians.

Mr. Speaker, with that comment then I think it is very fitting also that this Bill be presented to this House this year, which is the year that people from that part of the country are celebrating a 100th anniversary of settlement to Canada from Ukraine, and also quite fitting because it is within a year of the declaration of the independence of Ukraine. All of these things for which many Ukrainians in Canada, people of Ukrainian extraction in Canada, have been working and feel a very great affinity to.

I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, that Bill No. 01, An Act to provide for the incorporation of Ukrainian Catholic Parishes within Saskatchewan, be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

#### Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate The Regina Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition Association, Limited

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And before I move the Bill No. 02, I would also like to inform the members of a brief bit of background to the Bill that's coming forward.

As a member of city council, we were looking at the make-up and membership of the exhibition association and met with them to do some visioning and mission statement and planning, and at that time looked at a new make-up of the board. The old board had 36 members and found that it was an unworkable number. They also wanted to have more accountability and be more accountable to the community that it serves, and also request a member from the minister.



So it's been my pleasure to be a part of the workshops and the mission-envisioning statement and therefore was asked to present this to the members of the Assembly through the Private Members' Bill.

And with that, I would move Bill No. 02, An Act to amend An Act to incorporate The Regina Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition Association, Limited be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

**Bill No. 03 — An Act to amend An Act to amend and consolidate An Act respecting Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society Limited and Saskatchewan Co-operative Financial Services Limited**

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to moving the Bill, I wish to inform members that this Bill is an amendment to a Bill which affects Credit Union Central and its member credit unions across Saskatchewan. Members might recall that in the federal parliament last fall, and in December, a piece of legislation was passed and approved which affected all financial institutions across Canada.

The amendments which we put forward in Bill No. 03 in essence harmonize the provincial legislation affecting credit unions in Saskatchewan with the federal regulations with respect to that legislation. So I would, Mr. Speaker, in light of this, indicate to members that the amendments will, in essence and in summary, sustain the status quo for the Credit Union Central and its member credit unions with respect to harmonizing federal legislation.

I move that Bill No. 03, An Act to amend An Act to amend and consolidate An Act respecting Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society Limited and Saskatchewan Co-operative Financial Services, Limited be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

**MOTION UNDER RULE 16**

**Review of Saskatchewan Pension Plan Status**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to be able to move this motion before the House today. Every motion that is placed before the Assembly is important, Mr. Speaker, but this one is especially vital. After all, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the financial security of thousands of Saskatchewan people — or I guess after the NDP budget betrayal '92, the lack of financial security for thousands of Saskatchewan people.

We are talking about well over 50,000 people, Mr. Speaker — 50,000 single mothers, part-time employees, home-makers, and farmers who are struggling to be able to secure their future and the future of their children —

50,000 people that this government has abandoned.

Mr. Speaker, most of the members of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, in fact 78 per cent of the members of the plan, are women, many of whom are single mothers or are women working in positions like waitressing where an employer does not offer a pension plan.

These women and the farmers and small-business owners, Mr. Speaker, came to the former government looking for help. They wanted to be able to plan for their futures. They wanted to have some security so when their golden years started creeping up, that they wouldn't have to worry about where the rent money was going to come from. Mr. Speaker, all they wanted was security. And, Mr. Speaker, no government previous had been able to satisfy their needs in this regard.

I am happy to say, Mr. Speaker, that the former administration listened to these people. In fact the Progressive Conservative government did more than just listen. They cared enough to do something about their needs. The PCs (Progressive Conservative) implemented a secure plan that would enable these people to set aside a little money each month and rest assured that their money was growing. And the reception was great, Mr. Speaker — 50,000 people became members of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Find me an individual that doesn't think it is worthwhile to have such a program, other than of course the members opposite. They, Mr. Speaker, think it is just fine to take away the pension plans of mothers and home-makers because they never liked the idea in the first place. I don't imagine they had a lot of trouble with the plan itself, Mr. Speaker, but the NDP have a hard time complimenting any idea that was not their own.

The fact that the Saskatchewan Pension Plan was a Tory idea was even worse. The NDP criticized the Pension Plan right from the start, Mr. Speaker. The member from Regina Churchill Downs called the program, socialism for the rich. The member called a single mother, scraping together sometimes \$20 a month to invest in her future, socialism for the rich.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to see the member from Regina Churchill Downs talk about the thousands of single parents and home-makers across this province, many of whom realize just how ridiculous that statement was.

And other NDP members complained too, Mr. Speaker. The member from Regina Hillsdale said the Saskatchewan plan didn't do enough to eliminate the problem of poverty among seniors in our provinces. She didn't think the plan did enough, Mr. Speaker, yet just a couple of years later that same member, that same member is supporting cutting the entire program off. Obviously the member from Regina Hillsdale is not speaking the truth when she said the Saskatchewan Pension Plan didn't do enough, because it certainly did more than no plan at all.

It's almost worse, Mr. Speaker, because the members opposite claim to be the only ones who care about single mothers, the only ones who take care of low income

earners. Well the NDP budget betrayal lays all of that to rest.

The members don't care about people. They don't care about the lives that they are turning upside down by cancelling of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. All the members opposite care about is the destruction of any Tory program or any Tory idea, no matter who gets hurt in the process. The NDP are so bent on their ways, Mr. Speaker, that they'll allow single mothers to take it on the chin so they can settle their political scores.

It's sad, Mr. Speaker, that this government tries to blame everyone else for their choices. They claim the pension plan was unfunded, that it had to go because it was costing \$12 million a year. Well, Mr. Speaker, that sounds like a pretty small cost for 50,000 Saskatchewan working people. Not to mention the fact that according to the Gass Commission, there were unfunded liabilities that are absolutely huge in comparison to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

The public service annuation plan is unfunded to the tune of \$776 million, Mr. Speaker. The teachers' superannuation fund like the member from Swift Current belongs to, is about \$1.5 billion in unfunded liability. Ten million dollars in judges of the Provincial Court superannuation fund, and even the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) superannuation fund is underfunded by \$90 million.

Mr. Speaker, who is covered under that pension plan, the old MLA pension plan? Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put it on the record just a few of the members who are opposite, currently in government, who are members of that pension plan, the unfunded MLA pension plan.

The member for Quill Lakes is a member of that unfunded pension plan. The member from Regina Churchill Downs, the Associate Minister of Finance is a member of that unfunded pension plan, Mr. Speaker

The member from Regina Dewdney, the Finance minister for the province of Saskatchewan is a member of that old unfunded MLA pension plan, Mr. Speaker. This, Mr. Speaker, is the very same minister that is cutting off the pension plans of the people of the province of Saskatchewan — the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. And yet that minister, the Associate Minister of Finance and the Minister of Finance are both members of an extremely lucrative pension plan that they belong to.

(1430)

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but the current Premier of this province, the member for Saskatoon Riversdale is also a member of the unfunded liability pension of MLAs. He is also a member of that.

Mr. Speaker, not only that, but we have people like the former premier of this province, a former premier, Mr. Allan Blakeney. He is a man that is receiving a substantial pension plan from the taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, it's the same people that now want

to take away the pension plan from the single parent, mothers in Saskatchewan, small-business people, farmers. Those are the type of people that they want to take it away from, and yet they're sitting on probably one of the most lucrative pension plans in all of the Dominion of Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when we look at these types of figures, does \$12 million sound like it would break the province when there's \$19 million going to seven members on the government side? Seven members on the government side have an unfunded pension of \$19 million.

**An Hon. Member:** — How many on your side?

**Mr. Boyd:** — There is one member, the member from Swift Current speaks up and says, how many members on our side? Well I'll tell the member from Swift Current. There is one member on the opposition side, the member for Arm River.

And not only that, I'll have you know, Mr. Member from Swift Current, he in this House stood and said he would give up his pension under this old unfunded MLA pension plan if those seven members would also do the same. And I haven't heard a word from any one of those seven members, Mr. Speaker, about their unfunded pension.

The member on the opposition side will give it up but none of those members will, Mr. Speaker. We haven't heard anything from them. Twelve million dollars, that's what it cost for the Saskatchewan Pension Plan; \$19 million for seven members on the government side.

The Minister of Finance could have come up with a better excuse, Mr. Speaker, but I'm afraid he's used them all up trying to defend the horrendous decisions his government has made. I find it interesting that the Premier found it necessary to cut off the financial futures of the home-makers of this province when he has over \$1 million. I think that has to be reiterated several times. The Premier himself, \$1 million in his pension plan. I think it's shameful, Mr. Speaker. There was absolutely no consultation about this measure, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier in members' statements I pointed out, and I'd like to reiterate a little bit about the consultation that they had with members of the pension plan and more specifically with people in the town of Kindersley, a letter from the mayor of Kindersley to the Minister of Finance. And I'd like to read just one short paragraph into the record:

I am writing you today over the lack of action on our request to meet with you over the removal of the (Saskatchewan) Pension Plan from our community. Since the Provincial Budget our Town Administrator Jim Toye has contacted your personal secretary several times to arrange this meeting and has been continually told that he would be notified when this meeting could be arranged. It has now been close to one month and we still have not received notification of a meeting.

They have contacted the Finance minister's office on May 11, May 12, May 19, May 25, May 28, and two times on

May 25, and again on this letter on June 5. A clear example, Mr. Speaker, of the kind of consultation that these folks opposite are willing to take part in — absolutely no consultation. That's the type of thing.

Mr. Speaker, there were a number of alternatives that this government could have explored with respect to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. They could have looked at things like reducing the government's contribution. We've heard from people all over the province, as I'm sure members of the government have heard from Saskatchewan Pension Plan members all over the province, that they would have been happy if the plan had continued even if the government wanted to cut back on the matching contribution or eliminate it entirely. They would have been happy to at least have the plan continued.

Mr. Speaker, it's alternatives like that that I don't believe the government looked at and they very definitely should have looked at.

Mr. Speaker, another alternative that they could have looked at was turning the pension plan over to a private pension plan company to administer it. They did not do that, Mr. Speaker. They did not consult with anyone. We have had letters and phone calls from members of the pension plan all over this province, and yet we see absolutely no action from this government with respect to the pension plan.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I think it's important to note and to reiterate there are unfunded pensions in this province today. The teachers have an unfunded pension. The Saskatchewan government employees have an unfunded pension. And most importantly, the MLAs — seven on the government side — have an unfunded pension that they are not willing to give up.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, today, why does the government, the NDP administration feel that the home-makers, the business people, the farmers of this province should give up their pension plan when they will not give up theirs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move the motion:

That this Assembly urges the Premier to reverse his decision to destroy the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and that the status and review of the plan be referred to a committee that includes plan members to examine alternatives such as private sector involvement and adjustments to the government's matching contribution.

I so move.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join in this debate regarding the Saskatchewan Pension Plan which was eliminated by the NDP government recently in the province. I would suggest, eliminated without consideration of the alternatives or amendments to keep the plan alive. Many alternatives and many ideas have certainly been coming across my way over the past number of days.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, as I was visiting with a number of people at 4-H achievement days on Thursday, I don't exactly remember how many people came up to me, but that was one of the first areas of conversation was the fact that the pension plan was eliminated — a pension plan, Mr. Speaker, with almost 55,000 members involved, members who depended on the program for their financial future.

And there's no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that there are men and women across this province who believe and who are beginning to believe, more so every day, that it is imperative that we all plan ahead for our future. Certainly there is a paranoia, if you will, or a fear that maybe even the Canada Pension Plan will not be solvent by the time some of us reach the age of looking at collecting it. And so it's very realistic . . . we must always be realistic in planning for our futures.

Mr. Speaker, the 50-odd thousand people enrolled had no access to any kind of private pension plan. Mr. Speaker, the enrolment increased steadily since the plan's inception back in 1986. And in fact one constituent the other day didn't realize that she would have had the opportunity and could have become involved in the plan even though she had just turned 60 when the plan was introduced, and I had indicated to her that she could have been involved. She could have made commitments to the plan over the five-year period till she reach 65 and certainly would have been able to receive a small but modest pension and return from the pension plan.

There were over 2,300 new applicants in 1991 alone, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP government's destructive decision to eliminate this important program impacts many more people than just those enrolled in the program. And we have to think about the employees in the pension plan offices in Kindersley — employees who had been working in the plan, who had been involved in the plan, and in many cases men and women . . . or women who had given up other jobs and made application to work in the pension plan all of a sudden found out that their jobs were eliminated, employees who received their pink slips without any warning on budget day.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, just previous to, about three weeks previous to the presentation of the budget, the government of the day read a throne speech in this Assembly that said that they would be consultative, that they would talk to people, that they would keep people informed. And yet we have to ask ourselves, did they talk to the employees working in Kindersley on the pension plan?

What about the families? What about the families of the employees involved? There's no doubt that many people across, not only in our province, but across this nation — anyone at any time who receives notification of a job closure or shut-down, Mr. Speaker, or the elimination of a job and their families — it's disruptive on their lives. And certainly it becomes disruptive and interferes with the lives of their children as well. Think about the negative effect this decision will have on the town of Kindersley where this office is located. I believe, Mr. Speaker, the

impact is widespread.

If I were to pick a particular group of individuals who were affected the most, Mr. Speaker, I would say without hesitation that it is Saskatchewan women. Of the 55,000 people involved and enrolled in the plan, Mr. Speaker, more than 80 per cent were women across this province. Women who were involved . . . maybe women who chose to remain at home and be housewives or housekeepers or care for their children, for their families. Women who were involved in small businesses in this province who had no other source or avenue in planning for their retirement and through the process of working together with their employers and Saskatchewan Pension Plan were finally able to put aside funds for that day when they could look forward to retiring and have a part in the retirement, not only the dreams that they'd been having regarding plans for the future with their husbands or with family, but certainly being able to be involved in the financial wellness of their family as well. After all, the majority of people enrolled in the program are women who had no other retirement options.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the situation facing farm families is very severe in these tough economic times. Not only are we facing the tough economic community and the economy, but certainly many farm families across our province even this year, Mr. Speaker. For many of us it may be hard for us to comprehend and believe, but there are areas of this province where it is very dry as yet. The stress not only of all of a sudden losing the options and the ability of being involved in a pension plan certainly compounds the stress that farm families face when they look at the fact that the drought situation and the lack of resources they have to provide for themselves.

I think farm families across this province probably are the last individuals around who would go looking to someone else to bail them out. They are very independent and will do anything within their power and means to provide for themselves. And so being able to be involved in a pension plan was something they took a lot of pride in.

Mr. Speaker, I received a letter last week that addressed a number of concerns regarding a number of decisions made by the government and elimination of programs. And this was from a young farmer who is in the feeding industry, and certainly the elimination of the FeedGAP (feed grain adjustment program) program affects him. The ceiling on refund on provincial tax on fuel affects him, Mr. Speaker. But the first point he raised was the elimination of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan program.

And his comment to me the other day when I was visiting with him, Mr. Speaker, and just talking with him at the fair grounds was the fact that we've heard so much about the fact that this program was set out specifically to address the needs of the rich, or that it was only people who were well-to-do who could afford to become part of the pension program. And yet, Mr. Speaker, he indicated to me that last year it was bottom line when it came to paying his income tax. After everything was said and done on his farm, his bottom line was in the neighbourhood of \$8,900 for his family and him to survive on over the year to pay for all their personal

needs.

(1445)

Couple the state of the economy with the NDP cuts, government's cuts to agriculture, and you can see the dire straits that people across this province are in. The Saskatchewan Pension Plan was designed for those who had no access to a private pension plan. The NDP decision to eliminate it is just another slap in the face of Saskatchewan people. And many people, not just people with Conservative leanings, not just people with Liberal leanings, but people even of NDP persuasion felt that this was a very good, responsible program and a responsible way to face the future, and they are even disappointed.

The members opposite use financial constraints as a defence to their action. They say it is too expensive to operate. And yet, Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to sit in my seat and listen to the Minister of Finance use this defence while his very own much richer MLA pension plan remains untouched. And certainly that is the debate that is taking place around the province and a debate that was brought to my attention the other day as well.

And when I took the time to explain the fact of the annuity plan that is now in place for MLAs, and I believe the taxpayers' association have also brought out that fact, have indicated that Saskatchewan has a much better MLA pension plan than any other province in Canada. I also mentioned to them that this Saskatchewan Pension Plan was based on an annuity system as well.

It's been suggested through various sources that the MLAs under the old pension plan give up their massive pensions rather than destroy the plan.

And I quote from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, May 16, 1992:

Premier . . . who says his government can no longer afford to pay homemakers' pensions, will collect at least \$73,000 a year from a taxpayer-funded pension plan when he retires.

And you say, the Premier collects for 10 years; that's \$730,000. If it's 20 years, that's one point four and a half million dollars.

How about the Finance minister, the minister responsible for the elimination of the pension plan. In the *Star-Phoenix* it says he:

. . . stands to pick up a pension of \$55,000 a year, even if he's defeated in the next election.

And multiply that by 10 and by 20 years.

And, Mr. Speaker, we could go on and on about unfunded pension liabilities. I know of an individual who's taught, been in the education field for some 30 years and has just turned 51 and was able to retire because of the formula and the way the process works. And he's going to be collecting \$36,000.

**The Speaker:** — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into this debate, Mr. Speaker. And I would like to first of all advise you and members of the Assembly that at the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving the following amendment:

That all words after "Assembly" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

regrets the necessity of having to cancel the Saskatchewan Pension Plan because of the previous government's failure to provide for its unfunded liability and because its general mismanagement of the province's economy made the plan impossible to sustain in its present form.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying I find it kind of interesting that the two members who have spoken from the side of the opposition were not members of the PC government when the plan was introduced.

It would be my considered opinion, Mr. Speaker, that when the PC government introduced the Saskatchewan Pension Plan in 1986 in election year, it betrayed and it betrayed miserably those people who became members of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. It did that, Mr. Speaker, in two ways: number one, by failing to plan for the future to ensure the affordability of the plan; and secondly, by governing like drunken sailors to rid this province of the financial stability that is necessary in order to provide the social programs that Saskatchewan people want and need, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I say that I took no joy, no joy in being on this side of the House and being a member of a government which was faced with some difficult responsible decisions to make in light of the financial circumstances of the province. And one of those decisions being the very difficult, painful decision of having to address the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Now let me make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, I support, I support initiatives which lead to pension income for Saskatchewan residents, both those who have been active participants in the work-force as well as those who have not. But I say as well, Mr. Speaker, that I recognize that the most desirable form of public pension in our country is to have an expanded Canada Pension Plan for all the residents of the nation.

And I say that for two reasons, Mr. Speaker, and I know that prior to the introduction of this plan in this province there were a number of meetings that went on in investigating that very objective. Mr. Speaker, I say it is a more desirable objective because: number one, it provides for a portable pension plan which is portable wherever you live within the nation. But secondly, and in light of the current circumstances, Mr. Speaker, because it also is a pension program that is supported by a government much less vulnerable to the economic pressures and downturns that we are feeling in Saskatchewan today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Pension Plan was helpful to those who could afford to enrol in it because it had two features which made it attractive, in many ways

unique in North America.

Number one, the hon. member from Kindersley referred to the matching contribution which cost the provincial government, and would have cost this year, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member for Kindersley said, some \$12 million in matching contributions. But I note as well, Mr. Speaker, that neither of the government speakers who have taken their places in this Assembly, have made reference to the other feature, the guaranteed minimum.

Mr. Speaker, the guaranteed minimum which created an unfunded liability that would have been in excess of \$43 million this year, by the end of last year as a matter of fact, an unfunded liability, Mr. Speaker, which was projected to rise to \$80 million by 1995, they conveniently left that information out of the debate. Mr. Speaker, therein lies the problem. Therein lies the problem.

Government is no different from any responsible family, Mr. Speaker. If we want to make our own choices in our own families, we have to live within our means. That's what gives us the financial freedom. Well it is just as true, Mr. Speaker, that if you want to make your own choices in government, for your own reasons, then you also have to live within your own means so that you have the financial freedom.

And, Mr. Speaker, I stand in this Assembly proud to be a member of a political party which has introduced some 32 budgets in this Legislative Assembly over the last 48 years. Mr. Speaker, the first deficit budget year introduced by the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation), the New Democratic Party over the last 48 years was on May 7 of this year, Mr. Speaker. This is the party of fiscal prudence in the history of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, that is not the pure coincidence. It is because this political party believes that if we are to ensure security for social programs for our citizens, then we must manage our affairs, live within our means. That is where the security and the stability lie for the future.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we recognized that in the election that has just been held. Members on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, went door to door with the election card that has been referred to a number of times in this House, Mr. Speaker, saying first things first: common sense, financial management. We said, number one, we'll open the books, and that's been done; number two, a comprehensive review of PC privatization and business deals to determine if they're in the public interest, and that's ongoing.

And, Mr. Speaker, here we are now — a balanced budget in our first term of office and a 15-year plan to eliminate the accumulated Devine deficit. That's what it said, Mr. Speaker. That is the objective of this government. That is why some difficult decisions, Mr. Speaker, have had to be made this year to begin to clean up the mess of the members of the PC Party who spent like drunken sailors, particularly in elections years, and in doing so, Mr. Speaker, destroyed the future security of social programs

to the people of Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're paying the price in a number of ways for 10 years of irresponsible spending. In 1982, by the words of the PC Finance minister of the day, \$139 million surplus turned over by the Allan Blakeney government in 1982 now a total debt in excess of \$14 billion. Some \$9 billion of that in the Consolidated Fund, Mr. Speaker, with sky-rocketing interest — interest on the public debt being paid for out of the Consolidated Fund this year, Mr. Speaker, in excess of \$760 million. Last year, Mr. Speaker, it was just over \$500 million. It's sky-rocketing, and if you stand back and watch, you see it eating up Health and Social Services and the social programs, Mr. Speaker, for the future.

And then last week, last week we got the word, Mr. Speaker, from Standard and Poor's, and I have the release of Standard and Poor's here, which says that as a result of the spending practices of the members opposite, Saskatchewan's credit rating has now been reduced to BBB.

What does this mean, Mr. Speaker? What does this mean? What this means, Mr. Speaker, is that Saskatchewan is in the unenviable position today where it has become the short-term objective of the Government of Saskatchewan to increase our credit rating to the level of that of Newfoundland.

That's where they put us. Did we come to this point having left government, Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago with the highest credit rating and the best managed government and the most secure future for the people of Saskatchewan, to today where it becomes the short-term objective to some day achieve the credit rating of the province of Newfoundland? That's where they put us and that's why, Mr. Speaker, this difficult decision has had to be made.

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

**Mr. Hagel:** — That is exactly why we're here today, Mr. Speaker, dealing with this decision. And I quote from Standard and Poor's in their release last week, Mr. Speaker, when they said:

(The) debt that must be serviced by the province now totals almost 180% of (the) annual budget revenues. This burden is substantially higher than for other Canadian provinces and is a function of large budgetary deficits in recent years as well as sizeable provincial investments in several projects intended to diversify the economy.

And I rest my case. They plead guilty on the opposite side, Mr. Speaker, and therefore I move:

That all words after "Assembly" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

regrets the necessity of having to cancel the Saskatchewan Pension Plan because of the previous government's failure to provide for its unfunded liability and because its general mismanagement of the province's economy made

the plan impossible to sustain in its present form.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

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

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise today to speak in favour of the amendment moved by the member from Moose Jaw Palliser, the amendment which reads:

That this Assembly regrets the necessity of having to cancel the Saskatchewan Pension Plan because of the previous government's failure to provide for its unfunded liability and because its general mismanagement of the province's economy made the plan impossible to sustain in its present form.

Mr. Speaker, this government, this new government led by our Premier the member from Riversdale, upon entering office found itself faced with several dilemmas, the least of which was not, Mr. Speaker, how to carry on the programs, existing programs of the province and yet in some way retain the financial integrity of the province.

We found ourselves in a dilemma, Mr. Speaker. How do you continue the services that we have been providing in health care? How do you continue the services that we've been providing in education? How do you cope with the fact that you have to reduce staff? How do you cope with the fact that you have to reduce funding and at the same time knowing that if you don't do so, that you will be forced to do so by the lending agencies before too long.

Mr. Speaker, it is with that kind of a situation going into government that you find that you dig right down to your deepest values and you have to make your judgement based on what you feel is best. And the government did exactly the same thing as any parent would do.

(1500)

When you're faced in a situation, Mr. Speaker, at home if you have some money available only to send your children to school or to put away for your own future some time down the line, we know what we would all choose to do. We would choose, first of all, to send our children to school and then work on our own retirements and our own plans for the future and hope for the best under those conditions. And doing all of this, Mr. Speaker, our byword I guess with the government ends up to be the byword of fairness.

You ask yourself questions. Is it fair to subsidize at the taxpayers' expense some pensions when at the same time you're doing cut-backs to health? Is it fair to cut back more on education or is it fair to ask people to do more taxes . . . pay more in taxes while at the same time you're creating a bigger and bigger unfunded liability to the province?

Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that probably every member in this House would agree with the concept of pensions. We all agree that it's prudent to put away some money for the future.

And it's prudent to set up pension plans. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, one of our New Democratic members, long-standing New Democratic members, Stanley Knowles, worked his entire life to work towards an old age security and the Canada Pension Plan. And his deeds and his efforts in that respect are well noted and well respected.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you a little bit about a pension plan that I participated in as a teacher and how that whole thing worked out. And it'd be advisable I think for the member opposite to listen to a little history of how that evolved.

There was no teachers' pension plan back in the late '40s and early '50s, Mr. Speaker. But it was found at that time that there was a need for one and there was a tremendous lobby for one, and the government put one in place. And because there was a growing population, particularly a growing teacher population, the fund that was guaranteed by the government at the time with the agreement of the teachers that you . . . it would be put into place and it would be paid for by future generations.

But what happened in the '70s? We suddenly found that that original premise was faulty, that is, that there was no longer . . . the growth of the nation's population was not continuing. So we needed to find a different way. We found that that fund which was . . . that liability which was unfunded was becoming untenable.

So the Allan Blakeney government of the day, starting in 1978, looked for new ways to sustain that plan, and by 1980 had developed a new plan for teacher pensions — a funded plan. It was a responsible thing to do. And they put into place also funded plans for other government employees.

By 1980, pretty well everybody in Saskatchewan knew that unfunded pension plans was not the way to go. Now following up to that, there was still the unfunded liability of the old plan, and the idea was to slowly build that up and put it into place so that it would become a funded plan. Teachers now have taken over the plan themselves and they're working on the basis of attempting to make that thing a fully funded plan eventually. That principle is very important.

Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that anybody bringing in a new pension plan to Saskatchewan would have followed that principle. This pension plan that the government members of 1986 brought in did not take into account the unfunded liability even after the experience of the governments previous and of all pension plans previous. It was a very irresponsible move, a very irresponsible move.

And now the members opposite sanctimoniously say, well you're destroying the plan. Well if they'd have put the proper foundation under it in the first place this would never have had to happen, would never have had to happen.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has outlined the problems himself; he spent some time outlining the problems of unfunded plans. And he itemized, for

example, and I will repeat because I think his argument should be listened to but from a different point of view than what he has done.

He mentioned a government unfunded liability of \$776 million. That is a real problem. The teachers' fund still has a \$1.5 billion unfunded liability. That is a real problem. The judges, \$10 million unfunded liability; MLA plan, 19 million unfunded liability, and yet the member would add to this another unfunded liability of 43 million this year, which is projected to grow to an \$85 million deficit by 1995.

Mr. Speaker, somehow the logic of the member opposite escapes me. If an unfunded liability is bad, then adding to it surely is not an answer. The idea here is that we have to get into place some system of creating a funded pension plan. Mr. Speaker, our objective, the objective of this government and my objective as a member supporting this government, number one, is to get our finances in order. We have to do what we can to put the financial picture of the province of Saskatchewan into order so that we can have the freedom to put in and to fund any pension plan and existing pension plans that we have now in Saskatchewan.

And when we look at the spending patterns of the government past, I can see why, how their logic follows that this 43 billion would be next to nothing as well, because they did several things which we have to now repair which make it very difficult to run the province on a fiscally responsible basis. I want to just very briefly refer to what they did to the Crown Investments Corporation.

We've found, Mr. Speaker, since we've opened the books that in addition to the debt, the operating debt of the province which in itself runs at about 5.2 billion, in addition there was a great Crown debt. And part of it is because of the way they lost money in their Crowns year after year after year.

Let me mention just a couple as an example. Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, the taxpayer has to pay up \$361 million in non-recoverable loss due to the government previous privatization methods. SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation), non-recoverable losses from . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've sat here and listened to the members of the legislature debate the resolution and the amended resolution. I too, not unlike other members of the legislature, have heard from our constituents regarding our government's decision to change the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that our government is facing a fiscal crisis that is unprecedented in the history of our province. There is no question, and I'm sure the members opposite will agree, that government has to come to terms — regardless of who would have been sitting on this side of the House — government has had to

come to terms with the size of our deficit. Mr. Speaker, \$760 million will be paid out on interest on the debt, and that's just the Consolidated Fund debt, this year in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in 1986 when the Government of Saskatchewan, the government of the day, decided to introduce this pension plan, the pension plan was applauded by many people in this province, including myself. I applauded the introduction of this pension plan because for a long time — I think if you look at the history of this country — there has been no recognition of the kind of work that women who work inside the home have done in terms of any kind of government recognition.

Mr. Speaker, in 1990, 44.6 per cent of the participants in this pension plan were home-makers. There will be those that argue that these home-makers, some of these home-makers come from larger income families because their spouses are earning a good income. I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that for many women working inside their home, that they are only a man away from poverty. I know many women in this province who have been faced with the prospect of no husband due to divorce and separation. They came from well-to-do families based on the size of the family income, but when the husband left, they were left on social assistance or poverty, Mr. Speaker.

I've heard from many constituents that they recognize the plight of the provincial government, that being that we have a very large provincial deficit. I've heard from many constituents recognizing that this government had tough decisions to make. They too have advanced the arguments provided by the member from Kindersley that the government could have looked to other possibilities in terms of the plan, i.e., the provincial government would not make its contributions, they would continue to make contributions, Mr. Speaker.

I am not unsympathetic to that argument. And, Mr. Speaker, I know that there are many people in this province that are not unsympathetic to looking at another way of dealing with the Saskatchewan Pension Plan in such a method that citizens could still make their contributions but the Government of Saskatchewan would not be bound by this unfunded liability.

Now the member from Kindersley argues that because seven members of the government side have a pension plan that is unfunded, civil servants have a pension plan that is unfunded, teachers have a pension plan that is unfunded, that somehow we should continue to fund the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

I'd like to remind the member from Kindersley that before 1980 I believe when Wes Robbins — who was the former member for Saskatoon Nutana, the seat that I took over in 1986 — was the minister of Finance, that a decision was made that this province could no longer afford to have the kind of pension plans that led to an increasing unfunded liability. And a decision was made by the government of the day that we would have a funded pension plan — that all civil servants and all teachers and all MLAs, anybody who worked for Crown corporations, when they started to work after 1978, '79, '80, depending on the date of the

plan, that their pension would be funded.

That's not what the members opposite decided to do in 1986. They deliberately introduced a pension plan that, because of the guaranteed minimum income, was unfunded. We had decided in the late '70s and early '80s that we weren't going to continue to have that type of unfunded pension plan. But these members decided — for I would say political reasons — to introduce a pension plan that would be unfunded. So obviously our government had to deal with that very question of an unfunded pension plan through the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. The way we've decided to deal with that is to abolish the plan.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Kindersley makes some good points, as do other citizens in this province. And I am sure that because of the nature of our government — which is a caring, compassionate government that isn't afraid to accept some logical proposals — that this kind of proposal that's being advanced by citizens who are members of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan could be looked at by the Minister of Finance and the Government of Saskatchewan.

But that does not change the fact, Mr. Speaker, that in 1986 the Government of Saskatchewan, the Conservative Party, introduced a pension plan that was not sustainable financially. Given the historic problems of this province for the last nine and a half years in terms of a huge \$5.2 billion deficit, in terms of \$760 million per annum being paid out in interest on the debt, our government has to make logical, rational choices. That does not mean that we won't make mistakes, Mr. Speaker. That does not mean that we won't be flexible enough to accept reasonable proposals that will deal with the question.

(1515)

So, Mr. Speaker, I accept the amendment that we regret having to cancel the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, but it was because of the failure of the previous government to have a plan that was funded and was sustainable.

Those are the points that I'd like to add to this debate in the legislature. I'm sure other colleagues would like to add their comments on this issue, Mr. Speaker, so I'll take my chair.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've listened with some interest as we've gone into this debate this afternoon, and I guess one of the observations that I'd have to start out with is that the member from Moose Jaw Palliser is an eloquent speaker. And I was impressed with his eloquent speech that I think will probably allude well to getting him into cabinet which I'm sure is what he's attempting to do here more than anything else.

But in reality I'm afraid that he will have to change his approach if he wants to get into the hearts of the Saskatchewan people. He may get into cabinet, but he certainly won't get into the hearts of the Saskatchewan people. And I think probably you'll have to work a little harder at it, sir, and you may be successful.

The member from Prince Albert Carlton has trouble



figuring things out. And I couldn't help but wonder if we shouldn't take up a collection and buy him a calculator, so he can manage to figure this thing out, the fact that people are losing one of the best programs that they've ever had in this province. He says things like the Crowns are all losing money. And the reality of the facts of the last few days have revealed that SaskPower and SaskTel and different Crowns have made money in the past year. And so we have some rather misconceptions being strewn about.

I want to mention the member from Saskatoon Broadway's comments because I think here we've got something, something that's coming together. She says she liked the plan, and I appreciate her honesty. She probably should be in cabinet right now with the views that she's expressing of late because it seems to be an approach to honesty and fair play.

I believe that she honestly would have worked to adjust this program, by her comments, to work out a plan so that the Saskatchewan people that were involved in the plan might have had that plan continue. And I believe that if she works hard at it and we work with her that she may achieve that goal in the end because I really believe that the people of Saskatchewan want the Saskatchewan Pension Plan reintroduced. And I think that it can be reintroduced with some adjustments and some program changes that will make it cost-effective and those things that are of concern to the folks in government.

I think those things, Mr. Speaker, could have been done without throwing the plan away and starting from scratch. I believe that it was wrong to throw the plan out. You should have worked harder to make it work as it was, and you would have caused an awful lot of less pain and hurt in our province.

If there's one thing that the NDP government can take credit for, it is the destruction of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. No one else can take credit for that. This is the NDP government's own doings. It's their choice and their decision and the people of Saskatchewan will have to weigh and measure that against performance as time goes by.

The program implemented to meet the needs of people who did not have access to a private pension plan, a program initiated and implemented at the request of Saskatchewan residents. The previous administration was lobbied intensively to come up with a retirement savings vehicle for those who did not have access to one. The previous administration listened to the people of Saskatchewan — they listened, and they came up with a workable program.

By destroying the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, the NDP government is singling out and harming a very distinct group of our province, a group of people that need a program and a pension plan.

Mr. Speaker, who has been affected by the elimination of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan? Home-makers, for one. Up until the Saskatchewan Pension Plan was introduced, home-makers had no access to a pension plan. They had nothing.

Well, Mr. Speaker, so much for progress. If the NDP government doesn't reverse this destructive decision, the home-makers once again will have no access to any pension plan of any kind in the province of Saskatchewan.

Who else is affected, Mr. Speaker? Saskatchewan's small-business sector is affected. The Saskatchewan Pension Plan gave employers and employees all the benefits of an employer-sponsored pension plan without the costs. This is extremely important in a province that fights so hard for an economic base as we've had to do in Saskatchewan over the last few years. Minimum wage employees, employees who had no pension plan benefits — those are the people that benefitted from this program.

Another large and important group affected, Mr. Speaker, are Saskatchewan's farmers. What do farmers like about this program? Well aside from the fact that they also had no access to a private pension plan, they appreciated the voluntary contributions aspect with no annual minimum. You may know, Mr. Speaker, that some years are very lean for farmers. The no-minimum provision was surely appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP are fond of claiming that they are the party for women. They have also claimed that they would be the only party who would adequately support the province's low income residents. Just who did the NDP think this plan was for? These two groups were greatly represented in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Check the figures. Let me refresh the members opposite of some of the enrolment statistics for this plan — 78 per cent of the individuals enrolled were women. The members also have mentioned opposite those figures, so they can't go around saying they don't understand it or didn't know, because they've used those figures themselves. They've admitted that they know that the very people that they claim to represent were the ones that were benefitting the most from this program — 78 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

How does the elimination of this program illustrate the NDP's commitment to women? Does destroying their retirement vehicle, perhaps their only pension plan, assist women? I think not. Forty-four per cent of the individuals enrolled were home-makers, people who raise our families and keep our homes going. These are the people that were affected when this program was taken away.

Almost 50 per cent of the individuals enrolled were between the ages of 50 and 65. A very important group of people in our province who may not have had any other pension provision now have had their only vehicle of pension stripped from them. These people are close to retirement, Mr. Speaker. Obviously these individuals were in need of a retirement savings plan. What are these individuals to do? These people were in need of some security. They were taken care of and now the NDP have stripped them of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We are asking that the Premier reverse his decision to destroy the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. We would even go so far as to beg him to reconsider this. We ask that this

important plan not be arbitrarily eliminated. Take another look.

The NDP government has set up review committees, commissions, and boards on almost every matter in this province. We even had a review committee set up for shopping hours. Is a decision regarding the Saskatchewan Pension Plan not equally as important as the decision on shopping hours? We on this side of the House certainly think so. The people of Saskatchewan certainly think so from all of the calls and letters and correspondence that we've been getting.

If the government won't listen to us and won't listen to the people, perhaps they will listen to recommendations from a committee whose mandate is specific, a mandate that would include examining alternatives, alternatives that do not include plans of a plain old eliminating of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, something that the NDP government did not consider but now we think they should.

They could look into choices that include transferring the pension plan to the private sector or some other vehicle. They could look into what impact adjustments to the government matching contributions would have.

This committee should be made up of pension plan members, those people mostly affected, the individuals who will actively search out workable alternatives, alternatives that they would need for their own personal benefits and needs, individuals who have vested interests in keeping the plan afloat rather than those who have a vested interest in wanting to destroy it. It should not include bureaucrats from Finance who know nothing about running anything except a calculator. It's got to be people who have heart and soul, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people who have something at stake — more than just trying to balance somebody else's book.

Bureaucrats who are only following directions coming from the Finance minister will not do in this matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Directions to specifically single out the previous administration's programs is also not an acceptable approach, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We need to know that the people who are involved in rethinking this plan . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. The member's time has elapsed.

**Mr. Swenson:** — I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are only a few minutes left in this particular debate, but I did want to make a couple of comments on it. I would like to say to the members of the government that this afternoon I think we've had a good debate on this topic. It's a topic that rings true with so many people. I have seen positive comments made by both sides of the House on this issue. I appreciated the comments from the member from Saskatoon Broadway. Her comments on women in our society and the home are something that we simply as a society are going to have to emphasize more and more in the future.

I think back to the people that live in my community and the contribution made not only as mothers, but as people

who could at a spur's moment go out and grab the wheel of a tractor or a truck or do things in the community that required many extra hours that indeed saved that community money, is just something that we in this society can't put aside.

The unfunded liability problem has been with this province for a long time and I recognize that there have been moves made in that direction. I don't think anyone at the time — and I remember the debate on this Bill — recognized perhaps the potential for the unfunded liability to grow to where it is today. But I think you still must recognize that that unfunded liability and what it means to a certain sector of our society, in comparison to some of the other unfunded liabilities that we have, means that if we start making choices on unfunded liabilities, that perhaps this one deserved more credit than what it got.

And I think it is absolutely incumbent upon the government to re-evaluate the situation to allow 44,000 Saskatchewan women an opportunity, an opportunity to look after, help look after their own future. That is too large a segment of our society, too large a contribution, Mr. Speaker, to our society to say we are simply going to dismiss your wants because we have a fiscal problem in the province of Saskatchewan that we're trying to address.

And I would hope that at nowhere in this thought process did the fact that Kindersley was the site of a government decentralization have anything to do, anything to do with this decision.

And members of the government say no. But I know for a fact that every last decentralization move made by the previous government was fought tooth and nail in this Assembly and on the streets of Saskatchewan. So why would people, right thinking people in our society from rural Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And that one was fought too, Mr. Member, and you darn well know it. Why would any right thinking person in our society not suspect just a little bit, just a little bit that that was the case? And I hope, I hope that it wasn't.

That the members of the government are now prepared to get on with the job, get on with the job of reinstituting that plan, reinstituting it in Kindersley, Saskatchewan, and that the service being provided through the Saskatchewan Pension Plan will continue to be available to women particularly in this province, whether they be farm wives, the wives of small-business people, home-makers, primarily those in rural Saskatchewan that don't have the opportunity to access the pension plans that are more aptly available in our larger centres.

These people, Mr. Speaker, are making an ongoing contribution to this province. They have chosen sometimes; sometimes they have no choice as to where to live. And as the member from Saskatoon Broadway said, oftentimes a circumstance arises, either through divorce or death or loss of business . . .

(1530)

**The Speaker:** — Order. The time for the debate, as

pursuant to the new rules, has elapsed. And at this particular time we will begin the question and comment period of 10 minutes. So I will recognize members.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a number of questions to the member from Saskatoon Broadway. The first question is, did the government consider cutting back the matching contributions but continuing the program?

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, in the budgetary process, as the member must know, the cabinet goes through a process of recommending a budget to caucus members. Caucus members then have an opportunity to have input into the budget. Obviously our government considered a number of different options when it came to dealing with the horrendous problems that we're facing as a province, and that is the issue of \$760 million being paid out in this year alone on interest on the provincial government debt — a debt, I might add, sir, that was chalked up in the nine and a half years of a Conservative Party administration.

This government had to make choices, very difficult choices, to get the fiscal crisis in this province under control or the beginnings of getting it under control. Obviously government has to consider all kinds of options, and I can tell you that these options were not easy. The choices were not easy, and many of the members here — I would say all members of the government side — have found this process very difficult.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we talk about choices, indeed the government did have choices, Mr. Speaker. Again to the member from Saskatoon Broadway, does she believe that the Premier and the other six members of her caucus should be willing to, when they ask the pension plan holders of this province — the home-makers, the housewives, small-business people, and farmers of this province — does she believe that they should be willing to give up their pension and yet the members, the seven members on that side of the House, not give up their pension? Does she believe that?

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much. In answer to the member's question, obviously there are many examples of government waste and mismanagement. It seems to me that we've been in government for seven months. During my speech on the budget I asked civil servants and citizens to begin the process of identifying to the government and members opposite, areas where we could identify waste and mismanagement where there could be government cut-backs.

Obviously we have to run a very lean operation in these hard times, sir. It seems to me that we can identify savings, and these savings can be used for other government initiatives that are important to the people of this province.

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question would be to the member from Thunder Creek. I was at Mosaic over the weekend and talking with some people who did ask the question about the pension plan. And when I was speaking to them and telling them about a program that had been designed very poorly and hastily by the members opposite and the same members who

have put this province into a debt that chalks up now interest payments of \$760 million, purely politically putting this in place at a time when they knew that this program was going to have a major unfunded liability in the future, and talking to the members who would know and recognize in the community that they were going to have to pay far more in taxes and look at more cut-backs in programs and services if we can't do something drastically to reduce the deficit in this province, that far more than that, they would not receive a benefit; they would be looking at paying out more.

I'm wondering then if the member from Thunder Creek would tell us why they would begin a program like this that would be a strong politically motivated program and be good for political points, but not consider that it is now chalking up \$43 million in . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I'll let the member answer the question.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to reply to the member. I know she wasn't here during the debate on this particular issue back in 1986, as were not a lot of the current government members. And at that time there was extensive debate on this particular item. The question of unfunded liability was never raised by anyone in the then opposition.

And someone who was as astute as the Hon. Allan Blakeney, former premier, Finance minister, and economic whiz I'm told, in debate on the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, never once questioned the concept or the premises that it was begun under — clearly recognizing, I say to the member, clearly recognizing that there were a lot of women particularly in rural Saskatchewan, because the average age of farm families in this province is now probably approaching 60 years of age; at that time there were a lot of rural women in that 55 age group and up.

The decision to allow them to go in with a minimum pension meant that in the front end years, recognized by all members of this Assembly, that there would be some liability incurred at the time. And your leader at the time, Mr. Blakeney, recognized that fact also.

But these women had . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — My question is to the member from Moose Jaw who moved the amendment. The member from Melfort today presented a new Bill to the House in which she is going to consult with the public as to their concerns and their ideas on the environment.

Why was your government not willing to consult with the public that was involved in the pension plan before you made the changes that you have implemented?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. If I can comment first of all just on the comment made by the member from Thunder Creek a moment ago who is in the most recent minute praising Allan Blakeney but earlier in the day, when it was convenient, condemning Allan Blakeney. So, Mr. Speaker, I find it gets curiouser and

curiouser, Mr. Speaker.

I also think you can't stand and listen without asking the question over there, just who was the financial wizard that dreamed this thing up. Who was the financial wizard? Was it Bob Andrew who introduced the flat tax and called his budget the most brilliant budget that had ever been introduced . . . or most intelligent budget, I guess, that's what it was.

Or was it Gary Lane? Was it Gary Lane who after having misled the people of Saskatchewan by some \$800 million in the size of the deficit, Mr. Speaker, and then followed that up after the election year in 1986 — the election year in which this pension plan was introduced — when asked how did you make a mistake of \$800 million, who followed that up by saying, what do you expect, we're politicians. What he should have said, Mr. Speaker, is what do you expect, we're Tory politicians.

**The Speaker:** — Order.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, the question I'd like to direct . . . the person I'd like to direct the question to is the member from Moose Jaw Palliser. The member for Saskatoon Broadway conveniently wouldn't answer the question with respect to whether she believes people in the government benches should be giving up their pensions as well. So I'd like to direct that question to the member from Moose Jaw Palliser. Does he believe, for example, that the House Leader for the government side should be willing to give up his pension when he's asking the home-makers of Saskatchewan to give up theirs. Simple question.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, it was recognized back in the 1970s that unfunded liabilities and pension plans was not a solid way to go. And as a result of that, Mr. Speaker, there were changes made to the pension plans as they relate to members of the legislature, to public service employees, Mr. Speaker, as well as to teachers in the province of Saskatchewan.

But I would say, Mr. Speaker, that as we are standing here as private members and all expressing what I believe to be a bona fide interest in the welfare of Saskatchewan people, would it be fair to assume that all members of this Assembly — both sides of the House — would support being progressive and looking to the Canada Pension Plan as a vehicle which will provide a larger level of portability for people across the country, Mr. Speaker, as well as the connection to, Mr. Speaker, a government which is not as vulnerable to the economic circumstances of the province of Saskatchewan. That is the question that we really must be asking ourselves as we look forward with some hope and optimism for the people of Saskatchewan.

**Ms. Stanger:** — Question for the member from Kindersley. I think that if you put in a plan — which you say the Saskatchewan Pension Plan was an excellent plan — don't you think to ensure that this excellent plan would stay in force, that you would during your time as government make sure that the financial situation of the province is in such a good order that you can ensure that these plans continue. So I'm asking the member from

Kindersley, you put in a plan but you didn't take care of the finances of the province, so what is your comment on that?

**Mr. Boyd:** — Well she talks, she talks about the plan being an excellent plan. And indeed it was an excellent plan — 54,000 people in this province thought it was an excellent plan. That's what the people of the province of Saskatchewan think, Mr. Speaker — 54,000 think it's an excellent plan.

When we talk about unfunded liabilities . . . and that seems to be the only argument that they have against this thing, the unfunded liability. And that member right over there, the House Leader's pension plan is \$1 million. That's the type of thing that the people of Saskatchewan are arguing against in this, Mr. Speaker. One million dollars in his . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The time has elapsed for the comment in question period, pursuant to the new rules.

We will now proceed to motion for returns. Oh, I'm sorry. Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Roy:** — Leave to introduce some guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Roy:** — Mr. Speaker, and fellow members of the legislature, it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Minister of Health, Louise Simard, to introduce to you and through you 12 students from Ottawa who are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

They're here on an exchange program, Voyageur Canada '92, and their host school is Ecole Monseigneur de Laval, Regina. Their students vary in grades from grade 10 to university.

Monsieur Le Président, ça me donne plaisir de vous présenter du part de la ministre de La Santé, l'Honorable Louise Simard, 12 étudiants d'Ottawa qui sont ici sur un program de change, Voyageur Canada '92. Les élèves, il y a douze en tous et sont du niveaux la dixième jusqu' à secondaire, université, et je veux demander à tous les députés de les accueillir chaleureusement et vieille une bonne visite à Regina. Je vais les voir plus tard pour un café et pour jaser.

(Translation: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to introduce to you, on behalf of the Minister of Health, the Hon. Louise Simard, 12 students from Ottawa who are here on an exchange program, Voyageur Canada '92. The students, there are 12 of them in total, are from the 10th grade to secondary, university, and I would like to ask all the members to welcome them warmly and wish them a good visit to Regina. I am going to see them later for a coffee and a chat.)

Mr. Speaker, I'll be chatting with them later on in the members' dining lounge. Would you all please welcome them. Thank you.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to also welcome the students to our legislature. I'm pleased that they chose Saskatchewan to visit, and je vous souhaitais bonne chance dans votre visite ici. Merci.

(Translation: I would wish you good luck in your visit here. Thank you.)

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

(1545)

## MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

### Return No. 9 (continued)

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion for return debatable is basically a fairly simple one. We're asking the minister, with respect to the Saskatchewan Development Fund Corporation, all we're asking for is the employment history and some other pertinent details surrounding the people that they've hired since November 1, '91 — only since November 1, '91. I want to emphasize that point. That's the only people we're interested in, Mr. Speaker.

I think it's the type of thing, a question that every employer on every standard employment contract we see. That's the type of thing. They want to know about the people that they're hiring for their employees. Myself, as a business person and a farm operator, when I take on people in the spring of the year, or throughout the year in my place of employment, I always ask for that kind of information, about the background of the people who are applying for jobs for myself. And I'm sure other employers around the province, that's the standard practice, to ask about their employment history.

And it's clear why they do that. It gives the employer the opportunity to check into their background a little bit, to find out what kind of person that is applying for the job that they're offering, to find out a little bit about their skills in the job that they're offering, to find out a little bit about the people's educational background, and that sort of thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the request that we are making of the minister is unreasonable at all. I think every responsible employer in this province would be asking exactly the same question. So, Mr. Speaker, I would certainly believe that this motion is very definitely in order and should be considered by the minister. And so I would ask that the minister give it its due consideration and respond to the motion.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated the other day, what we are doing here is allowing for the members opposite to receive I think what they really want, and that is the staff who are employed in the minister's office, the people who have probably some political background, and they may want to know where they come from and what they're being paid, and I think that's legitimate.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think what we're seeing here is where they want all of the employees that this government hires. And their background and salary is completely out of order with the tradition that has been set in the Government of Saskatchewan, particularly in the last 10 years where you'll remember, Mr. Speaker, that when we asked in Crown Corporations that member's desk mate, for example, when he was a minister, for the salary of the presidents of the corporations. Wouldn't give it to us, not even the president.

I can remember asking for the salary of Mr. Hill and other members asking for the salary of Mr. Hill, and they were not forthcoming with the answer as to what his salary was. And then when we get into office, it became very clear.

But for them to ask for every individual that we hire, many of them at a level where it is of no concern to the members opposite or to the public, one can only assume what they want to do with that kind of information.

So what we're saying here, and I intend to make an amendment that will clearly outline that we're willing to give, Mr. Speaker, is the information they ask for on those that might be perceived to be political and have political background because they work in the minister's office. And I don't think any one is surprised by that.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move that the motion be amended as follows:

That the words "by or accountable to the minister directly or indirectly who were employed on or after November 1, 1991" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

"in the minister's office."

And that the words "including employment history" be deleted.

I so move.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, I think that the employment history of an employer asking for the employment history of prospective employees is something that is a standard practice in business throughout the province, throughout Saskatchewan, probably throughout the world, for that matter, asking for that kind of information. It simply points out that where the person, the prospective employee, has worked in the past. I can't understand the government's reluctance to answer that question. We're only asking it of the employees that have taken up employment since November 1, '91.

When we talk about the past . . . and that's something that these folks continually like to talk about is everything that went on in the past; they never consider what's going on in the future, only the past. But nevertheless we'll take up his argument a little bit. He suggests that never before has the information been given on this type of thing, Mr. Speaker. But that's not true one little bit.

In the *Public Accounts* record for 1989-90, in the minister's own department himself of Economic Development and Tourism, the department that the minister is currently responsible for, it lists page after page after page of the employees and their salaries and that sort of thing. So I can't understand why the minister wouldn't be willing to point out that kind of information.

For example, in the Economic Development and Tourism department, in the *Public Accounts* record for 1989-90, we see that a Mr. Kenneth Adie received \$61,752 in salary; he didn't have any travel expenses. We go down the list and we can find person after person, and I'll read a few more. Mr. Bryce Baron, he received \$83,324. That is a matter of public record, Mr. Speaker, about the type of thing that the minister talks about. We move on. We see a gentleman by the name of Kerry Dahl that worked in the department at that time. His salary was 32,617 and he had travel expenses of \$2,958, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member for Souris-Cannington on his feet?

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, with leave to introduce guests, please.

Leave granted.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly, the grade 7 class from the Estevan Junior High School. There are 23 students today here. They are sitting in your gallery. Along with the students, Mr. Speaker, are their teachers, Maureen Ulrich, Barb Schmuland; chaperons, Glendyne Brown; and bus driver, Bev Schmidt.

I will be meeting with the students for pictures and for drinks later and for some discussion. I would ask that the Assembly welcome them here today.

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

### MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

#### Return No. 9 (continued)

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, as well the minister suggests earlier that that information isn't on public record. But again we'll go back to his department, the very department he's responsible for today. And we see a gentleman by the name of John Barron, he received \$9,000 in various grants.

And so my colleague just a moment ago, the member for Rosthern, pointed out in the Department of Health there are nine full pages of very small print of people's names, of the various salaries and travel allowances and things of that nature that they receive.

So what we're asking for, Mr. Minister, I think is very straightforward and the type of thing that every employer would ask of his prospective employees. And so we're not doing anything, I don't believe, that would be considered out of the ordinary one little bit when we ask for the

qualifications including employment history.

That seems to be the concern that they have. They're back-filling. That's what they're doing, Mr. Speaker. They're back-filling with NDP partisans, patronage-type appointments. And that's why, that's specifically the reason why they don't want to give us the qualifications, including employment history because they know very well they are patronage-type appointments, and they probably aren't qualified for the job that they're receiving.

And no wonder they don't want to include their employment history because they're bringing NDP people from all over the country. That's the type of thing that you people are doing. It's no wonder they don't want the people of Saskatchewan to know that.

But the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are the employers of these people. These people are employed by the people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. They're not employed by the gentleman sitting opposite, the deputy . . . or I mean the House Leader. They're not employed by him. They're employed by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. That's who employs them.

And they have the right to know about who these people are hiring on their behalf. They have the right to know about their qualifications. They have the right to know where they worked before, including employment history. They have the right to know about their compensation. They have a right to know about their job description. Those are the type of rights that employers have always had in this province. And the people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan are the employers of these people, and they have the right to know, and they should be given that right.

And we should not in Saskatchewan allow the minister to just go around hiring people, patronage-type appointments from all over this province and all over this country to do his bidding for him. That's the type of thing that's happening in this province today, Mr. Speaker. And I believe that the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, the people who pay the bills in this province, believe that they have the right to know about the qualifications of these people, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in my place this afternoon to speak in support of the amendment of the government. The member from Kindersley just gave us a whole tirade about the right to know and about accountability and responsibility of governments, the right to know of taxpayers.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is peculiar coming from a member of the Conservative Party who was in power in this province the last nine years, who undertook to mastermind the most secretive government in the history of politics in North America, let alone in Saskatchewan. This government of the Conservative Party from 1982 to 1991 were secretive. They were not forthcoming with respect to questions in any areas with respect to their

hiring. They redefined patronage to its darkest colour. They made patronage look like in other governments it was a normal, pleasant, opportunistic, fine thing to do.

With this government, the Tory government being in power for those nine years, they went to new depths — in my view, depths not height, but depths in terms of appointing people without any qualifications to high paying jobs. I refer, Mr. Speaker, to the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation as one example. The previous government, in particular the Conservative Party government, in the past hired literally hundreds of people in that corporation to management positions without qualification, paying them exorbitantly high wages.

And we have seen in the Crown Corporations Committee — the committee of this legislature which I chair, Mr. Speaker — during the questioning of the Conservative government in the last nine years, absolutely no co-operation when it came to gathering information with respect to any function of their Crowns.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, during the questioning of ministers in the Crown Corporations Committee, who were responsible for various Crown corporations, they refused to answer general questions for the last two or three years. We asked them questions in writing and verbally, and they said, we'll get that answer to you, Mr. Speaker. They said they'd get that answer to us. It's now been in some cases with respect to the Saskatchewan Transportation corporation three years since we've had an answer from this former Conservative government.

So what I'm trying to get at, Mr. Speaker, is that the people of Saskatchewan do have a right to know. They have a right to know that their government is an accountable government; they have a right to know that their government is responsible.

But they also have to recognize that because people are hired in the public service, they are hired to do specific jobs which are public knowledge; that they should not have to be subject to bandying about their application forms and making public their personal resumés to everybody and their dog in this province.

We certainly support the Public Service Commission review and process of hiring people in an independent way. We do not as a government believe that out of the 20,000 or so employees of the government in the Crown corporations, that each of them should have all of their resumés and personal histories bandied about in a public way.

Now the people of this province have a right to know whether a government is open and accountable and honest. And we will fulfil that right, which the former government which the member from Kindersley used to represent, used to be part of, they know darn well and full well, Mr. Speaker, that they had absolutely no interest in complying with the requirements of being an open or accountable or a responsible government.

(1600)

So, Mr. Speaker, I think what they're trying to do here is they're trying to create a great deal of work for the government. They're attempting to increase the burden in cost of administration when they know full well and the people of this province know full well there are very few dollars to pay for this kind of research which does not have any particular sensitivity to the ... or interest by the public.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that I would ask the Conservative members of the legislature to not be paranoid. I assure them on behalf of this side of the House and on behalf of the government that we will not be hiring hundreds of people in the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation who are not qualified and we will not be hiring them in a secretive way, and we will not be paying them exorbitant salaries as they have paid some of their former political appointments.

I also want to ask members opposite to temper their paranoia because this is a new government; this is a refreshing government. We have a government that has a real interest in fulfilling the criteria of an open, accountable, and responsible government.

The example I'll use in this House, Mr. Speaker, is again the Crown Corporations Committee. Members opposite, after they were defeated, all of a sudden were born again accountability people. They wanted to have the Crown corporations open and accountable and responsible to the people of this province. This is after nine years of secretive deals and a lack of co-operation with respect to providing information. Yet during the Crown Corporations Committee they are saying we want to reform the committee.

And you know what reforms we've undertaken, Mr. Speaker? Because I believe we have to reform the committee as well, and so are the members of the committee. The most refreshing reform that took place in the Crown Corporations Committee, Mr. Speaker, was that the ministers answered the questions they were asked.

This was absolutely stunning and incredulous to the opposition. They thought, oh my gosh, when we were in government our minister never answered questions. Maybe what the New Democratic Party government is doing makes sense. Maybe we don't need a wide ranging reform of the committee other than to have the minister respond to the questions that were asked.

Indeed this was very refreshing, Mr. Speaker. It was very refreshing because the people of this province and the committee members had not seen that kind of co-operation in the last nine years of the Conservative government.

So I say to the member from Kindersley, temper your paranoia. Don't believe for one minute that the New Democratic Party government would act in any way like the former Conservative government, like your colleagues acted when they were in government.

We have the best interests at heart of the province of Saskatchewan and the people and the children who live

here. And it's our intention as a government, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan not only have the right to know, but that they are provided with any kind of information that they feel they require with respect to accountability to a government.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I say that with respect to this amendment, I support the government's amendment. I do not support the entire motion that the government's put forward because it really does intrude into people's personal lives. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I actually wasn't going to speak to this motion, but when I heard my good friend from Kindersley who's a new member to this Assembly and he's working very hard on behalf of his constituents, then I decided that I would make a few comments because I think that he is missing a bit of the history of what's happened in this place, particularly under the former government.

And so, Mr. Speaker, he mentioned, that is the member from Kindersley mentioned that this government doesn't like to talk about the past. Well, Mr. Speaker, there's no question that that side of the House does not like to talk about the past because they have devastated this province in the nine and a half years they were in. They have devastated this province to the point that it is on the verge of bankruptcy, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make the member from Kindersley, the new member, aware of a few facts because it's clear that he lacks a bit of the awareness of what's happened here.

And here we've seen a situation where he's looking for the detail of virtually every staff member in SaskEnergy, and, Mr. Speaker, we have to wonder what for. We've already seen the opposition do a character assassination on the Hon. Allan Blakeney, who was the premier of this province for many years and is a distinguished Canadian. So they've already done a character assassination on him, and I suspect that that's the only reason that they want this information, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to reiterate what has been said by the minister responsible earlier on the previous motion, and that is that that opposition — and that's why they're sitting in opposition now — they never even provided the salary and benefits of the president of the corporation, never even . . .

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

**Mr. Whitmore:** — I would like to have leave, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Whitmore:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To you and through you to this Assembly I would like to introduce a group of individuals who have been touring western Canada. These are people that are members of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers.

This group attended meetings in Quebec City last week and have travelled the west to Alberta and Saskatchewan for meetings and visits with Pool officials and members the past few days.

They have been touring in Saskatchewan yesterday and today. They had the opportunity of attending a grain farm and a mixed farm yesterday. And today I think they attended a dairy farm this morning, and are now touring the sights of Regina today. So I would like to introduce them if I could, to you today.

From Iceland, Mr. M. Hallderson and a Ms. B. Bjarnadottir; a Mr. J. Helgason, who is the MP (Member of Parliament) from the Icelandic Parliament, and a Ms. Thorkelsdottir, a G. Karlsson; from Norway, an S. Seljegard, a Mr. and Mrs. C. Kjørven; from South Africa a Mr. and Mrs. P. Swart, and a Mr. and Mrs. J. Fourie.

I extend to them, I hope they've had a pleasant trip in Canada. It's certainly a welcome opportunity for them to take the time and to visit agriculture in western Canada and to have an understanding of what's going on. So I hope the legislature would then welcome these people who have come to visit us today. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I too would like to join with the member from Biggar in extending a welcome to these people. It was a privilege for me to, on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan in previous years, to travel together with a number of people who were here from Denmark and from Australia and other places to buy registered purebred Hereford cattle. And I travelled around with them and I found them not only entertaining but also very much in tune with the kinds of agriculture we have here.

And I want to extend to you a special welcome, because actually my great grandfather's name was Jensen and it's Danish, and it has some significance to the part of the world that you come from and . . . not the ones from South Africa of course, but I extend to them also a very sincere welcome to this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would also like to welcome the group here today. Both my grandparents came from Iceland, so I especially want to welcome the members from Iceland. But I'd like to welcome you all here. Welcome to Canada and welcome to Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to add my comments of welcome as well, and let these folks know that I flew over your country about a week ago. And so it's a great privilege. We've all got some connection here.

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



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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — I want to also welcome the guests, and I want to talk about the Icelandic parliament and all of the women that are in that parliament.

Leave granted.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — I also want to welcome our guests, and I also want to say a special hello to the people from Iceland. We had the honour of having your Prime Minister visit our legislature. We also have had women visitors from Iceland who have spent a great deal of time with the New Democratic Party women talking about how to get women involved in the political process, not only as local political activists but also as provincial politicians.

And in the last provincial election, October 21 of this year, we elected 11 women to this legislature which is a historic event. We elected 10 women to our government caucus, and out of those 10 women, 4 women have become cabinet ministers in an 11-member cabinet.

So you can tell the folks back home that we in Saskatchewan are making progress. We're not quite where Iceland is yet, but we certainly look to your lead and your leadership. Thank you and welcome.

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

#### MOTIONS FOR RETURN (Debatable)

##### Return No. 9 (continued)

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to bring my remarks to a close.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to say in closing that I think that we have demonstrated as a government that we are very concerned about being accountable and being open. The minister has said, and he's demonstrated this in the last six months, that we will share any reasonable information, any reasonable request that comes from the opposition.

And I would remind them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they wouldn't even share basic information with the opposition. They wouldn't share basic information with the Provincial Auditor who had to write a special report, a special mid-term report trying to tell the government that please share information and don't break your own laws. They were breaking the laws of the province by not sharing information which the members of this Assembly had a right to see.

So, Mr. Speaker, we will share reasonable information. We're not interested in them being involved in character assassinations like they were today. And I am proud to support the amendment by my colleague. And I'll have a few more comments to make on their next motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I just

want to make a few brief remarks in this debate. I made a few last week when the same opportunity arose on motions for return.

The member from Saskatoon pointed out a very fundamental difference to the Assembly on this particular question. He said that you folks lost the election and we won because we promised people that we would be different. And I think that's the fundamental difference here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This party, this party time after time said, we went out and sought the people's vote. We promise to faithfully do certain things if you vote for us. And now we see them scratching like a cat covering up its tracks all of a sudden when we get into some of the issues, some of the issues that they talked about at great length in this Assembly and around Saskatchewan. And I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's what we find so disappointing.

They're saying to the opposition now, you have no right to talk about that. You have no right. Well the right comes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because these folks went out and said to the average Saskatchewan voter, we are different. We will never hide anything. And as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in debate last week on this topic, if you've got a bunch of New Democrats that you're hiring, you should be proud of it. I mean you should want to stand up on a fence post some place and crow to the world that you've got all these qualified New Democrats.

I mean, what is there about an employment history? The private sector deals with it each and every day in their workaday life. And I'm sure they hire New Democrats and Tories and Liberals; they hire all sorts of people. But they've got the employment records, they've got the references, they've got the past employment, and no one seems to be disturbed about it.

(1615)

But the Minister of Economic Development, the House Leader, the man charged with managing the political direction of this Assembly, is afraid — is afraid that the average taxpayer and voter in this province would take issue, would take issue with some of the people that he has hired since November 1. This from a group of people who went to the voters a few short months ago and said, we will be different; we will not hide anything. And if we employ our own we'll stand up and tell the world about it.

And now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the member from Kindersley pointed out, the *Public Accounts* for years has been full of the names and the salaries of people that work in the public service in Saskatchewan. I remind the members of this Assembly that it was the former government that opened the Public Accounts to the public and the media back in 1983. Before that it was a closed-door process so that people could not peruse those very things.

And now the members of this new government that is so prideful of their changes are offered an opportunity in many cases to do what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? To provide a public accounts for Crown corporations, something that I have heard members of the New Democratic Party say is

not a bad idea at all. In essence you would have a public accounts of Crown corporations. And by doing so you would have the list for the public to peruse.

And if they are contemplating hiring people that they are ashamed of in some way, then don't hire them. Go to the most credible person you can find that you are proud to tell the world about. If that's the problem we have here before us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and if you aren't proud to hire them and tell the world about it, then don't do it. That's the simple solution — don't do it.

The member from Kindersley has just asked some very fundamental questions that I would think a group of people who went out and sought the votes, sought the votes of Saskatchewan voters a very short time ago on that very issue would want to fulfil. But they don't seem to want to do it, and find a million excuses. And I see member after member standing here, members that should know better, covering up and making excuses.

And I don't think that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, given the rhetoric that we heard year after year from the members of that party, is acceptable. And that's why members on this side, after those promises were made — obviously are now going to be broken — why we are calling the government to account. We are simply asking for public accounts dealing with Crown corporations.

I'd even say to the minister from Elphinstone, if this employment history thing is such a big bugaboo that you in some way would be ashamed of advertising to Saskatchewan people the history, the employment history of the folks you're hiring, then perhaps we would be content at this time to delete that and he can fill in the rest of the blanks for us, knowing full well that down the road that is the expectation.

And I make that offer to the minister. And if he doesn't want to accept it, I don't know what we can do about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I think the point has to be made — there is a fundamental difference between this side of the House and that. And we didn't go out, we didn't go out a short time ago and say to Saskatchewan voters, elect us and this is what you'll get. And obviously, by what we're seeing in the amendment today on motions for return, we are not getting that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that simply isn't good enough.

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

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

### Return No. 10

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Once again it's a fairly straightforward motion asking for the names of the people who have been hired by the Saskatchewan Energy Holdings Limited since November 1, '91, including their details of employment, including compensation; job description; qualifications, including employment history; the name of his or her immediate superior; the authority under which the person was hired; and the actual date the person started work.

It's, as I say, a rather straightforward motion and

something that we believe very definitely that the government should answer. They continue to want to amend these to take out certain parts of it, particularly including history and the qualifications because I guess they must not be hiring anybody with any qualifications. That's the only conclusion we can make from that, that the people that they're hiring have no qualifications and therefore wouldn't want to display them to people.

The member from Regina North West suggested that it's paranoia that the opposition is dealing with here. Well I would suggest to the member from Regina North West that the only paranoia being displayed here and exhibited here is by the government for not being willing to put forward this type of information.

He also talks about patronage. Well in their seven short months that these folks have been the Government of Saskatchewan, they have, I'm sure, must have set a record by now in the number of patronage employees that they hired.

We saw one in here not only, not less than an hour ago — Mr. Jack Messer. One can only wonder what kind of new job he's lining up for himself today. One can only wonder that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Maybe he isn't satisfied with just being the head of SaskPower. Maybe he feels he needs some more responsibilities so that the taxpayers of Saskatchewan can pay him some more.

You look down the list, and the list is growing day by day by day. Carole Bryant. First of all Jack Messer, as I said, Jack Messer, the former campaign chairman of the New Democratic Party — obviously a very qualified individual for employment with this government. Obviously. Everybody in Saskatchewan knows, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about his qualifications. He ran a successful campaign. That obviously gives him the qualifications to be the president of SaskPower. Everyone should be willing to accept that.

Next we see Carole Bryant sitting in the same office as Jack Messer. She is obviously qualified — a former NDP activist. Absolutely, absolutely qualified for the job that she's doing.

Next we see Mr. Don Ching. Obviously another person who's eminently qualified for almost anything that the government of the day, the NDP government, would want him to head up. He's obviously qualified.

Next we have Garry Beatty. Well we all know about Mr. Beatty's reputation and his ability to manage affairs in this province. He would be happy, I'm sure, as everybody in this province would be interested in knowing his qualifications.

That's the type of thing, Mr. Speaker, that the taxpayers of this province are interested in. When they want to hire these people, we would like to know what their qualifications are, including their employment history — which should extend, incidentally, it should extend beyond working for the NDP Party in the past. But I don't think it does extend much beyond that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we also have the members back in the

corner over there spouting off about the kinds of things that happened in the past. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, is those folks went around the province promising they'd never do it. They'd never, never, never get involved in patronage.

We have a member, the Minister of Justice, stand up in this House and tell everybody in the House and all of Saskatchewan that they're never going to participate in patronage. Never going to do that. But yet we have distinguished gentlemen like Jack Messer heading up SaskPower. That's what we have, Mr. Speaker, in this province today. The qualified individuals that they've put forward are running the province today. And they suggest that, and he is an example of NDP patronage.

We see former MLAs of that party coming forward on boards all over the place. We see former candidates coming forward. We see defeated candidates, not just . . . for example, in certain parts of the province, for example, in Kindersley, I can think of the NDP candidate in Kindersley getting an appointment to the board of STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company). Excellent opportunity for him. Yes . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, I'm sure.

The member from Biggar seconds his appointment, Mr. Speaker, and I'm happy to say that. The member from Biggar points out that the gentleman out at Kindersley, Lorne Johnston, is obviously well qualified for STC. My guess is that man has never ridden in a bus in his entire life, Mr. Speaker. That's my guess about his qualifications for that job. The only thing that qualified him for this job was that he ran for the NDP Party. That's the only thing that qualified him for this job.

And incidentally, Mr. Speaker, he didn't make a very good job of that either. He was the only person in this province, the only NDP candidate in this province that ran third — and a distant third I might point out, Mr. Speaker. He ran third in Kindersley and that obviously qualified . . . the people of Kindersley obviously feel he's eminently qualified to be in Regina. That's why they let him come in third — third in Kindersley. That's his claim to fame, Mr. Speaker.

And we go on, the list goes on and on and on about patronage appointments.

But we see again today my colleague, the member from Moosomin, asking questions about the eminent gentleman, Mr. Blakeney. But no, no, no, they get up and sanctimoniously say, this is not a patronage appointment.

Well what is it, if it isn't a patronage appointment? There isn't a person in Saskatchewan other than 55 of these folks that believe he isn't a patronage appointment. One only has to wonder about his qualifications for being on the uranium . . . for uranium company board member.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only that, the member from Swift Current says that this shouldn't be seen as an example of support for the industry. That's the most laughable thing I've heard in several weeks, Mr. Speaker, coming from these folks opposite.

They are gearing up to do some things in uranium. Hopefully, they're gearing up to renew the agreement with AECL. That's what we're hoping on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. And the people of this province are also hoping that's the case.

In spite of what all of these people, these anti-nuclear people on the other side of the House are saying today, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what they're doing. And if it isn't a clear signal to you by putting Mr. Blakeney on that board that they're going to re-enter agreements with AECL, well it sure should be, Mr. Speaker. That's the type of thing, Mr. Speaker, that's happening in this province today.

They're ashamed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They're ashamed of the people they're employing. They're ashamed of them. They won't put forward their employment history because they know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the people in the province will judge them for what they are — hiring of patronage employees. They will be judged for that by the people of this province, particularly, Mr. Speaker, if the people of this province are allowed to have a look at their qualifications and employment background. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Before I recognize the next member, I should point out to members that we're debating a motion, and that the motion has particular wording so that in your speeches or in your comments to the motion you should try every now and then to relate what it is that you're saying to the motion, either in making your comments in moving the motion or otherwise speaking to the motion.

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Well I'm very pleased, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you've highlighted what the member from Kindersley refused to do, and that is to keep to the topic. In all of his remarks, he never once referred to the . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Order, order. Order. The member for Regina North West should know, given his years of experience, that you need not reflect on any comments by the Chair.

(1630)

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The member from Kindersley is obviously feeling, or should feel, personally devastatingly embarrassed with respect to his comments with regard to this motion. And I say that for a couple of reasons, because if he had been in consultation with his desk mate who is the member from Morse, who's a member of the Crown Corporations Committee, the member from Morse would have told him, I'm sure quite co-operatively, that the questions he's raised here were raised just the other month or two in the Crown Corporations Committee.

As a matter of fact, the member might recall that Mr. Bill Baker was reported to have been making \$180,000 plus other perks and benefits, and he's the president of Sask Energy Holdings.

He might also want to consult with his partner, his desk

mate, the member from Morse who's a member of the Crown Corporations Committee and reinforce his personal embarrassment by being informed by the member for Morse that this Thursday coming up, which is June 11, the Crown Corporations Committee will be once again making SaskEnergy accountable by having the officials and the minister responsible before our committee to ask questions with respect to SaskEnergy.

So I ask the member from Kindersley before he gets off on a tirade about everything under the sun, most of which was incorrect and misguided and all of which was never related to this subject, that he consult with some of his caucus colleagues and I'm sure he'd be informed quite clearly about the business of the Crown Corporations Committee through which we raise these questions on the Crowns.

And I can't understand for the life of me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why when we're referring to the Sask Energy Holdings Ltd. in this Assembly, he is not aware that on June 11 if he comes to Crown Corporations Committee he can be chitted in by one of his colleagues. He can ask these questions of the minister and his officials, and Mr. Baker, and anybody else he wishes to during the committee meeting.

And I'm sure, I'm sure that he'll be provided with some information with respect to salaries. Like I mentioned, Mr. Baker makes \$180,000 plus, and it's some kind of a long-term contract. But I'm sure he could raise those questions with Mr. Baker . . . personally be happy to provide the answers to you. So, Mr. Member from Kindersley, I just wanted to remind you that you should perhaps take some advice from your colleague, the member from Morse.

But if you were aware of what's going on with respect to any of these Crown corporations that you're asking information on, you would know that this information is readily available from the Crown Corporations Committee during the review of these Crown corporations.

And I don't even see why it makes much sense for us to be debating this issue in this House because many of these motions for returns (debatable), Mr. Deputy Speaker, including this one on Sask Energy, can all be brought to the Crown Corporations Committee and he can be provided with information the moment he asks it, or it can be subsequently provided in writing if it's not readily available.

So I think that he's wasting our time in this House by bringing these motions forward. He's wasting even more of our time by standing up and talking about incredulous hypotheses and unsubstantiated facts that don't pertain to these motions in the first place.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. I want to add a few comments. At the end of my remarks I'm going to move a motion which would delete the words "by or accountable to the minister, directly or indirectly, excluding only members of the energy/chemical workers who were employed prior to November 1, '91." Exclude that and insert "in the minister's office."

We are more than prepared to provide the members opposite with any information that they want. This is not an attempt to keep information from them. We have not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, practised the evasion and the outright denials of information which members opposite practised when they were on this side of the House.

The chairman of the Crown Corporations quite correctly pointed out that when the Crown Investments Corporation was before the Crown Corporations Committee, all questions were answered fully, and nothing was held back. The member from Morse was there and might be able to confirm that. There was no information we didn't . . . no questions that weren't fully answered.

I invite the member from Morse to reread the *Hansard* from years gone by. When we could get the Crown Corporations to meet, which was a rarity in itself, the behaviour of the ministers who came before Crown Corporations was an exercise in evasion, an attempt to provide as little information as possible whether or not it was in their political interest to do so. It just seemed to have become a deeply ingrained habit.

As the chairman of Crown Corporations Committee pointed out, all of these Crown corporations to which you refer will be before Crown Corporations. You have the opportunity to ask whatever questions you want. And so far as one can do, the answers will be given.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to refer in a specific way to the particular request that was made. It reads:

Regarding the Minister responsible for Saskatchewan Energy Holdings (this is the phrase I want to draw members' attention to) . . . the names of all persons currently employed by or accountable to the Minister directly or indirectly . . .

That really includes everybody in Saskatchewan Energy Corporation in the sense that Crown corporations are accountable to the ministers, and all the employees in there are indirectly accountable to the ministers. There is no . . . given that phraseology, there is no way of limiting the question.

If the members had some particular concern, we would have been happy to answer it. But to ask for everybody who directly or indirectly reports to the minister is a request for the names of everybody who works at the corporation, and that would scarcely be useful.

Let me guess that members wanted information, wanted to know whether or not there was anybody paid for by the Saskatchewan Energy Corporation but who reported directly to the minister. Members opposite will recall that this was a common practice under the former administration, the special report of the auditor listed a number of instances of that and had become apparently fairly widespread in the former administration.

If that's what you wanted to know, it would have been easy to ask that. I suggest one wording to you: anyone

paid for by Saskatchewan Energy Corporation, but who reports directly to the minister. I think that would . . . first of all, it would elicit a nil answer which you may want to get that in writing. You may want to get that yourself in writing. I invite you ask it.

There still is a lengthy time left in this session; you still have the opportunity to ask more questions. If you have some specific concern, please word it in a fashion which can be answered.

But I say to members opposite, the way you worded this question cannot be answered. There is no way of limiting, there is no real way of limiting, the answer. We could imagine what you want. I can speculate that you want to know the names of anyone who reports to the minister but is paid for by the corporation, but that really is speculation. I may be wrong. It may be some other evil that you are trying to rout out — trying to root out. So I say to members opposite, the way you worded the question it could not be answered literally.

We have given you our assurance in . . . I give you assurance on this occasion. It has been done on past occasions. It was the subject of a lengthy discussion during the estimates of the Public Service Commission. We do not . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Nobody believes that.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well I shall return to the comment of the member from Kindersley that nobody believes it. We said during the estimates of the Public Service Commission that there was no such practice. The Premier has made it crystal clear that that practice is to halt. People who report to the ministers must work in their offices and be accounted for through estimates of the public . . . the estimates of Executive Council. People are not to be squirrelled away in departments. The Premier has made that clear.

And the member from Kindersley says nobody believes that. The members of the opposition don't believe it because they persist in imagining that everybody runs the government like you people did. I say to the members opposite, nobody ran a government like you people ran a government. Nobody had done it in the past and nobody will do it again.

You people will stand alone as having been in charge of the sloppiest management, the worst system in terms of accountability, the most patronage-ridden administration in Saskatchewan's history. Nobody runs a government the way you people did.

**An Hon. Member:** — You're going downhill with the wind on a slippery slope, Ned.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well the member from Morse, who is so chatty from his seat . . . I hope the member from Morse rises in his comments, rises in this House, and compares the approach of the Crown corporations this year with the approach of the Crown corporations in previous years.

I hope the member is candid enough with himself and this

House to discuss that. The Crown corporations . . . I will sit down in time for the member from Kindersley — he's already commented — I'll sit down in plenty of time for the member from Morse to make his comments.

I want to point out to members opposite that we have been forthcoming with you. We have given you all the information you wanted. That was true in estimates, that was true in the Crown Corporations Committee, and it will be true here. If you have a specific concern about the hiring practices of any Crown corporation, rephrase your question in a fashion in which it can be answered.

I want to make specific mention of the second amendment. The second amendment is that we will be . . . At the conclusion of my remarks, I will be deleting the words "including employment history".

My initial reaction to this request was that it was reasonable. Indeed in my own, in my estimates for the Public Service Commission, we gave this information. I've since been persuaded that where one is dealing with an employee whose employment history you don't know, this may not be wise.

I was asked in the estimates for SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) actually, for the employment history of certain people. I knew the people, I frankly knew their employment history, and I gave it. I have since been persuaded this may not be wise.

I refer members to the freedom of information Act which you passed before being unceremoniously escorted out of office. You excluded from the list of information which needs to be answered — there was a following exclusion included: Section 24 (1) stated that personal information need not be divulged. Then subsection (2) of section 24, defined personal information to include information that relates to the education or criminal or employment history of the individual. And then the section goes on, but those . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — . . . all a bunch of criminals?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — No, I'm not suggesting everybody's a criminal. I am suggesting that people who have been criminals (a) have a right to employment, (b) have a right to have that not disclosed to anyone without a good reason to know it. There may well be . . . there are occasions when that information should be excluded. Sorry, there are occasions when that information should be divulged. For instance, when one applies to be a member of a police force, obviously any employment history should be provided. That's something that that employer has a real interest in knowing because of the enormous trust placed in officers who wear uniforms.

But I remind members opposite that once this information is given here it becomes public information, anyone is entitled to it. Employment history may disclose a lengthy period of unemployment. It may . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I am, I'm dealing directly with the amendment, unlike the members opposite who talked about every conceivable Crown corporation but SaskEnergy. I have been dealing with SaskEnergy. The members opposite may not find the comments to their

liking. They may not agree with them, but my comments have never strayed one syllable from SaskEnergy. I've simply been trying to explain to members opposite why the information they requested is not appropriate.

(1645)

Employment history may well disclose things that a person is not proud of, and I remind members that this is public information. Once it is disclosed, everyone has a right to it. There may be a lengthy period of unemployment. There may be lengthy gaps which might indeed be a period of incarceration. People have a right not to have that disclosed. You . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, that may be the member . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Listen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to what the members opposite are asking us to do.

Without any authority from this legislature, they're asking us to go through the information and cull those names that we think, in our judgement, is not appropriate to disclose. Is that really the process you want?

I say to members opposite, if you don't understand the process then let me explain to you what we're doing here. Once this Assembly orders a return we have to provide it, and we don't have any discretion left. If this order were to pass without amendment we would have to disclose the employment history of everyone, including people who have been incarcerated.

We do not have the discretion to act upon informal comments made by members from their seats. We are thus, Mr. Speaker, going to be excluding the employment history of the people. And if members have some particular concerns that aren't being answered by the fashion in which we ask the question, please feel free to put another order for return back on the order paper.

One of the things that has changed, Mr. Speaker, is that these questions are being answered early in a timely way in the session, unlike the former government which answered them all at the end of the session so there was no chance to retrieve and ask follow-up questions. These questions are being asked early. If there is specific information which the members want, they can, Mr. Speaker, ask for additional information.

I will move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Eastview, I move the motion be amended as follows:

That the words "by or accountable to the minister, directly or indirectly, excluding only members of the Energy and Chemical Workers Union who were so employed prior to November 1, '91" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

"In the minister's office."

And that the words "including employment history" be deleted.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wanted to make a few comments regarding the long liturgy that has been presented by the Associate Minister of Finance.

I found it very interesting, first of all, to have the member from Regina North West stand in the House and talk about how co-operative the ministers had been in Crown Corporations and the fact that information such as this would be available in Crown Corporations, and we will say we appreciated the forthrightness by the ministers, and we expect that in proceeding Crown Corporations Committee ministers will be as forthright and be coming with the information to members of the committee.

At the same time the minister talked about being open and sharing information, being so willing to divulge information — any information that was pertinent and certainly informative and available to the public. Then the minister turns around and indicates to this House that he's going to be somewhat restrictive in the information that he is willing to put forward.

And that is the problem that we have on this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the fact that it seems the information that is being released to the members, and in response to the questions that are being presented by this side of the House, is being limited to information that the government members feel lead or are willing to release to the opposition members.

The minister also acknowledged or indicated that the government would be consultative. And a number of our motions will be talking about a consultative process, not just looking for information on employment practices and former employment and hiring practices, but the consultation process that would have taken place, or we're assuming took place. At least the indications are there that that has taken place.

The minister also said that he would give his word and make a commitment to members of the Assembly, to opposition members, to abide by his promises. And I want to remind the minister, the Associate Minister of Finance, that members on this side of the House, in light of recent developments, certainly have some concerns regarding to commitments by ministers as the minister in recent debate on Public Service Commission made a commitment to the member from Arm River to supply him with the files that are in his office, by last Friday, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to remind the minister of the fact that the member from Arm River is still waiting for that information that the minister promised to deliver to his office by Friday.

In light of that fact, it begs the question, one wonders how far we can go in trusting the minister to indeed live up to his word and his commitments and promises — not just this minister, but all ministers on the government side of the House.

So the question before the Assembly regarding the motion that has been brought forward by my colleague from Kindersley is the fact that the information, as we've already heard, is available through the *Public Accounts*. The minister has said it would be available through the

Crown Corporations Committee. If this information is available, I don't see where we then have a problem in releasing the same information to the House in response to the questions that have been placed by the members at this time.

As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the minister raised the question of the process and the fact, well, maybe the former government didn't do this. Or we can go back to the '70s when we say maybe at that time the former government didn't meet these requirements.

The facts are that a commitment was made to Saskatchewan taxpayers that this government would be different, that this government would be more open, that this government would be consultative. And so if this government is going to be more open, if this government is going to be free and willing to release the information and answer the questions, then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we ask . . . the question is posed, why then would the ministers or members of the front benches on the government side continually amend the motions as they are being placed before the Assembly today?

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wanted to take a moment to bring those concerns, on behalf of the opposition, forward to the House to remind the minister of his commitment to this Assembly and to the members on this side of the House.

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to just make a few comments myself on this motion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was a bit surprised to hear our friend from Moosomin get up and speak in the way that he did. Mr. Deputy Speaker, our friend from Moosomin was one of the members of the former government, Mr. Speaker, that I think has a national reputation — had a national reputation — for being unaccountable, for their secrecy and their closed government. They had a national reputation for withholding information, and patronage.

In fact a book or two or three were written on this government . . . the previous government's level of patronage, written on their level of patronage. And they were national books. You were recognized nationally as a government that took patronage to new heights. So don't talk, you know, don't talk about what some other government may do.

You know if you'd be honest with yourself as you look at the legislation that was passed in the previous session near Christmas time, that in fact there were Bills passed so that never again can a government withhold information and not table documents in the way that you people did. That was done by convention and tradition in the past. But you people ran the government in such a way that we had to bring in laws because you didn't respect the basic tenets of openness and honesty and sharing information with this Legislative Assembly.

So I wanted to rise for a few minutes and support the amendment of the Associate Minister of Finance. And I also support what the member from Regina North West said, who is the chairman of the Crown Corporations

Committee, that you have your opportunity in just two days to ask all the detailed questions you want about SaskEnergy. And I encourage you to come and to do that.

And you'll be there and that's great. Because when you were in government you will recall that you refused to call the Crown Corporations Committee to meet. Now the new members may not know this, because you probably didn't tell them. And you refused to call Public Accounts as well. So you're not used to the idea that Crown Corporations meetings are going to actually be held. But they're held on Thursday and you'll be welcome to attend.

Now you want a list of all employees potentially of SaskEnergy. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that just simply isn't reasonable for the reasons that were outlined by the Associate Minister of Finance. I remind the member from Kindersley that you people would not even share basic information about the salary and benefits of the president — of the president.

Now think about that. You're wanting a list of all the employees of SaskEnergy. You wouldn't even share, you wouldn't even share the salary and the benefits of the president. And we know why, because we found out that there was almost a half a million dollars a year. In fact you negotiated a settlement with the chairman of the Potash Corporation, the president, that was \$740,000 a year. So that's the kind of information that you didn't share either until that was leaked to us.

So this is why that you people are over there now. I mean all of a sudden you've got this sanctimonious attitude, you've got this sanctimonious attitude about sharing information and openness. You're over there because you wouldn't do that.

Now the critic for Finance says, took a lot of pride in saying, that we opened up; he says we opened up the Public Accounts process to the public and to media. What he failed to say is that they never called a committee together. Now we tried on many occasions to embarrass the premier into calling Crown Corporations Committee together. He wouldn't do it.

We tried many times to involve the Speaker to ensure that Public Accounts meetings were held and we weren't successful. The auditor wasn't successful in getting the information that you now are so anxious to have. Well I would just like to say that we have shared more information already. We have tabled annual reports and financial statements on time. We will continue to do that in the future.

And I think the public is quite satisfied that this government is starting out in a very accountable and open manner. We've complied with the Gass Commission recommendations, and the Provincial Auditor was part of that process, and we'll continue to do so.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, given the time, I would like to at this point adjourn the debate on this motion.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 p.m.