

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Murray: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased this morning to introduce to you and through you to my colleagues in this Assembly a group of children, 48 of them actually, representing grades 4, 5, and 6, from South Shore Elementary School in Regina Beach.

They are accompanied by their teachers JoAnne Beach and Shawn McCall; their chaperons Carla Gusway and Kenda Ashton; and their bus driver Tone Pearce.

They invited me to their school last week and I thought it only fitting that I should invite them back here. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming them here this morning. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased this morning to have the opportunity to introduce through you to all members of the Saskatchewan legislature, representatives in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, who are visiting our province. They represent the China National Waterproof Building Materials Corporation.

They are here, Mr. Speaker, meeting with provincial, civic officials, as well as with the officials of Moose Jaw Asphalt and Saskoil, looking at developing a cooperative project in the city of Moose Jaw here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed having the opportunity this morning to meet with the delegation, and now I would like to introduce them to all members of the house: vice-president of the corporation, Mr. Chen; chief engineer, Mr. Zhang; chief of the research institute, Mr. Liu; and economist with the corporation, Mr. Xu.

They are being hosted in Canada by two representatives of the Happy Trading Company, Mr. Joseph Chan and Mr. George Shaw. And with us this morning also in the House, Mr. Speaker, from Moose Jaw Asphalt, Mr. Ed Long, who's vice-president and general manager; Paul Picherak, who's our refinery manager in Moose Jaw; and from Saskoil, Mr. Tim Jeffery, corporate affairs coordinator; and Mr. Doug Wakabayashi, corporate affairs assistant.

So please, members, assist me in welcoming this delegation.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, we too want to welcome the delegation here from China. It's a unique experience. I have a nephew of mine who's a doctor of veterinary medicine who's teaching land range management in

Hohut in Inner Mongolia, I believe that is, in China. And he's teaching there right now. And I want to welcome you. It's of interest to me that you're here, and I hope you enjoy your stay here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me this morning to introduce to you, sir, and to the other members of the gallery, Mr. Charles Stonecipher, who is attached to the U.S. (United States) Consulate in Calgary. Mr. Stonecipher, if you'd stand up, please.

Mr. Stonecipher is naturally interested in what happens in the political process in western Canada. He represents our largest trading partner, and certainly the trends in Canada in what we do with our relationships in the North American continent is something that we all need to be cognizant of all the time. And I would just like to welcome Mr. Stonecipher to the Assembly this morning.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Utility Rate Increases

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the minister for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). Mr. Minister, you have announced a range of increases which you called modest. But when the bills start coming in to the people of Saskatchewan in the farming sector, they're being knocked for a terrible loop.

The increase for farmers is not anything approaching modest. Mr. Minister, I have an actual example here from a farmer in the Last Mountain-Touchwood area, where his farm truck plates have gone from \$567 a year to \$718 after your announcement. That's a 26.6 per cent increase, Mr. Minister — 26.6 per cent when Saskatchewan's inflation rate is zero.

Is it your view that a 26 per cent increase falls into the category of modest? Is that the kind of modest annual increase that we can expect every year from your government?

Hon. Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to indicate to the hon. member that the increase, average increase that was effective April 1, was 7.6 per cent in respect to registration across the board. And I want to say that that is considerably modest compared to when his party was the government of the day.

I want to indicate here that in respect to registration, in 1982 the fees were increased 15 per cent across the board. In 1984 they were increased 11 per cent. In 1987 they rose 20 per cent. That's the record that your government indicated. And I want to indicate in respect to registration in respect to farm vehicles, 67,000 mini-vans, quarter tons, half tons, \$75 registration fee, percentage increase: none — zero.

In respect to heavy farm trucks — two-, three-, four-axle

trucks, 74,800 of them — increases range from \$4 to \$11. I think that is a reasonable increase in comparison to the record of your government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, the minister talks of 11 per cent increases, 15 per cent increases, and yet this is a 26 per cent increase. This is a farm truck that increased by \$151 dollars — not \$4, Mr. Speaker, not \$7, not \$11. Again I ask the question to the Minister for SGI: is this type of modest increase, in his terms, going to continue year after year with his government?

Hon. Mr. Koskie: — I want to indicate to the member, as I have indicated, the increases in respect to registration, the average is 7.6 per cent. The only indications of any increases is in respect to five-axle trucks which comprise about 25 to 40 per cent equivalence to commercial trucks. There was some increase there, but in no case was there 26 per cent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, the auto insurance rates for 1972 to 1982 increased 80 per cent under the previous NDP government. Under the previous administration the insurance rate increases from 1983 to 1991 were 9.5 per cent. There's a big difference there, Mr. Speaker.

And the 26.6 per cent that occurred for this farmer from Elfros, he wants to know if he's going to be facing the same thing next year and the year after. And, Mr. Minister, you have not yet answered that question.

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Well, Mr. Speaker, in regards to the increases on SGI, we had a 4.75 per cent increase. And the reason for the increase, so that the member understands, is that the losses we're incurring are \$40 million approximately, over \$40 million in the past two years.

And also, for the member's knowledge, we are now . . . had to deal with a court case where 80 per cent of the cases now in liability are on whiplash, and they had gone up from 25,000 to \$50,000.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, the minister talks of whiplash injuries, but how many people in large farm trucks suffer whiplash injuries? Perhaps he should be looking in that area.

I understand why they're looking at increasing the profits of the Crown corporations.

I'd like to direct a question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, or to any of the other economic ministers in his empire. Mr. Premier, according to all the numbers publicly available, the inflation rate in Saskatchewan now has only one significant component. Almost the whole province's inflation rate consists of increases in government fees and taxes.

Mr. Premier, will you acknowledge today that you are responsible for all the inflation in the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Economic Development, let me say that we have a relatively low rate of inflation today. It is lower than it has been in almost two decades.

That comes about because . . . I think that, Mr. Speaker, I think that comes about largely because of this Conservative prosperity which we have visited upon this nation, both federally and provincially during the last decade. So there is perhaps one and only one benefit of having Conservatives in office federally and provincially, and that is the economy is so depressed, we do have a low inflation rate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, it seems we have a couple of Finance ministers too many, because we have to get the Minister of Labour to answer the finance questions.

Again I would direct to the Premier: have you been suggesting that without government increases that in all sectors of this province that the province would not have an inflation rate? Actually, Mr. Premier, without your tax increases we would have a deflation rate in this province.

Now you're arguing that the rate increases for utilities should be funding the deficit, yet you are also arguing that you cannot take dividends out of the Crown corporations to pay down this deficit.

Mr. Premier, without getting into your whiny rhetoric about the past, let's deal with your responsibilities today — your responsibilities. You're raking in hundreds of millions of dollars of profit from the Crown corporations. Will you at least agree today to use these profits to reduce the operating deficit of this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite asked a number of questions, I'll answer some this time and some the next time. With respect to utility increases. I have here an article from *The Globe and Mail*, February 23. They say: "electricity rates rose 6.5 per cent nationally" in Canada.

Now what's interesting is in Saskatchewan they only rose 4 per cent. They talk about comparisons with other provinces that in fact, across the piece, rates have tended to go up about 10 per cent. So our record compares very favourably.

Now with respect to what happens to monies that go to Crown corporations, some of those monies are used to finance the bad deals which we inherited from the previous administration.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Import of Video Lottery Terminals

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for the Gaming Commission. Madam Minister, the continued confusion and lack of direction by this government is causing havoc in the gaming industry. It is hurting volunteers, church groups, sports organizations, and Indian bands.

Respecting the White Bear Reserve casino, my first question is whether or not the province gave any approvals or authority of any kind for the video lottery terminals to enter our province from Wisconsin?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, the Gaming Commission had no involvement with those video lottery terminals. The policy of the government and the Gaming Commission is that the only video lottery terminals that we will approve are government owned through Western Canada Lottery Corporation.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, the question to the Gaming Commission minister again. Under Wisconsin state law, an American law, any movement of slot machines must be reported to the Wisconsin Gaming Commission. U.S. federal law also disallows the sale of video lottery terminals to certain jurisdictions. Is the minister aware of whether Canada or Saskatchewan is one of the allowed or restricted jurisdictions? And can you tell us what communication took place between Wisconsin and Saskatchewan on the transfer of these machines?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, if there was any jurisdiction involved with respect to those machines, it would be federal because it would be customs at the border.

One of the problems we have with what is happening at White Bear is that the machines, we have no knowledge of. They are not government-approved machines. So we have no knowledge of where they come from or the conditions under which they arrived here.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Madam Minister, it has been reported that the business transaction on these video lottery machines was facilitated by a so-called middleman. Will the minister tell us who this middleman was?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, if I could go through the constitution. When any commodity crosses a border from another country into Canada, if any jurisdiction is going to be involved in that transaction, it is going to be the federal government not a provincial government. So if there was any contact with the government, it would have been the federal government.

Our concern about . . . one of the concerns about what is occurring at White Bear is we have no knowledge about the machines. They are not our machines. So these questions are questions that the government cannot answer.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Justice then. Does the Minister of Justice know whether these machines entered the province of Saskatchewan legally or illegally?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know. I think you should probably address that question to your cousins in Ottawa. We have no jurisdiction with respect to the entry of those machines into Canada. All we can say is that in the administration of the criminal law, for which we are responsible, those machines can't operate legally.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, the responsibility of gaming in the province of Saskatchewan is the responsibility of the Minister of Justice for the province of Saskatchewan under the Criminal Code. And my question to you, sir, is: are these — and you just concluded by stating that they were not here legally — are you saying that they entered Canada illegally?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, they can't be used legally. I think that unless and until they're used, no offence has been committed. At least I'm not aware of any offence that's been committed. But when they're set up and functioning as a gaming machine, then they do run into problems with the Criminal Code, and then it is illegal. And then it is our obligation in the administration of the Criminal Code to do something.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, were these machines in operation the past weekend?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — As the member well knows, they were. Media reports make that quite clear, and there were television pictures that show that to be the case.

And I would just like to know, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, just what is the position of our friends opposite. Is it the position of the member from Morse, who seems to be critical that we didn't act; or is it the position of the member from Souris-Cannington, who was on the radio this morning criticizing us for not allowing this casino to operate?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Let the member have his turn asking his question.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, did the terminals that entered into Saskatchewan . . . were they checked at all by the Gaming Commission to see whether they were legal machines or illegal machines? The responsibility, Mr. Minister, or Madam Minister, is that the Gaming Commission is responsible to exercise its authority under law in relation to the Criminal Code. Did you inspect them?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, if I could go through that again. The Gaming Commission makes policy with respect to gaming in the province of Saskatchewan. If there is a legal problem, it goes over to the Minister of Justice. If it is a problem with goods being transported across the border, it goes to the federal government. Our jurisdiction is quite restricted — gaming policy and the enforcement of that policy. It's not imports; it is not Justice.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, while we can understand it is a complicated issue, Madam Minister, we believe this government's lack of action is making the situation worse. Will the minister confirm whether or not the government has received any advance recommendations or communications from the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) about the province's jurisdiction in relation to this matter.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, Madam Minister, is it then the possibility that individuals from all across Saskatchewan, whether they are bingo hall operators, whether they are Indian reserves from across Saskatchewan, can bring these kinds of machines in any time from anywhere in the world?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Again, Mr. Speaker, that would be an issue for the federal government. The issue for the Gaming Commission is to detect any breach of gaming regulations. So if we became aware of a machine in operation, it is a breach of a gaming regulation. A machine coming across the border is not a breach of our regulations. If there is a breach because there is a gaming facility in operation in contravention of our regulations, then we turn it over to the Department of Justice.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, Madam Minister, there were . . . in the media it said between 1500 and 1800 people were at the casino during the time of its operation. Does the minister know how much money was gambled there?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, immediately that I became aware that there was a casino operating in contravention of the gaming regulations of this province, it is a Criminal Code offence and I immediately informed the Minister of Justice and he took over that file after that point.

Mr. Martens: — Okay. Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, then I'm going to ask the same question to the Minister of Justice. Does the minister know how much money was gambled over the past weekend?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — The answer to that piercing and devastating question, Mr. Speaker, is no, I do not know how much money was wagered in White Bear last weekend.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Will the minister acknowledge to this Assembly, either one of them, whether there was any arrangement between the Indian band and the Department of Justice or the Gaming Commission for any volume of dollars returning to it in relation to an agreement that you have reached between the two of them?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, if I could try to explain this again.

Immediately that we became aware that there was a casino operating in contravention of the regulations it became a legal problem which was turned over to the Minister of Justice.

We have no agreement with White Bear with respect to anything, because from our point of view, they are in contravention of the Criminal Code and therefore the Minister of Justice will take the file from this point on.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Madam Minister, from the public remarks of the band leadership yesterday, we understand that the band offered a policy solution that would leave the issues of jurisdiction completely alone, and set it aside.

Will the minister acknowledge that the Indians themselves offered a compromise that would see all people in Saskatchewan treated equally without even dealing with the issue of band rights?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, that is not accurate. This government has come out with a gaming policy and it is the only jurisdiction in Canada which has provided a legal framework in which Indian and Metis people can participate in gaming, in casino activity.

We have developed a policy for the whole province. We attempted to work with White Bear to fit them under the umbrella of that policy, but that was not successful. But as I say, what we are proud of is that we are the only jurisdiction in Canada that has legally provided a place for Indian and Metis people to participate in casino activity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Did this discussion take place between the minister and the band or the Gaming Commission and the band?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — We're taking turns trying to shed some light on the member's obvious confusion about this thing.

The discussions that went on over the past two weeks involved myself at a couple of stages, involved the minister responsible for the Gaming Commission on at least one occasion, and involved throughout senior officials from the Department of Justice and from the Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat as well as a representative from the Saskatchewan Gaming Commission.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Madam Minister, did the minister have representatives of the Gaming Commission present during the time of the apparently illegal action taken by the White Bear Indian Reserve?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, if I can understand your question, if you're asking if the gaming officials were at White Bear, no is the answer.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Madam Minister, and Minister of Justice, did the Department of Justice . . . or were there any RCMP or any of those people at the site during the time of the action taken by the Indian band?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, there were no members of the Department of Justice or representatives of the Department of Justice at the White Bear facility last weekend.

I'm not able to tell the member whether there was anyone there who was in any way representing the RCMP. I simply don't have that information.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Madam Minister, my question to you is this. What is . . . Or Mr. Minister of Justice, whoever. What are you going to do today in light of the fact that today they may be opening up the casino there today again? What is your response to that?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, the RCMP is of course aware of the plans of the band to the extent that those plans have been announced and reported in the media.

I said yesterday and I repeat today that the RCMP is among the finest police forces in the world. They have as part of their obligation the enforcement of the Criminal Code. And it is my understanding that they will be enforcing the Criminal Code if indeed this turns out to happen on the weekend at White Bear.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Accountability of Crown Corporations

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, the Provincial Auditor has made a number of recommendations pertaining to how Crown corporation monies are reported to the Legislative Assembly and how those monies should be viewed in relationship to the Consolidated Fund. Those recommendations were made some months ago.

I'm wondering if you could tell the Assembly this morning if you are prepared to follow the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor that Crown corporation profits should be routed through the Consolidated Fund so that this Assembly and its members can deal properly with them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, I'm again very proud of this government's record in complying with the Gass recommendations with respect to the accountability of Crown corporations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — I truly find it incredible that the member opposite would talk about the accountability of the Crown corporations in light of their record. Under their administration Crown corporations could be created without the public being aware of the mandate, without the monies being spent accountable to the legislature, and we could find out as we did with Saskatchewan Diversification Corporation that the taxpayer was left with a bill of \$14 million. So as I say, I am very proud of our record in complying with the Gass recommendations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question once again is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, it's amazing how your Minister of Finance can stand up and hide behind the Gass Commission when it's appropriate in this House. I mean, to use the Gass Commission as a reason to try and steal the funds of the wildlife people in this province, and now we hear that that same *raison d'être* is going to be used to take away the charities monies in this province.

I didn't hear the Finance minister talk about the Provincial Auditor at all. We're not talking about me or anybody else in this Assembly. We're talking about the only individual in the Government of Saskatchewan that has no political agenda, who simply deals with responsibility of the taxpayers.

Now I ask again, Mr. Premier: the auditor has made a recommendation based on, amongst other things, the report of the Gass Commission. It deals with how Crown corporations and their profitability will be handled in this Assembly. Do you agree that there should be some consideration for the auditor's recommendations?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, this government always takes the auditor very seriously. The auditor's recommendations have gone to the Public Accounts Committee and we will await their report. But I think what is important here is that the progress that this government has made thus far in ensuring that Crown corporations are accountable. Their financial statements now all have to come to this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — We will be passing legislation in this session to ensure that in future if a Crown corporation is going to be created, this legislature has to be aware of its mandate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — And we will ensure that the Crown Corporations Committee can review in detail the financial statements and other affairs of these Crowns.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 6 — An Act to amend The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, 1982

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I move that An Act to amend The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, 1982 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.

Bill No. 7 — An Act respecting Social Workers

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that The Social Workers Act, An Act respecting Social Workers, now be introduced and read a first time.

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

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, yesterday after question period a point of order was raised by the member for Rosthern regarding language used by the Minister of Health in replying to an oral question. The member did not identify the words that caused him concern. And in future I ask members, be prepared to cite the words that they find to be unparliamentary.

I have reviewed the verbatim for yesterday's question period and I sense that the words at issue are the ones used by the minister when she said, and I quote: "I don't know what these guys have been smoking . . ." I am concerned about the use of innuendo and personal reflections such as these which have the potential to create disorder in question period.

Earlier in yesterday's question period I cautioned the member for Rosthern for accusing the minister of using blackmail tactics, as I found those words to be inflammatory. While the comments were of a different character, I also want to caution the Minister of Health to refrain from using the language she used yesterday. To make such insinuations about other members, whether made in jest or not, is inappropriate in this place.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We'll move that this question be converted to an order for return (debatable).

The Speaker: — Order for return debate. Order.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Stanger, seconded by Mr. Renaud, and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Boyd.

Mr. Jess: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is once again a great honour to stand before you and bring greetings to this Assembly on behalf of the residents of Redberry. It is . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. I'm not able to hear the member from Redberry. Could we please have order in the House.

Mr. Jess: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a privilege to represent them at the third session of the twenty-second legislature of Saskatchewan. I would like to commend the Lieutenant Governor for her fine delivery of the Speech from the Throne, and the Premier for clearly establishing a new direction for our province.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster for moving the Speech from the Throne, and the member from Kelsey-Tisdale for his seconding. Both members spoke on issues of major importance to the people of Saskatchewan.

I would also at this time like to congratulate the Kinettes, the Kinsmen, and the people of Saskatchewan for another very successful Telemiracle.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jess: — It was a very successful weekend involving thousands of people, many months of work, which was responsible for raising just over \$2 million.

It is interesting that this whole performance, this whole process, and all these hours and months of work and donations raised approximately the same volume of money that Saskatchewan people collect each and every day to pay the interest on the Tory debt. Over \$2 million each and every day. Isn't that just divine!

I am pleased to have this opportunity to inform the Assembly about the people of Redberry, and to share some of their hopes and dreams for this province. Redberry consists of many small towns and farms in the north-central part of the province. The people of Redberry are made up of a vast range of ethnic groups with the people being as diverse as the countryside. However the people have a common thread, and that is the will to work together to once again rebuild Saskatchewan.

Last August, Mr. Speaker, we had an official opening in my constituency for the Redberry Lake Interpretive Centre, a centre that will allow the public to observe the pelican nesting grounds without disturbing them — another project of cooperation which this throne speech talks about.

I learned something at that opening that I would like to pass on to the members of the opposition. A pelican swallows its lunch whole, then brings the same lunch

back in a slightly different form. That's for its offspring or for itself. It eats the same thing twice. It may change it slightly the second time, but it's still the same old, stinking fish. I've been listening to the speeches of the members of the opposition for a while, and it's the same old fish.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jess: — Yes, the same old fish that we've been smelling for about 10 years now. They have learned nothing. They realize less about what they have done to Saskatchewan.

I often hear people question the wisdom of the former premier, the present member for Estevan, question him because of the massive debt that he left future generations. They suggest that he has failed because he did not understand what he was doing to the people of Saskatchewan. Unlike so many, I don't think as an economist he was a failure. I believe we are in this mess because he did know what he was doing. He deliberately planned to have the people of Saskatchewan so burdened with debt that even this government, with its social conscience, could never be able to restructure this province so that it could once again be a leader in North America.

In spite of the situation in which we find ourselves in, Saskatchewan is rebuilding and this throne speech is just one step on the long road to recovery.

I was pleased to hear that the Lieutenant Governor state that of the hundreds of the new expanding and potential business projects in this province, more than half of them are outside of Regina and Saskatoon. Those outside our two largest cities have the potential to create or maintain almost 8,000 jobs. The regional economic development authorities will empower communities to deal directly with development. This is truly an approach that will increase opportunity for input in development by people in small communities such as I represent in Redberry.

Mr. Speaker, like more than a third of the constituencies in this province, Redberry depends on agriculture for its prosperity and for its identity. It may be statistically fair to say that Saskatchewan is becoming more urbanized, that the movement from farms and the small towns into cities is happening all over the world. But for some time to come agriculture will remain the economic, social, and cultural background of this province.

I am proud to represent the people of Redberry and I am deeply concerned for their welfare, Mr. Speaker, because of the current farm revenue crisis — a crisis not of their making but a crisis none the less. The throne speech indicated the strong support our government is prepared to make to the family farm as we know it in Saskatchewan. The recent attempt to assemble large tracts of farm land near Eston has shown the need for amendments which will be introduced this session to The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act.

Efforts are being made to consult with farmers and farm groups to develop an improved safety net system. Sadly the federal government refuses to become involved. Responding to the crisis in agriculture needs the

commitment from all levels of government. The government of Saskatchewan has responded; the government of Canada is sitting on its thumb. The members of the opposition are holding that thumb that the feds are sitting on.

Members of the opposition support that the third line of defence is being withheld from Saskatchewan farmers by the federal government. Mr. Speaker, we took a bad program, that Tory Bill, GRIP (gross revenue insurance program), made out of tar paper and chewing gum. We consulted with farm groups throughout the province. We listened to their advice. We made a bad program somewhat better. Considering what we started with, it's not bad, but as the Premier said, it wasn't good enough.

(1045)

We did our part, and are doing our part now. The federal government reneged on its responsibilities. Mr. Speaker, one could make some pretty good guesses as to why the federal Tory government is no longer interested in helping the farmers of Saskatchewan. One could argue that there are some reasons having to do with the political expediency and upcoming federal election. Some might argue that. I don't.

I only know the third line of defence was promised by the federal government and it has not yet arrived. Rather than provide support, they've reduced it and delayed it. To my mind, Mr. Speaker, that is not cooperative, not cooperative federalism at all. But we will continue to press the federal government to assume their responsibilities. The solution is international. The agent is the Government of Canada.

Since the Speech from the Throne was prepared, Saskatchewan people find themselves set back another \$106 million by another strange deal between Ottawa and the previous Saskatchewan government. Odd how that money came forward to Saskatchewan prior to the election and then is being reclaimed after. Just another method of the Tory government trying to buy an election with the taxpayers' own money.

Ottawa says that they have to have it back. That was the same day that they announced an additional billion dollars-plus to expand the purchase agreement for helicopters — a deal that itself will cost more than a third of the total provincial debt. This is just one more Tory debt for us to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, there are many commendable ideas and issues in the throne speech. Those issues I would like to address, but two in particular are important, and I believe important and connected.

As a part of our mandate for change, the throne speech announces that the government will continue to restore the Saskatchewan spirit of community and cooperation and it will use this spirit to help its aim of bringing about economic recovery, the *Partnership for Renewal*.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jess: — Mr. Speaker, I applaud the idea of

cooperation as outlined in the minister's *Partnership for Renewal*. I am in favour of streamlining the many economic development programs left over from the Tories into one department.

But, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, real economic recovery and real community cooperation will be spearheaded by our small-business sector. The sector that employs the most people in our province. The sector that most directly mirrors the ups and downs of our economic life. The sector that asks for the least from government. And over the past 10 years the sector that has been kicked around the most by the previous government.

As economic recovery happens once again, our small-business people are leading the way quietly and efficiently. It is the nature of the small-business person to be self-reliant. It is their survival that demands that efficiency. It is their character that ensures they will hire within their own community, within . . . but within the community and contribute to the prosperity of that community.

Especially in a constituency like mine, Mr. Speaker, small business provides a barometer for the health of the community as well as providing leadership in maintaining that health.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are signs, preliminary signs, that the health of our province and of our small business is coming out of the critical stage. I am not much of an economist, but I know that if the customer leaves the territory, business suffers. Even the member from Moosomin understands that.

And for 10 years, Mr. Speaker, customers were leaving this province in droves, fleeing the plague of the Tories. They campaigned in 1982 on the theme of bringing the children home. And then they drove the children away. Our population shrank. Our customers fled. Our businesses suffered.

Take a year, any year, Mr. Speaker. Take 1990 for instance. During 1990 Saskatchewan's population shrank by 6,596 people. That's taking all factors into account — births, deaths, and in- and out-migration — 6,596 fewer people than the year before. That's like losing Meadow Lake and a couple of villages thrown in. And that's a lot of business gone elsewhere.

By comparison, Mr. Speaker, during '91 our population shrank by only 187 people. But what's interesting, what's hopeful, Mr. Speaker, is this. During the last three months of 1991 from the time the election was called to the end of the year, our population actually grew by 254 people. Not a huge number, but compared to the 1,975 people who left during the same months the year before, not bad at all.

All members will know that housing starts are up substantially. These figures show one thing, Mr. Speaker, they show the attitudes are changing. They show that where before there was gloom and doom, there is now hope. They show that Canadians are coming to where they believe the economy will improve. They might even show that some of Saskatchewan's children, now 10

years older, are finally coming home.

They show that people are responding to this new government and what it represents. They show that people are eager to be part of our mandate for change. And leading the way will be our self-reliant, quiet, efficient, small businesses. Those businesses are hiring Saskatchewan people, buying Saskatchewan goods and services, and enhancing Saskatchewan life, but with a smile on their faces for the first time in many years.

The economy is improving. People are coming. They're coming to a place where financial order is being restored — a place where optimism begins each day once more. It is encouraging to know that while we are providing the responsible government which we promised, we are still able to do positive things for our people.

For the last 15 months the people of Redberry have assisted me as we work towards improving health care. Their efforts will be rewarded when they become part of the new health care districts. I remember the strong dedication to the betterment of health care that was shown by many Redberry residents over 30 years ago when medicare was first being introduced. The kind of wellness model that is being developed will serve the need of that constituency of Redberry as it will indeed serve all of the people of Saskatchewan.

As a member of the caucus committee on health, social policy, and justice, it has been a great opportunity for me to work with others as the wellness program develops. We are fortunate in this province to have the Minister of Health who is truly a leader in her field.

As an integral part of wellness, but also enhancing social justice, we are initiating an action plan for children. All citizens of this province must have adequate food, clothing, shelter, and a safe environment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jess: — Changes to The Workers' Compensation Act, Labour Standards Act, are long overdue, and I'm pleased that we are dealing with these important matters this session.

Mr. Speaker, in fiscal management development, in agriculture, in education, health, and labour this throne speech announces a program that is people directed, a program that puts the needs of Saskatchewan people first. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, for the first time in a decade, we have a government with a program that considers the children and the grandchildren of Saskatchewan people.

Right-wing governments talk of family values on the one hand, and then they squander the family's heritage on the other. That's what those Dan Quayle think-alikes did. They talked about how they loved their children, and then they snuck out of town leaving a family-crushing debt for their children. Great parenting.

Mr. Speaker, Christmas is a time when children ask Santa Claus for what they want and adults pay for it. Deficits are when adults spend what they want and the children pay for it. The government is setting a course where our

children will be allowed to make their own mistakes and not to pay for ours. That is the difference between this government and that government.

Because this throne speech commits this government and the people of Saskatchewan to prepare for the future, not rob from the future, I am happy to support it. I will be opposing the amendment and supporting the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wormsbecker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak in support of the Speech from the Throne delivered by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan on February 25 last. The central theme of last year's throne speech was a mandate for change, a mandate for change not just for the sake of change, but a mandate to restore the fiscal responsibility and integrity of this province for the benefit of our children and our children's children.

The throne speech for the fiscal period '93-94 invites each and every one to continue the journey of renewal undertaken this previous year. In pursuing this undaunted task of renewal, both economic and social, coupled with fairness and compassion, we will be able to build once again a vibrant Saskatchewan in a land filled with many untapped opportunities waiting to be explored.

Mr. Speaker, the first step taken last year by our government in the journey for renewal was deficit control. As was stated in the throne speech last week, Saskatchewan was the only province in Canada to reduce its expenditures this past fiscal year, a reduction of 3 per cent. An interest payment of \$760 million on our total accumulated deficit of \$4.7 billion was the only obstacle in preventing a budget surplus.

The most serious threat to our economy is a deficit spiralling out of control. In order to restore consumer and investment confidence in our economy, it is of utmost paramountcy that our government send a signal of fiscal restraint and responsibility to all stakeholders in our province. There is no economic confidence with runaway deficits which was the hallmark of the previous Tory administration.

I am proud to be a caucus member of this government and a team player in staying the course of deficit control, which one day shall give us the financial freedom to re-implement adequate funding for social programs that are experiencing temporary cut-backs just to provide basic, necessary, no-frill services.

It is no secret that our province must operate in a survival mode. This requires everyone, including labour, business, and farmers, to work cooperatively with each other and government to plan a strategy for economic renewal.

(1100)

Over the past six weeks I've held five public meetings throughout my constituency. My constituents have expressed concerns and asked questions regarding the

following subject matters: deficit control, taxation, agriculture, jobs, health care, and human rights. I would like to spend some time, Mr. Speaker, addressing the concerns of my constituents, which I presume are not unlike the constituent concerns of my caucus colleagues gathered and assembled around this Chamber.

On the subject matter of deficit control, most of my constituents are supportive of the direction this government has taken over the past year. The deficit was accumulated over the past 11 years and most agree that balancing the operating budget within the next three years is a reasonable approach.

Some state that the budget should have been balanced within the first or second year of our term of office, emphasizing that expenditure reduction should be the only key in balancing the budget. Our government chose not to follow this approach because government is a big employer. Such a massive reduction in expenditures would have created immediate shock waves throughout the economy.

On the other hand, some constituents state that our government is paranoid over our emphasis on deficit control and that what is needed is massive infusion of capital expenditures toward our public infrastructure, for example, roads, bridges, and educational facilities, to stimulate the economy.

This strategy has some merit, provided the rest of the economy starts to grow and expand at a fast rate to generate the tax revenue needed to pay for these capital expenditures. The projected rate of economic growth within the reasonable foreseeable future is approximately 2 to 3 per cent. This rate of growth is not sufficient to warrant large capital expenditures. The people of Saskatchewan must live within their financial capability, even if it means a lower standard of living for a short period of time.

On the subject matter of taxation, Mr. Speaker, no one wants more taxes. Taxation reduces disposable income, resulting in fewer goods and services being purchased by families. Increased taxation means doing with less. No one enjoys a reduction in one's standard of living. However, most people also realize that our government is strapped for cash and that the budget must be balanced.

The issue of taxation immediately becomes an issue of fair taxation. It is not the intention of our government to place taxation burden on the backs of any one group or any one sector in our economy. Our government is committed to a fair and progressive taxation system. There is plenty of speculation regarding budgetary detail and increased levels of taxation. This debate will run its course when the budget is delivered by the Minister of Finance within the next several weeks.

On the subject matter of agriculture, Mr. Speaker, the farming and non-farming communities of my constituency are equally concerned about the future of agriculture because of the economic importance of agriculture to our economy. Right now farmers are in need of cash to put their crop in this spring. The seriousness of this problem cannot be overstated. As one

farmer stated to me, and I quote: I signed up for GRIP because the federal government promised a third line of defence. Where is the payment? End quote.

There is a quiet desperation in the farming community which has the serious potential of becoming militant. Our government has pressed and is pressing Ottawa for the promised third line of defence payment. Farm organizations are also pressing Ottawa. Thirteen thousand farmers gathered at Saskatoon on January 26 of this year and pleaded with Charlie Mayer for a third line of defence payment. To date the federal government and the federal Tory MPs (Member of Parliament) have said no to the province, no to the farm organizations, and no to the farmers.

Our government is committed to supporting agriculture, is committed to helping farmers and farm families, and is committed to working with our government in Ottawa in designing a new, long-term agricultural income net program. But cash is needed now. Our government has stated and continues to state that we as government are prepared to do our fair share in supporting our most important economic engine in this province — agriculture and farmers.

At one of my public meetings, a farmer attempted to engage me in the debate over '91 and '92 GRIP, stating that he was worse off under '92 GRIP. Another farmer interjected immediately, without being challenged by any other farmer present, and stated that the debate had moved beyond '91 and '92 GRIP comparison to, firstly, an immediate third line of defence payment, and secondly, a restructured, viable, long-term, safety net program.

Several farmers have stated they want out of GRIP, whether '91 or '92 GRIP. The farm community realizes that '91 GRIP was not intended to meet their long-term income support needs in an unfriendly, subsidy environment caused by the Europeans and the U.S. in competing for traditional Canadian wheat markets.

I've been asked what in my opinion is fair, provincial, financial support for an agricultural safety net program. I've responded, Mr. Speaker, by stating the following, and the following are the matters that should be taken into consideration: firstly, the per capita debt load each province has in comparison to all other provinces; secondly, the ability of each province to finance additional debt to make the expenditures towards a safety net program; and thirdly, the number of taxpayers each province has as a taxation base.

On the first count, Saskatchewan has the largest per capita debt. On the second count, Saskatchewan has the second lowest credit rating; and on the third account, Saskatchewan has less than 4 per cent of Canada's total taxpayers. In this fiscal year, Saskatchewan will have expended \$230 per capita towards safety net programs while Ontario's contribution will be less than \$5 per capita. Does this sound fair?

Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition would lead us to believe that our contribution should be more because we have more farmers per capita than any other province in

Canada. Can the Saskatchewan treasury compete with the European Common Market and U.S. treasuries? Let's get real and stop day-dreaming.

Ottawa has the major responsibility, and the major role, to pay in adequately funding a permanent and predictable disaster assistance program and a long-term income safety net program. I implore and beseech the members opposite to join with us in lobbying Ottawa to live up to its moral obligation to farmers and farm families. Let's join hands and raise our voices in unison in support of our farm neighbours and friends.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wormsbecker: — The need is great; the cause is just; the time is now. Let's do it together — now.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak briefly on the subject of jobs. Not only are my constituents concerned about the deficit, they are equally concerned about jobs.

Jobs are important to sustain individuals, families, and communities. Work, in its broadest context, is needed to sustain the dignity and soul of an individual, the dignity and soul of a community or a nation. Without work, without an opportunity to engage in meaningful employment, individuals, families, and communities yield to despondency and, ultimately, despair. Jobs are needed for the economic, social, and spiritual health of our province.

What is the role of government in job creation? When our government assumed office we stated we would not support taxpayer-financed megaprojects. The trickle-down economic theory of the previous administration did not work. Feeding the frenzied capital demands of multinationals with taxpayers' money did not result in many jobs being created.

Where lies the biggest employment bang for the taxpayers' buck is a legitimate question for the public to ask. The public document entitled *Partnership for Renewal*, released by the Department of Economic Development in consultation with the public, provides the direction this government feels is the only direction for sustainable economic growth and job creation in this province.

Governments, communities, working people, and business people are gradually coming to realize that any economic undertaking must be fair for all participants. There must be a sound economic reason for any business venture to locate in Saskatchewan, or to locate in Weyburn, Saskatchewan.

Financial incentives such as capital grants, loan guarantees, or municipal abatements are temporary fixes and soon lose their lustre to the grim reality of necessity for sound economic planning and strategies for long-term viability.

Our government is prepared to work with communities in developing community or regional districts for economic development. Saskatchewan people have a history of innovation and inventiveness. Communities know best

what may or may not work in their areas. Accordingly the concept of economic regional development districts is the fundamental key in fostering community cooperation and in attracting new businesses and employment opportunities to our province.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to give specific examples of some of the encouraging economic developments in the constituency of Weyburn which I am very proud to represent.

Many community spirit-minded Weyburn residents have worked diligently and arduously to locate Advanced Test Technologies Inc. in our midst. This technology, the first of its kind in the world, has the ability to test unpopulated circuit boards without making direct physical contact with the circuits themselves. This technology will reduce the number of circuit boards damaged in the present bed-of-nails testing procedure which requires direct physical contact with each circuit. This new technology is very welcome in Weyburn and has the potential for the development of new product lines, adding further employment opportunities for Weyburn-and-area residents.

In addition, Alcatel, formerly Canada Wire & Cable, has over the past year rationalized its wire and cable manufacturing operations in Canada, and its Weyburn plant has received a \$10 million-plus plant upgrading and expansion to service markets in western Canada and the western United States. This is good news for Weyburn and Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan business and Saskatchewan workers can compete globally.

Also the former Weyburn Distillery, which has been in mothballs since the early 1980s, appears to be getting a new lease on life. On February 4 of this year, Plains Food Fibre Inc., representing a consortium of Alberta and Colorado investors, announced its intention to reopen the Weyburn Distillery for ethanol and food fibre production. Not only will this business provide employment, but it will also provide a market for grain required in the production process. This is an example of an agricultural added-value industry that has promise.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1115)

Mr. Wormsbecker: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to focus my attention briefly on health care, and particularly as it relates to my constituency. On June 21, 1992, Weyburn and District Special Care Home Corp. celebrated its 25th anniversary. I was pleased to be present and participate in the celebration ceremonies together with some of the founding board members.

Health care services have expanded significantly since the province pioneered medicare in 1962. Saskatchewan set the national standard for compassionate health care, and the federal government followed our lead in establishing a federal health Act which provided financial assistance to all provinces for health care services.

For many years we focused on training people and treating people only for their illness. We cured people.

We extended life expectancy. We now need to do more in the area of preventative health care.

There's also a direct correlation between good health and socio-economic well-being. Accordingly, our approach to health care must change by encouraging healthier lifestyles, working to prevent disease and disability, reducing poverty and illiteracy, ensuring people have meaningful work, helping seniors live more independently, and encouraging people to take more responsibility for their health.

This new approach to health care, the wellness model, is a community approach, empowering communities, through larger health care districts, to take charge of health care delivery.

My constituency has been actively involved in discussions to form larger health care districts. There is some apprehension concerning the future delivery of health care services and how each community's present health care facility shall fit into the larger picture.

Most of my constituents realize that the previous four decades of delivering health care services from hospital centres every 30 miles apart is no longer valid. Health care is more than acute care but acute care is still vital to our overall health care system.

Communities must be prepared to consider an expanded role for some of our acute care facilities, which presently are centres of "patch me up and send me on" facilities. This is a very costly service in need of fundamental structural change.

My constituency and my constituents will adapt to larger health care districts. My constituents will accept the challenge of managing change during these turbulent times.

Mr. Speaker, there is another area where change is occurring, not only in Saskatchewan but across the country, both federally and provincially. And that is in the area of human rights legislation and in particular sexual orientation. This is an issue on which everyone has an opinion. It is one of those black-and-white issues. You're either for it or you're against it.

What the legislation does or doesn't state isn't of any consequence because the vast majority of people have already made up their mind. They have prejudged whether it is good or whether it is bad prior to seeing the text of the legislation. Perhaps the reaction of the public to this legislation prior to the amending Bill being introduced to the legislature is indicative of the need for this legislation.

Many of my constituents see this legislation as sanctioning a lifestyle that is contrary to their moral Christian beliefs. Many also fear that this legislation shall open the door for future changes such as same-sex marriages, redefinition of traditional Christian family values, adoption by homosexual couples, and homosexual education in our schools.

Even though I do not regard the homosexual lifestyle as an

acceptable alternate lifestyle, and even though I share some of the same concerns as my constituents regarding future challenges by homosexuals to change traditional Christian values, I also recognize a common bond of brotherhood among all people deserving of respect and dignity whether we agree or disagree with each other on any particular issue, including the issue of sexual orientation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wormsbecker: — Mr. Speaker, it is my deep and abiding personal conviction, based upon my moral Christian values, that of all of us, whether black or white, Christian or non-Christian, heterosexual or homosexual, have a right to engage in employment to feed ourselves or obtain accommodation to shelter ourselves.

These rights should be protected by law so those who disagree with what we are or what we do cannot deny us employment, accommodation, or access to public services. These basic needs should be protected under the Human Rights Code for all of us, including homosexuals. I support these limited basic rights for everyone.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I support the throne speech. I also give my undertaking to journey with my caucus colleagues and my constituents on the path of renewal to revitalize our beautiful province. And while we journey, Mr. Speaker, let us dream and plan together for a brighter future. And with guidance from above we will accomplish great things together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Carlson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to start off by commending yourself, Mr. Speaker, for the decorum you keep in the House. I know it's not an easy job you have and you're doing an excellent job. And I would just like to say I'm sure you've got the support of everybody else because I know I'm impressed, and I'd like all the members to . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Carlson: — Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and a great pleasure to be able to participate in the throne speech debate. I want to make a quote of Tommy Douglas's speech to the federal convention, the 1983 convention of the federal party, and it says: what our ancestors began, we will continue. We will continue, not with old ideas because times change and people change; we need new ideas to meet new situations. But the principle of organizing our society for the benefit of all the people and not for the privileged few, that is still here, and that is the principle to which we adhere.

And, Mr. Speaker, today we certainly have a new situation and Tommy was right when he said that we would need new ideas. The financial crisis that our province faces today is one of unprecedented size and urgency. We are not able to rely exclusively on the traditional solutions that served our province well in the past however, in order for us to look ahead and reflect on

the past so we may build on our historic strengths.

Perhaps our greatest strength as a province is the people. They developed out of the dust in the Depression of the '30s a spirit of cooperation in the Saskatchewan people that is still with us today. The idea of helping a neighbour out in his or her time of need has not diminished with the passage of time but rather has grown and nurtured over the years. It is our spirit that will allow our province to rise out of the current dilemma and once again shine as the jewel that it truly is.

Another strength that we still possess is our agriculture sector. The people who farm the land are perhaps the strongest-willed people in our country. They continue persevering in the face of uncertainty long after even the most stout-hearted would have thrown in the towel. The government will not allow their dedication and way of life to go for naught. We will continue to work, just as our farming friends and neighbours have continued to work, towards a solution to the crisis that so plagues our farming community.

The citizens of this province are well-known for their innovative solutions to the difficult problems. Examples in the farming sector have shown that when we are facing our problem, we don't back down and say, well I guess there's nothing we can do. We are the people who face those challenges, look them in the eye, and say we will get through this, and I know we will.

Saskatchewan has always built and promoted buffers to protect our citizens from the international pressures that threaten our very way of life. When lending institutions failed to address the concerns of people, we developed a large network of credit unions. When line grain companies were abusing our farmers, we started the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. And when the international grain trade were stealing our grain, we worked very hard to promote and sell the idea of the Canadian Wheat Board so that when grain sales were made, they were made in the best interests of farmers and not simply with volume and profit margin as the driving factor.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Carlson: — These are just a few examples of what people have done to protect ourselves in this province. Other examples are the development of co-ops, restrictions on foreign ownership of land, the Crow rate, SaskTel, SaskPower, Saskatchewan Government Insurance, and many, many others.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in the past in this province and in this country, workers have come together to form unions so they could accomplish objectives together that individually they could only dream about. Although some would argue that these institutions have hampered our ability to compete internationally, in reality, Mr. Speaker, it has been the reverse. It has allowed us to compete, and in fact it has allowed our parents and our grandparents to survive.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about working together, cooperation, partnership, we're not talking about something new. We're talking about revitalizing and

expanding some of those Saskatchewan strengths that has got us through in the past. The very idea that growth, stability, security, are possible only by working together as one are not new ideas, but a philosophy that has worked well in the past and will still work today.

But there are always attacks, Mr. Speaker. There are always attacks against the people. On Monday, Canadian National announced that they are going to be laying off this year 3,000 jobs in the country and 3,500 jobs in each of the next two years. It will be a total job loss in Saskatchewan of 91, and in the constituency of Melville, in the town of Melville, 15 jobs will be abolished by mid-June.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in time, the workers in Melville are working overtime. They're working overtime to get the job done because they haven't got enough workers, and they're cutting back more. And safety is going to be one thing that is going to be curbed. And we've seen wrecks, and wrecks are not cheap, and we've had a couple major wrecks in the last year.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the CN (Canadian National) should look very strongly at safety before they look at the almighty dollar. And I call on the federal government to ask CN to look at safety when they're making economic decisions because lives of people are more important than dollars. And jobs are also very hard to create, and when you lose 15 jobs in one crack, it takes a long time to rebuild them up because jobs don't come easy in these days and age, and it's a long, long process.

Mr. Speaker, the first step in charting our own course in gaining financial freedom, as I mentioned before, because the government is saddled with such a large debt, the question is now of how to get from beneath this financial dilemma. Do we shut government down altogether, or do we use government as a tool to achieve growth, stability, and security?

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we must use government as we have in the past. Our survival and success depends on it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is only through the use of government, the instituting of programs, policies, and the enhancing of cooperation that we'll free ourselves of these financial shackles.

The vision of *Partnership for Renewal* paper sets challenging but realistic goals for our government. The size of our provincial debt combined with the global market competition, the trade-dependent nature of our economy, and numerous other economic challenges will be overcome by the new ideas.

We have many strengths to build on. You have, I'm sure, heard of our well-developed base of public infrastructure, productive labour force, financial resources. It is the people of Saskatchewan who will lift us out of this crisis.

(1130)

Within our plan to attain financial freedom, the throne speech touched upon regional economic development authorities. The government will empower communities through the economic development boards to realize and

deal directly with development opportunities. Within Melville constituency, for example, we have economic development boards that are working extremely hard to attract new and promote existing businesses.

This is just one example of the many new and exciting ideas that are being instituted. The government's comprehensive energy strategy covering all forms of energy production — be it hydro, solar, co-gen — will identify economic opportunities and will find ways to reduce our energy consumption.

Mr. Speaker, as a farmer I recognize our government's commitment to rebuilding the farm economy. As this is the case with the economy in general, the farming sector has challenges to overcome and strength to build upon.

I'm sure that many people have heard the saying: give a farmer some seed, some fuel, a little fertilizer, and he or she will find a way to put the crop in. Well this is a true testimonial to the strength and dedication of the province's farmers, but patchwork solutions such as this are no longer acceptable in today's economic climate.

From the Great Depression to this day there has been a single underlying trend in the farming sector — the move away from the land. Each year, Mr. Speaker, an average of 1,400 farmers leave the land. And as the number of farmers goes down the average farm size has gone up, doubling in the past 30 years. We have all heard of the recent attempts to assemble large tracts of land, especially in the Eston area. And as announced in the throne speech, we will amend The Farm Land Security Act to broaden the investigative powers and to strengthen enforcement provisions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Carlson: — I believe that community-based land trust can be a vehicle for land transfer and on ownership for the future. And something like a community-based land trust must be established. And if it was in place the land grab near Eston, or the possible land grab near Eston, would never have come close to materialization.

There are a few proposals on community land-based trusts that have been developed by various groups in the province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is an important concept if farming is going to survive as we know it. The alternative is to move towards corporate farms. And that, I believe, would kill rural Saskatchewan within years.

The community-based land trust proposals are similar in that they all have local control but also provincial ties to ensure stability. Each shows promise in assisting with the problem of intergenerational transfer of land. Mr. Speaker, there are examples out there and even within my own family where land has been bought and sold two and three and four times, and in that process the land has gone from grandfather to grandson. And I know one sector that really benefits from that and that's the banks. They make a good profit buying and selling land . . . (inaudible) . . . interest rate.

Mr. Speaker, what farmers are facing today is not just a severe economic crisis. Farmers are facing a crisis that

jeopardizes the make-up of our communities and families. Family stress is high. People feel trapped and double-crossed. They blame themselves. Suicide rates are high and family breakups are rising. It is not their fault. Farm families in order to survive must first realize and believe that it is not their fault. Because it is only then that they can come together to help one another out.

But what they need most now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a cash injection. We need a third line of defence. My government stands firm that farmers need the federal government to come through on its promised third line of defence.

When we farmers signed up for GRIP in 1991, we were told that second line of defence would not be the answer without third line of defence to help us through disaster situations. Where has the federal government been, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I can tell you where they've been. They've been signing cheques for billions of dollars for helicopters. And I say, shame.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Carlson: — Clearly government programs fail to address the challenges that today's farmers face. We need solutions — solutions like agriculture diversification to reduce our dependence on cereal crops, solutions like national farm income program to ensure that farm income fairly reflects the cost of farming, and solutions like targeting of the financial assistance to those who need it most rather than universal farm aid programs which drain the public treasury, yet fail to keep the farmers on the land.

Mr. Speaker, as mentioned in the throne speech, currently being tested are systems that will use the school as the base to meet all the needs of the students that affect their ability to learn. I believe that such a system will move schools to become economic centres for a broad range of services for students and families. I believe that education is a right and not a privilege. This is predicated on the assumption that there is an inherent benefit to providing post-secondary education rather than simply meeting labour market demands.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the rising costs of post-secondary education, combined with increasing enrolment quotas and poor student-to-professor ratios, show us the need to develop some of the new ideas that Tommy spoke of.

I believe that education can be expanded through our regional community college. Distance in outreach education, with the advantages in satellite . . . advances in satellite and satellite technology, are bringing post-secondary education to rural Saskatchewan. Right now it is possible to take the first two years of university in Yorkton, only 25 miles away from Melville.

Such methods of educating the people must continue and expand in the future. The technology is there and it is being used. It will help prevent the depopulation of rural Saskatchewan and will educate the public for changing times ahead.

Mr. Speaker, to quote Tommy again with respect to health

care delivery. He said: when we begin to plan medicare, we pointed out that it would be in two phases. The first phase would be to remove the financial barrier between those giving the service and those receiving it. The second phase would be to reorganize and revamp the delivery system.

And of course, that's the big item. Today our health care system faces new challenges, and some of them include an ageing population requiring new and more extensive . . . expensive and extensive kinds of care, increasing, complex, and costly medical technology with the added problem of distributing and making it available in a large province such as a Saskatchewan, with a relatively spread-out population. Changes in the kinds of illness and diseases that we all face are also a factor.

Well the times have changed. Like Tommy said, it is time for some of those new ideas. The Minister of Health along with the department have developed a new vision for health. Health care in the past has been based on using the system. If people were not sick, the system would have fallen apart. Doctors would not get paid, hospitals would lose their funding, and so on. The initiatives to get people healthy and keep them healthy were simply not there.

People in the past have been using the system in such a way that it has been unnecessarily more expensive. I myself, as an example, a few years ago when I needed to see a doctor, I felt it much easier for myself to go to the emergency room at the hospital rather than see my doctor in the office. And I didn't know at the time that that choice that I had made for my personal health care cost the system much more than it could have.

The wellness system will provide the government with the means to educate the public on the costs, both economic and social, of our current health care system. The wellness model will reduce duplication of service, will result in a healthier populace, and will create a more efficient health care delivery system.

Communities are working towards the development of a delivery system that will serve the needs of the residents. I can envision in the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with health clinics as the centre of our communities, being a core of health care deliveries and with a wide range of wellness initiatives that would have home delivery health care. People's health delivery would be home based rather than institutionalized.

I can also envision doctors joining together to form rural health care practices, with admitting privileges to more and more facilities, and the ability to cover off for colleagues vacationing and on weekends, thus eliminating the fear of small communities that they will not have a reasonable access to a doctor.

Perhaps the most important thing that the wellness model will do for the people of Saskatchewan is that it will ensure medicare is here for the future generations. And that I believe is important.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Carlson: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by thanking our Premier and our cabinet for making partnerships for people.

The *Partnership for Renewal* is a comprehensive strategy to rebuild the devastated economy left to us by the previous government.

The Saskatchewan vision for health will get us working together towards wellness. Families and individuals can make personal choices that contribute to good health. Communities can work toward wellness by tailoring health services to meet local needs. And the province can work towards wellness by developing policies that contribute to better health and to reduce the likelihood of illness.

The discussion paper “Forging Partnerships in Agriculture” will increase discussion of the challenges and opportunities relating to Saskatchewan agriculture and food industry.

And for a guiding principle in the agriculture sector is to foster a self-reliant, sustainable agriculture and food industry, and viable communities in rural Saskatchewan, we must ensure the maximum opportunity for the highest number of families and individuals to earn a livelihood from agriculture.

To accomplish that goal we are going to need new ideas to meet the new situations that today’s farmers face. The “Forging Partnerships” paper will facilitate the creation of those ideas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the throne speech concluded, we have reason to be optimistic. True, we face new and difficult challenges. But the government is dedicated to searching out, through our partnership with the people, new ideas to meet new situations. Together we will continue to organize our society for the benefit of all, not for the privileged few. For that is the principle to which we adhere.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne. I will not be supporting the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it’s been with interest that I’ve been listening to the speeches being presented by members on the government side of the House, many of the members who have at times raised certainly a lot of . . . at least they’re trying to raise the hopes of Saskatchewan people in light of the fact that the throne speech that was delivered by Her Honour recently in this Assembly, I would suggest, really didn’t offer any hope — really didn’t offer a lot that the people of Saskatchewan could hang their hats on, that they could look forward to tomorrow with a lot of hope and optimism, believing that this province has so much to offer.

And I’m certainly pleased to stand up in this Assembly today and to speak in support of the amendment, but also to offer some observations regarding the Speech from the Throne.

Ordinarily, we find that a Speech from the Throne is used . . . or it’s a government’s means, or way, of relaying to the people of the province its plan for the future — its plan — and to set out some goals. And when I look at the Speech from the Throne, I wonder what kind of goals the government really has in mind, as it seems to me it was very vague, and in a lot of cases was just filled with platitudes and fluff.

And I want to quote from an article in the Leader-Post, Friday, February 26. The article headline says, “Throne speech dulled by lack of clear direction.” In fact it goes on:

It had contained a soothing “Comfort ye, my people” message. The new address is prelude to a Lenten budget that will signal taxpayer pain and suffering.

And certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we saw today in this Assembly where some of my colleagues raised questions about the taxpayer pain and suffering that people across this province are now facing because of the lack of direction that this government has taken.

And watching the news last night it was interesting to note what has taken place in other parts of this country regarding NDP philosophy and NDP policy and direction by NDP governments. I’m sure that the NDP Government of Ontario wasn’t all that happy to see the united auto workers of Canada pass a motion to disassociate themselves with the NDP Government of Ontario.

(1145)

And it would indicate to me that there is a certain dissatisfaction that is beginning to grow across this nation regarding NDP policy in light of the fact that over the past number of years, while in opposition, the NDP Party, then opposition members, took the viewpoint that while governments were trying to get a control of deficits, were trying to set some guidelines, were trying to project into the future and lay out ways and means of addressing not only deficit financing but how to balance the budget and how to be open and honest with the people, the NDP Party here in Saskatchewan and in other parts of this country and in Ottawa continue to reprimand the governments of the day for not spending enough, not putting enough into health care, not putting enough into education, not looking after people under social services.

And now we find today when they formed government, where are they? What have they done to help people? What have they done to help people in need? Most people, I find, in fact a lot of people, are quietly in some cases accepting, or have accepted. However, Mr. Speaker, I think more people are beginning to speak out, because the pain and suffering has just become unbearable. For many people the bottom line has disappeared, and for many people . . . And that is the reason we see members of the Saskatchewan Government Employees Union walking in front and picketing in front of the legislature, even today, Mr. Speaker. Because the bottom line has disappeared for them. Since the election of a government that they

thought was going to do so much more for them, their take-home has disappeared. They don't have that extra funding.

So what I say, Mr. Speaker, this throne speech has no plan and no concrete evidence of direction. Nothing in the throne speech to encourage people. And many of the government members were commending their cabinet colleagues for the direction and they were saying that the people of Saskatchewan were going to accept this throne speech as something to hang their hats on, to look forward to in the future.

And yet I want to read from a letter to the editor that appeared in one of our local papers and it says: "Which side are you on?" And I just want to read a bit of this letter to the editor, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just for the sake of government members as I note the name of the individual and where it came from and I know this individual quite well and I know that he certainly hasn't worked for the party that I represent — in fact he's worked very diligently for government members over the years.

And he says:

Dear editor:

Working people and farmers are dropping support for and membership in the NDP because they felt they were putting a government in place to implement solutions which met the needs of themselves and people like them, and they know that the solution being implemented meets the needs of the system, and of the rich.

Party supporters feel betrayed, and no less than a reversal of that betrayal can win their involvement and support.

And coming from an individual of this nature, Mr. Speaker, I take note of a comment like that. And he says:

NDP supporters are primarily working people, farmers, or self-employed.

They are asking this question of the party leaders and governments:

Which side are you on?

I could go on to quote many other points from that article, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where there are many NDP supporters across this province really don't know where to turn or who they are to turn to.

In fact let me take a quick look at the throne speech just for a moment. The beginning of the throne speech, we see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government said that they were going:

... to restore common sense and competence to the management of the public treasury;

Common sense, I wonder where the common sense really is.

... to restore public faith in the ability of politicians to serve the public interest;

And every time I turn around we seem to find a greater lack of faith from the public on behalf of the politicians to serve them openly, to serve them honestly, to be forthright with direction, and to let them know the direction that they are planning for this province, and the direction they are planning as they lead us into the year 2000.

It says that they are going:

... to give new hope to the less fortunate; and to bring people together.

Another section of the throne speech, Mr. Minister, talked about open and accountable government. And yet while the government is talking about being open and accountable, we find that the local media certainly don't find them to be that way. In fact one headline said: freedom of information commitment questioned. And another article from the Leader-Post indicated that it was actually ... this freedom of information legislation was passed by the Tories when they left office in 1991. And at that time I'm sure the media felt that if the NDP changed ... if the government of the day changed and the NDP formed government of the province, that certainly this freedom of information Bill would be followed to the letter.

And yet they find:

For instance, two omnibus polls conducted for the NDP in September and October of 1992 revealed the government had been a major disappointment in job creation, economic development and farm assistance.

And when the media tried to find this information or gather this information, they were hindered in gaining access to the information. In fact even today I wonder if the media were able to get any more information on recent polling.

Another thing the media found out through freedom of information after diving into and being persistent and asking the government for their information, they found:

A memo last April from former finance minister Ed Tchorzewski — ironically obtained through FOI (freedom of information) — told cabinet colleagues to make disclosure of budget-related information as difficult as possible.

And that's a quote from the Leader-Post article, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, does that talk of a government that's being open and accountable? Or does that talk of a group of ministers or individuals who really want to be open with the public?

I find it interesting that this media group would find it difficult to obtain this information when their feeling was, change the government and we'll have all the access we need. Well lo and behold, the access and accountability isn't there.

Another point, and I find it interesting in view of today's happenings. The media said:

After years of criticizing the Tories of governing by polls, it would be gauche to release documentation that confirms you are doing the same.

And then there's one comment that I just wanted to bring out by this individual. This columnist says:

But one wonders (in light of the recent scandal taking place down at the White Bear Reserve, one wonders) how it can chastise the White Bear Reserve for flouting one law of the land when it is doing the same with another.

And one really wonders about its true commitment to accountability and openness.

And another article, Mr. Deputy Speaker, basically says the same thing, "Government balks at FOI (freedom of information) request":

For the second year in a row, the NDP government is withholding the results of its pre-budget polling.

But this year (the editorial says) the government hasn't even cited the loophole it's used to deny a freedom of information request.

I wonder what that really means, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If this government is going to be as open and accountable as they say they are, then how come the media are all of a sudden finding that the openness isn't exactly there? Maybe we need to ask the Minister of Justice. Maybe he can respond on another occasion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we look at the throne speech we find that, as I've indicated, a lack — it's very vague — there's a lack of vision. And as we've heard over the last number of days, when it comes to responding to questions, on many occasions the Premier has stood up and the Minister of Finance has stood up and other cabinet ministers, and talked of the doom and gloom that is in this province.

And one wonders why there is a lack of interest in investment in the province of Saskatchewan. One has to ask: where is all the investment? Where are all of the 700 companies that were going to come to the province of Saskatchewan? Where are they today, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Well it would seem to me that many of these companies are basically sitting on the outside, may have thought of coming to Saskatchewan, but there isn't anything even in this throne speech that would give them a reason to even move or even look towards coming to Saskatchewan. In fact if we look at the province today and we look at the number of activities and economic activity that has taken place over the last year and a half, most of that economic activity and job creation has come about as a result of the policies of the former government prior to the 1991 election — government making decisions to invest and to

build in this province.

And I wonder. Certainly the member from Churchill Downs would like to question . . . I probably shouldn't repeat what he had said, Mr. Speaker. But one should be aware of what is really coming from the members opposite and the fact that any time you raise questions, Mr. Speaker, all of a sudden the members find it difficult to sit back and just listen to reason, to sound reason.

What we want to put forward and what we will attempt to put forward over the next period of this session, Mr. Speaker, is a format that would lay out a plan that could be followed by the . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Will the members please give the member from Moosomin the courtesy of speaking in this legislature?

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we will attempt to do, Mr. Speaker, is to lay out a format, and hopefully the government will do as they have on a number of occasions previously — take a look at some of our ideas, some of the ideas that we feel could be used to generate economic activity, to really raise the expectations in this province, to raise the hopes of people, such as the Atomic Energy agreement. Shortly after the election, scrapped. A few months later, reintroduced, a few minor changes, but reintroduced, and the people of Saskatoon and a lot of people in Saskatchewan said thank you.

And I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan appreciated the fact that the government revisited that whole program of the Atomic Energy agreement because it can and has the potential of creating a real economic boom in this province. And I think today, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Energy and Mines, federal minister, is now in China at this present time visiting with the Chinese regarding CANDU (Canadian deuterium uranium) nuclear technology to be used in energy involvement in that country.

And certainly Saskatchewan has a potential, Mr. Speaker, of really becoming a major player in atomic energy, in the fuelling and power generation and creation, not only in Saskatchewan, not only in Canada, but in the rest of the world, in many areas of the world where they just lack the ability, Mr. Speaker, or lack the resources of generating power electricity from natural sources such as water or even wind.

Mr. Speaker, what we have also seen in the lack of vision, is the fact that again the government not only complains about what the former government did, but they continually look at the present government in Ottawa and complain about the offloading that the federal government has done on the provinces.

And certainly the member from Melville, in his speech today, talked about the fact that this government today is going to hold the federal government responsible for third line of defence because of the lack of support the province gave to the agricultural industry by destroying a farm program.

Mr. Speaker, we're not saying it was the best program available. But, Mr. Speaker, it was a sound program that could have been designed and developed over the years to provide a reasonable and a guaranteed base for farmers to work with and to operate within, which if built upon, could have eventually been fiscally responsible so that the province of Saskatchewan and the people of Canada and the Government of Canada could be assured that the agricultural economy would be renewed, revitalized, and strengthened so that our small communities would be able to live and survive.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the Speech from the Throne, it talks about promising renewal. And I'm quoting from the *Star-Phoenix*. It says, Mr. Speaker: Premier Roy Romanow calls his government's agenda a journey of renewal that will eventually . . . Saskatchewan undergo a transformation that he likens to the quiet revolution which shook Quebec in the 1960s.

And yet at the same time when the Premier was talking about renewal, there were members of the government employees' union marching on the steps, speaking out against this government's so-called plan of renewal.

In fact when I look at the plan of renewal all I see is old faces reincarnate. It's interesting to note the number of people that have been brought back into this government, back from the '70s. And I'm not sure whether renewal is really looking ahead into the future or looking back into the past.

(1200)

And then again, not only did the Premier talk about renewal, but then he got into his doom and gloom setting again. And he warned Saskatchewan taxpayers, basically saying that there was going to have to be more cuts; more amputation of programs; cuts to middle and upper management in government; cuts in the number of departments, agencies, boards, and commissions, in this budget — in the budget coming up. I believe it's coming up on March 18.

One has to wonder what kind of real hope the people of Saskatchewan are going to see. Certainly there wasn't a lot of hope offered in the throne speech. And the budget debate, even today, Mr. Speaker, we can sit back and guess as to what it might contain.

And just from a letter that appeared in the *Whitewood Herald* on March 1, 1993, and I'm going to read this letter into the record, Mr. Speaker, regarding the observations of an individual in this province who basically is saying:

Dear Editor: History Repeats. Glenn Hagel's letter on January 6th, 1993 about promises kept, got me thinking back. So I am writing my first letter to the editor.

In the 1944 election campaign TOMMY said "the 2% E&H nuisance tax will be eliminated." He did; raised it from 2% to 3%. In 1946 and 1947 we paid tax on all food except butter, bread and sugar.

In the 1991 election campaign Roy said:

1. At midnight, if elected the 7% P.S.T. would be gone. It is and now we have an 8% P.S.T. DONE.

He said:

2. He could run this province with \$4.5 billion; he set the budget at \$5.17 billion. I read in the paper it could reach \$6 billion. WHOOPS! UNDER ESTIMATED a little, the shoe is on the other foot now, way to go Eddy. So Eddy had to quit.

3. He would open the books. Spent \$300,000 and Gas and Garf still haven't figured out where the money's going. UNDERWAY. Better open them again but don't spend another \$300,000.

4. He would start a prairie fire. There was one at Grand Coulee without pollution, and it burnt the chemicals that Roy and Al put there in the 1970's. DONE.

5. Would help farmers. Raised GRIP and Crop Insurance and lowered coverage, changed legislation. DONE.

And then he goes on to say, and what did this province . . . this NDP Party, what they did not promise. They:

DID NOT PROMISE:

6. To raise farm fuel .08¢ per litre so it costs more in bulk than at the Co-Op pumps. DONE.

7. To raise farm power \$5.00 per month and only \$2.50 for urban, two raises in one year. DONE.

8. Install casino gambling machines for Regina Agribition to get farmers' money first, then, move them to the country to get more money. Thanks for the help Roy. DONE.

9. In Melville, fired the Mayor from Crop Insurance and eight others and then hired back double; and dismantled Trinitel. DONE.

10. Dismantled the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. DONE.

11. Spend how much on advertising Above and Beyond? UNDERWAY.

12. Raised the prescription drug plan to \$380.00 a year. DONE.

13. Charging for eye exams, chiropractors and diabetic treatments. Give us wellness by closing rural hospitals and more beds in large hospitals, nice shot Louise. UNDERWAY.

You can see why the N.D.P. promise card was only 4 by 8 inches in size. If it had included all real promises it could have been 24 by 48. If this should continue for 3 more years, we will all be DONE.

Except perhaps Glenn Hagel and friends.

That would indicate to me, Mr. Speaker, that there are many people across this province who have become not only disillusioned, but dissatisfied and very cynical of government and what it is doing.

The government talks about its job creation. What have we seen in job creation? What have we seen in the province of Saskatchewan?

Headline Leader-Post: Saskatchewan jobless rate hits high, no longer the lowest. Saskatchewan's unemployment rate has hit double digits for the first time since the province began keeping records in 1966. The jobless rate reached 10 per cent in January. Saskatchewan turned over the title for the lowest rate in the country to Manitoba. And yet the Minister of Economic Development talks about the fine unemployment rate in this province. Yet we see since October of 1991 that that unemployment rate, despite the decrease in jobs in this province, substantial decrease in jobs, substantial number of people employed in this province, continues to edge even higher.

And one wonders by the time the budget is delivered in a couple short weeks, by the time this session winds down, how many more people will have left the province; how many fewer jobs we will see in this province; and how many more people will be looking towards and finding out that it would be a lot simpler to go on social assistance than to try and work because they'll have more money at the end of the day in their pocket?

Again, Mr. Speaker, another article I want to read, a letter. And this talks about . . . we look at the government's portrayal of where the budget was and the deficit at the time, going back to 1991. And they like to build this big picture of how the former government mismanaged, as their term is, mismanaged the finances of this province.

And yet you will find, Mr. Speaker, there were through the 1980s, there were a very difficult decade in time, Mr. Speaker, a time when we saw — in the agricultural sector — we saw frost, we saw drought, we saw hail, we saw . . . And in many cases, Mr. Speaker, there were a lot of cases where the employment situation wasn't that great. And yet what did the former government do?

The former government tried to . . . felt compassion for people and tried to reach out and help individuals. They put a . . . made money available to home-owners. They made money available to the farm community.

Mr. Speaker, when you talk about that funny . . . and the money into the hands of farmers, let's remember, just remember one thing, Mr. Speaker: money in the hands of a producer in rural Saskatchewan works its way right up into the major centres of this province. And many people today are beginning to see that agriculture is a very important part of this province.

And when the government talks today about the deficit, they forget about the unfunded pension liability. They forget about the deficit in the Crowns. They forget about the money that they used to purchase land and where the

land values have gone from when they purchased that land. They forget about what happened with the money they used to buy holes in the ground, rather than, if they wanted to get into potash, why didn't they build their own potash company rather than buying mines or holes in the ground that were already employing people, that were already paying their taxes and paying their royalties? What about oil companies?

Mr. Speaker, what did the government do? They said they're going to open the books and they appointed a man, Donald Gass, to review the finances of this province. They also appointed one Garf Stevenson, and I'm going to tie both Finance and Agriculture into this a little bit.

First of all I'd like to read another letter to the editor into the record. It was printed in the *Whitewood Herald*, March 1, 1993. Dear Editor:

I am an active member of a local Saskatchewan Wheat Pool committee, having marketed grains, livestock, and purchased inputs through . . . (Sask Wheat Pool) facilities since the late 60's. I am proud to claim ownership in so successful and supposedly democratic an organization. However, I am increasingly concerned about the involvement of . . . (Sask Wheat Pool) officers and officials in political issues which are not part of the mandate of . . . (the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool) board of directors.

And he says:

To name a few, I think Garf Stevenson was out of line in his opposition to the idea of decentralizing the provincial agriculture department. He was willing to work on the Gass commission on "Pool" time and was closely involved in the changes to the 1992 GRIP. He now finds himself in a position where he cannot communicate effectively with the Federal Gov't, particularly on the third line of defence, to the disadvantage of the farmer owners of . . . (the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool). He has followed his own political agenda and his belligerent attitude has filtered down through the organization to some of the district representatives. They ensure that the grassroots disenchantment with company policy is filtered out at source. Delegates are encouraged who do not "rock the boat" or steer away from the left.

With delegate elections in progress, all members should ask themselves if it is more than coincidence that year after year so many partisan NDP supporters, nominated as delegates, have moved on as directors and even become president.

With Stevenson's upcoming departure, the time has come to move the organization back to an apolitical state. (And I agree with that.) Let us hope that the board ensures we become an organization which can communicate effectively and without bias with any Government and with any and all members! Farmer owners must be afforded

respect and consideration in place of disregard.

There again, Mr. Speaker, is a very strong indication that people across rural Saskatchewan are very dissatisfied, not only with this government, but are finding that it's time to speak out in support of some of the organizations that they hold so dearly if they want them to see . . . be able to function apolitically so they can represent the best interests of their membership.

And when I look at the Gass Commission, Mr. Speaker, I would have to ask, isn't it time you gave us some of the real facts? This is out of the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, an ad that was placed in the *Star-Phoenix*. It says: dear Mr. Premier — fact: The Gass Commission, using accounting procedures not used by any other province, added almost two billion to Saskatchewan's debt.

Fact: Contrary to your horror stories, our real debt is 40 per cent of the gross domestic product, only slightly higher than Nova Scotia and lower than Quebec and Newfoundland.

Fact: Saskatchewan's debt servicing costs have actually declined from 21.6 of provincial spending in '86-87 to 16.2 in '90 and '91.

Fact: Our current deficit at 2 per cent of GDP is lower than it is in Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, or Newfoundland. Only Manitoba and Prince Edward Island have lower deficits relative to the size of their provincial economy.

Mr. Speaker, many people are questioning the accounting practices of this government — even the auditor of this province. Mr. Speaker, when we were recently in Crown Corporations, the auditor of this province raised a number of questions regarding the accounting practices of this government. And in the last budget presented by the then Finance minister, the member from Regina North East, Mr. Speaker, the auditor indicated to the Crown Corporations that he would be following very diligently the ability of the government to take long-term amortized debt with a known interest rate that was an affordable interest rate, to bulk it all together, to lump it together, and to pay it off out of the Consolidated Fund, transferring it from the Crown to the Consolidated Fund then to wipe out the debt.

In many cases, Mr. Speaker, the auditor said, what I'm going to ask down the road is — in many cases this debt was being paid off; it was being paid off over a period of years — why would you take and transfer it to the Consolidated Fund to build up last year's deficit by some \$750 million and then at the same time the payments and the money flowing in, such as the Riverhurst irrigation project, is still going to generate revenue into the Crown Water Corporation? Where is that money going to go? Mind you, that would have been used to pay off the loan given to the Riverhurst irrigation project.

So there are many questions, Mr. Speaker, that we as an opposition over the next number of weeks will be raising in this Assembly, so that the people of Saskatchewan will really know where this government is going.

What about its wellness program? They talk about a wellness plan, Mr. Speaker. I'm really interested to know what that wellness plan really means. The Minister of Health indicated that she had consulted with groups across this province about their wellness plan.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, when I talked to people, when I talked to administrators, rural hospital administrators, when I talked to rural board members who have gone to some of these meetings, many of the meetings that people I've talked to attended, the Minister of Health wasn't there, Mr. Speaker. Certainly some of the Health officials were there. And what did I find out when I asked, well what were you . . . what kind of questions were asked, or what were you asked to do; or were you given an opportunity to voice some of your concerns or to lay out some objections or some suggestions?

And what they said to me, Mr. Speaker, was that basically once they got to the meeting they were, in their opinion, basically informed that in the long run there was a plan already in place; that there was a map already drawn up with regards to regional health boards. And as we see with the legislation presently . . . or just recently introduced, I believe we're going to find that indeed the government has basically taken the point that the regional health boards are in place, the districts are in place, and if the public and the communities and the municipalities out . . . the municipalities in rural Saskatchewan could not come up and reach a consensus, they were going to impose it.

(1215)

And that's what most people believed was taking place. And I think the present legislation is giving us a strong indication that is actually what is taking place. There really wasn't a real consultation process out there. In fact I would have to wonder about consultation. Just observing the news last evening, the Minister of Agriculture being in Swift Current and looking — I believe it's one of the group of meetings that are taking place across this province in the next few weeks to in one way I guess try to develop an agricultural strategy — I look over that group of individuals and one has to wonder, how consultative, and who really is there.

Was it by invitation only? Or was it really an open, public format whereby people from all walks of life, all political persuasions, could come and sit down and discuss the problems in agriculture.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that we may find that at the end of the day that really it wasn't as open as the government has talked about.

Mr. Speaker, just coming back to jobs for a minute, I can see why members across the way are not interested in letting the media or the public know what is in store regarding jobs in the future. Because I don't believe they really know what is in store; I don't believe, as I've indicated, they really have a plan. They're afraid.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP are not going to the public with anything to do with how they plan to create jobs in this province because they are afraid there will in fact be no

jobs.

The throne speech certainly announced that the NDP want to maintain or create 8,000 jobs this year. And I guess, Mr. Speaker, the key word here is maintain, because the NDP government has made so many destructive choices, Saskatchewan will be lucky to maintain the jobs that are already here.

For evidence all we have to do is consider last year's throne speech and recent statistics on employment in our province. And as I indicated, remember the 700 businesses and thousands of jobs that last year's throne speech promised. The official opposition, the media, and many people asked the members opposite of documentation of those 700 businesses, but to no avail. Recently my colleague, the member from Kindersley, asked the government to provide a list; today we are still waiting for that list. Now we know why.

The Economic Development minister probably stood up in question period recently and gave the opposition a partial look at the secret list of 700 businesses. The only trouble is, most of them had nothing to do with the minister's doing, or any of his colleagues, for that matter.

Let's examine the so-called 700 businesses for a moment, of which the public was given a glimpse. Let me just take a look at a few of the businesses that were thrown out by the Economic Development minister.

Hitachi. Most people, I believe, remember the former government bringing Hitachi to Saskatchewan, but I guess the NDP are now taking credit for this initiative. What about Norquay Alfalfa Processors, another economic initiative by the former administration in the Pelly constituency. Next on the list is Babcock & Wilcox, once again a company that had nothing to do whatsoever with the members opposite. Babcock set up shop in Melville in 1989, a good two years before the NDP formed government.

As they say, Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. Add other deals like Atomic Energy, community bonds, Saskferco, Farm Credit Corporation, and Crown Life to this list, and there we have the entire NDP economic plan, a plan that could be entitled, play it again, Grant; or maybe, a shirt-tail plan. Both would be appropriate, Mr. Speaker, since any way you look at it this government is void of any new ideas of their own.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, the point is that the only way the members across the way know how to create jobs is to play as the member from Riversdale. One has to wonder if he is not playing Alice in Wonderland and their make-believe world of just looking at what somebody else has done and taking it as theirs.

And I dare say that the NDP talking of creating 8,000 jobs this year is something that the people of Saskatchewan are very leery about as we've just . . . We haven't seen job creation. We've seen jobs disappear; the only job creation.

And the Minister of Finance in his economic review statement of December of 1991 indicated the economic

activity that was taking place was due to Saskferco. He didn't say that it was initiatives of the former government. He said it was Saskferco, Weyerhaeuser, and the upgrader, and once those projects were built up and running, there really wasn't a lot more to offer.

And what do we have today, a year and a half later? The same thing — no more, nothing really to offer the people of Saskatchewan, even though there are many communities and rural development corporations around this province have ideas, have some excellent ideas, have some plans in the making, Mr. Speaker.

They've contacted individuals. People are willing to put some money up front, but nobody's willing to step out and take a chance because they don't know what this government will do. They don't know what this government's economic agenda really is, what its plans are.

Mr. Speaker, one has to wonder as we look back prior to the 1991 election regarding the announcement by my colleague, the member from Thunder Creek, about ethanol and its use in fuels across this province. Now the media brings it up almost to indicate that the member from Saskatoon Greystone initiated the question of bringing in legislation that would implement ethanol as being part of our fuel.

Mr. Speaker, there are many organizations across this province who are looking at ethanol production in small and large processing plants. Yet, Mr. Speaker, no one knows where to go and how far to go with these ideas because the government hasn't given them an idea of where they're going and what their plans are for economic development.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to mention a couple of things. The question we'll be asking is, on one hand we phone the government asking about the Saskatchewan growth fund and we're told that there are millions of dollars sitting in that fund that are accessible and available to manufacturing and processing and job creation in this province, and yet on the other hand when you apply or when you do a little more research, you can't find how you access those funds.

In fact, we don't really know if there actually is that money in that growth fund. And I'm going to be asking the Minister of Economic Development, where is the funding for the Saskatchewan growth fund? Is there actually a growth fund available? Is there money in that fund? Is it there, available to small communities for this economic development that they've talked about, the economic development that the Lieutenant Governor talked about, the government talked about in the throne speech, being created in rural communities?

And we see a lot of businesses across this province in small communities that are thriving today because they were created and initiated when a government was in place that set out a plan that people could follow and knew exactly where they stood.

What about SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation)? Where is SEDCO today?

People are wondering, where does SEDCO stand on economic development? They really don't know. And it's not my position as an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) to want to be involved to the point that I'm really pressing the SEDCO to give a loan to this individual or to that individual. All I'm interested in and all the groups that I have talked to, Mr. Speaker, are interested in is being able to go to SEDCO, lay out their proposal, and have SEDCO respond in an appropriate time and giving them some clear direction as to what they can expect from SEDCO.

The members opposite like to talk about the deficit. Let's talk about the job deficit that the NDP are creating in this province. Unemployment up to 10 per cent — a full per cent up from last year. And during the first year of NDP choices, Saskatchewan lost 10,000 jobs — jobs that are gone.

Now I think that the government would like to expect and like to see the people of Saskatchewan forget what they promised last year in the throne speech. Remember the promise? They'd like to forget about the 16,000 jobs that were supposed to come to this province because of NDP choices, and now believe that even though they have cut the number in half for 1993, that 8,000 jobs will suddenly appear. Well I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan really believe, in light of what had transpired since the last budget, that even 8,000 jobs will appear in this province.

Add the numbers together and right now the jobs deficit in this province is about 34,000 jobs since October 1991 — 34,000 jobs in the hole, Mr. Speaker. That's what NDP choices mean for Saskatchewan families and Saskatchewan families who are trying to survive in this economy.

And this is a disturbing number, Mr. Speaker. And as the opposition member responsible for families and seniors, I am especially disheartened by these numbers.

Mr. Speaker, I receive phone calls and letters every day requesting help in fighting the decision of the present government. Families who are barely able to make ends meet are now paying more for their telephones, all their utilities — telephone, power, natural gas, vehicle insurance. More for necessities, Mr. Speaker, which is taking more out of their pockets, more of what they need to survive and to provide for themselves.

Families who are on the brink of having to apply for social assistance but who want nothing more than to provide for their families without the government having to hand them a cheque every month. They are real people, people who the members opposite are hurting. Many of the families who contact my office are already on social assistance. Many families are phoning for help. They don't know where to turn to or who to turn to and therefore they're calling myself and my colleagues, wondering what they should do and who they turn to.

And we find seniors as well are doing their best to cope, but with the choices made by the NDP it is not so easy. The circumstances may be different but there is one common message. People feel betrayed, completely

misled by the members opposite. And the members opposite know very well this fact because we are all receiving calls. And I'm sure that even members on the government side of the House are receiving calls from people who have been hurt by the actions of their colleagues and their cabinet.

People are hurting and the NDP keep making them dig deeper and deeper into pockets that are almost empty. Many families' pockets are already empty, Mr. Speaker, but through it all the NDP claim to care. They claim to care while they are forcing families into bankruptcy. They claim to care while they embark on imposing the biggest tax grab in the history of this province. They claim to care and to be the friends of Saskatchewan families.

Well, Mr. Speaker, with friends like the NDP, who really needs enemies? The members opposite think floating fluff and platitudes in the direction of families will make the pain go away. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid that all the fluff and the platitudes that the government would like to throw out will not make the pain go away that is hurting families and seniors across this province.

Mr. Speaker, as we think about the hurt, we just have to reflect back a few weeks ago to that rally in Saskatoon. As one farm wife put it when she had a chance to address the floor, she said to the Premier, you can't keep milking the cow without feeding it. One has to wonder when the government is finally going to stand up and be accountable for its actions rather than continually blaming somebody else.

Maybe you can't keep raising taxes without creating jobs is more applicable to the NDP government. Unfortunately the members opposite would rather play politics than be honest with people. They would rather watch \$180 million disappear through the cancellation of harmonization instead of helping small businesses, low income, and farm families.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, this is the rationale that the NDP eliminated harmonization for — politics, not the reality of what it could have done for people across this province. They said the harmonization was unfair, that it would put thousands of people out of work and hurt the poor. Harmonization, Mr. Speaker, was to be paid on things like restaurant meals, stereos, and other goods. It was a fair tax.

And I find people every day coming up to me and saying, harmonization, as we begin to understand it, yes, was a fair tax. Because those parents able to afford taking their children out for dinner or the families who can afford to purchase a new television, those were the people that were going to pay the tax.

It was going to be paid only by those who could afford to pay. And, Mr. Speaker, for businesses it meant a refund as they get the refund on their GST (goods and services tax). Further, lower income people were to receive supplements to their incomes through harmonization. And the NDP members opposite will say, well families on social assistance are being taken care of.

First, I don't believe this is really true. I believe, Mr.

Speaker, as people take a deeper look at the harmonization proposals, they began to understand what kind of a benefit it would have been not only to individuals but to families across this province and even to businesses.

Mr. Speaker, as I've been speaking I've talked about a number of areas where the government have not been as open and honest and truthful with the people of Saskatchewan. I've talked about the rate increases and the continuance of rate increases, not only once, but two and three times since October of 1991 — rate increases, utility rate increases that have hurt Saskatchewan people.

I've talked about the lack of support and lack of direction this government has given to agriculture and to small communities across this province. And I've also raised the question about the type of support this government is going to give to health care in this province and to education. Health care and education, lack of support thereof which is going to hurt rural communities in my constituency and constituencies all across this province.

(1230)

Mr. Speaker, we could go on and on about the arguments that were presented by the former government — arguments as to how to address the deficit and how to bring it under control and how to bring in balanced budgets. And it'll be interesting to see what kind of number fudging will take place over the next three years, what kind of money all of a sudden we're going to find in two years time when the election rolls around, that this government has in its back pocket. It'll be interesting to see.

Because with the rate increases that have taken place and with the money that the Crown corporations were making, there's bound to be a surplus some place. At least I think there should be. We'll follow; we're going to follow that. We're going to track that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think what the people of Saskatchewan are looking for, not only from the government but from opposition members, is individuals who will be open, will be honest, will lay out the facts, will let people make decisions, will ask them for their involvement.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward to the involvement of many people as they have already in phoning me or sending me letters, to their involvement and their input into some of the decisions that I will be asked to make, some of the decisions my colleagues will be asked to make, the questions we will be asked to deliver to this House in bringing to task the government on a number of the issues and the decisions they have made.

I'm looking forward to hearing from people across this province in giving us ideas, not only how we build this province to the point where it's a better place to live in, but also as to how we address the debt. Because people are not only ... they're concerned about the debt. They're concerned about deficit financing. They have some sound ideas, and we want to hear from them. And we are looking forward to suggestions that are going to come from people across this province.

Mr. Speaker, I will have to say today that I find this throne speech to have been very void of anything real, anything realistic, or a very sound plan that the people of the province of Saskatchewan could really put their teeth into or could really look at and say yes, that's a solid plan that we can build for this future.

And as I've indicated, many people have already said that they are finding the party that they supported and elected to form the government of this province has already disappointed them.

Mr. Speaker, therefore I must say that I really cannot support the throne speech, but I will be supporting the amendment placed by my colleague from Kindersley. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted today to rise in this House and Assembly and enter into the debate on the throne speech.

Firstly I want to congratulate my colleague from Cut Knife-Lloydminster on the superb job of moving the Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Also, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate also the colleague from Kelsey-Tisdale on his adequate seconding of the speech.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, I want to give a thank you to the people of Last Mountain-Touchwood also for allowing me the opportunity to represent them. It is rewarding work being a member of this Assembly, serving a larger good of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm grateful by the strengthening that is shown in this throne speech for the journey of renewal that we had started on last year. As the speech says, this is a journey to right the wrongs of the past and rebuild our economy and our society together. This will not be an easy journey, but it is a journey that is being done in consultation with the Saskatchewan people.

I believe that step one of this process is to begin to live within our means. And we have taken that first step, Mr. Speaker. This year, we in the province of Saskatchewan are the only province to reduce our annual operating expenditures. Both the annual deficit and the borrowing requirements were also sharply reduced.

In fact we would have had a surplus budget last year had it not been for the horrendous amount of interest that we have to pay on the accumulated debt every year that was accumulated by the former administration.

In order to bring in that type of a budget, Mr. Speaker, tough decisions were made. And I want to compliment the Premier and the cabinet for having the strength to make and to hold to those decisions.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers are there for everyone to see, and they're frightening numbers. Saskatchewan now has the highest per capita debt in any province in Canada — some \$15,000 for every man, woman, and child in our province.

That is in nine and a half years of the former administration has ran that . . . (inaudible) . . . \$15 billion deficit. And that followed 11 straight balanced budgets by the former New Democratic administration.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition said in this Chamber the other day that we should be telling the people what the net debt is, not the gross debt. Well, Mr. Speaker, in order to get the net, you have to take what is owing on something or what it would cost and subtract the worth of that commodity. Then you get the net worth.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know what Rafferty dam cost, but we're having a little difficulty putting a value on a dam on a river that has no water in it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, we know what GigaText cost the people of Saskatchewan, but we're also having a little problem putting a worth on a room full of computers that won't do the job they were purchased for. What is it really worth? I think when you're talking about the debt built up by the previous administration, you might say it is net debt because they never built anything that was worth any value.

But, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will not forget that administration. They have left a legacy that people will remember year after year. Every year when we have to pay out some 7 to \$800 million of our tax money on interest charges on that enormous debt they left, we will remember them. And that money, Mr. Speaker, those interest payments leave this province. They're paid to bond companies in Zürich, Tokyo, London, New York, and Toronto — wasted money.

We have made a major change to that method of borrowing.

Last year this government offered its first issue of Saskatchewan savings bonds to the people of Saskatchewan thus allowing the people of Saskatchewan an opportunity to help in rebuilding our financial stability of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, they responded; 37,000 Saskatchewan people purchased over \$550 million worth of those bonds. And the interest from those bonds stays in the province of Saskatchewan for the betterment of the people of Saskatchewan and is not lost to some foreign investors.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, we must restore financial stability in Saskatchewan, not as an end in itself but to gain our freedom to choose a better future for ourselves and for our children.

As we struggle to get a handle on the fiscal situation in our

province, we believe that one of the major ways of generating revenue for the government is to put people to work, to create jobs for people, jobs that give stability to a family so they can plan their futures, build homes, purchase fridges, stoves, TV sets, clothing. All this stimulates the economy.

Mr. Speaker, we understand the necessity of people to work at productive jobs where they can make a decent and secure living. I believe it was the small-business people, the independent clothing stores, hardware stores, drug stores, and so on that built the province into the financial powerhouse it was in the '50s, '60s, '70s, and the early '80s, in fact right up until the previous administration believed that megaprojects that cost billions upon billions of dollars was what would save Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Speaker, we know those megaprojects didn't work.

And the former speaker just talked about a make-believe world. They had one for nine years where they thought the more the billions of dollars they borrowed, megaprojects they built, that the province of Saskatchewan would just flourish. Talk about being in a make-believe world, they were for nine and a half years. And now we have to pay for it.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it will be the small enterprises that will go a long ways to bringing jobs and financial stability back to Saskatchewan. We have hundreds of new, expanding, and potential business projects in or coming to Saskatchewan now. More than half of those are outside the two major cities of Regina and Saskatoon. Those outside the two largest cities have the potential to create or maintain almost 8,000 jobs.

Some of the positive initiatives that have been put forward to build on the already developing momentum is the *Partnership for Renewal — A Strategy for the Saskatchewan Economy*. Mr. Speaker, this strategy that was designed in partnership with a broad spectrum of Saskatchewan people, sets out to create a positive environment for economic renewal, to build on existing economic strengths, and to seek full employment.

Mr. Speaker, this government, under the guidance of the Minister of Economic Development, has put forth a strong, secure, and workable strategy to develop the economy and to create jobs in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in agriculture today we have a crisis, a crisis that Saskatchewan cannot fight alone. We simply do not have the finances to put into the agricultural sector that is needed. But we should not be alone in this crisis. Agriculture, the growing of food, and according to the federal government the cheap food for our people and food for export is a national responsibility, a responsibility that the federal government is failing to keep.

Mr. Speaker, the former premier stood in this House last week and said that we shouldn't blame Ottawa because they put billions upon billions of dollars into agriculture in Saskatchewan. They have put money into agriculture in Saskatchewan. In fact I'm sure everyone will remember the \$1 billion injection of cash. Remember that phone

call of 1986 election campaign by the previous premier to the Prime Minister? Remember thanks a billion, Brian?

Well, Mr. Speaker, they don't seem to understand in Ottawa that we can't shut the tractors off and leave the land sit idle between elections. We can't tell people not to stop eating between elections. It is time the federal government lived up to its responsibilities of paying a third line of defence to the farmers of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — And not because it's an election year but because it is a responsibility and because it is needed; not because some Tory premier needs it to get re-elected. Mr. Speaker, the serious flaws in the second line of defence programs have not given the level of help and stability that they were designed to do.

On the TV program *W5* which was aired on Sunday night, it showed the tough measures that have had to be taken in New Zealand because they were on the verge of bankruptcy. It was interesting to hear a sheep producer state that he didn't care if lambs weren't worth anything or not, he was getting paid to raise them and that's what he was doing. Mr. Speaker, they're self-destructed, and those systems in New Zealand and their economy has self-destructed.

The 1991 GRIP program, which was a program designed by a professor of agricultural economics — and at the time the premier — did the very same thing. Farmers were saying, I don't care how much I grow, I'll get paid the same amount; I'll get paid the same amount per acre whether I use fertilizer or spray. Doesn't matter what the markets are, they'll get paid anyway. And as we see in Alberta and Manitoba, their GRIP programs are self-destructing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, from the member yesterday that quoted in the House. He said, ask Alberta. Ask Alberta farmers what they think about 1991 GRIP in Alberta and 1992 GRIP in Alberta. Ask the farmers of Alberta what they think. They're in it. They're happy with the program out there.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder, if they're so happy with the program, why were they at the rally in Saskatoon? And why were they telling us that it wasn't so rosy in Alberta? Why were they telling us that Saskatchewan didn't have it that bad? They were there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — They were there. They were there from Alberta. They were there from Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the changes that we made to the GRIP encouraged the farmers to look at the markets, to see where they could get the best returns, to farm the land to grow the best yields. What it did was encouraged farmers to do what they do best and that is to farm the land, not the support programs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1245)

Mr. Flavel: — But, Mr. Speaker, we found out that the programs fell so far short of meeting the real needs of the farmers that it could not even be modified to do so.

Therefore this government has appointed a new farm support review committee to help develop a safety net that will work; a safety net to assist farmers in need in Saskatchewan, in rural Saskatchewan today.

Mr. Speaker, to assist farm families in financial difficulties, we also introduced the farm land leaseback program. Many banks and credit unions have become involved in the programs by providing six-year leasebacks.

But the federal government through its agency, the Farm Credit Corporation, says no. Says they will not participate in a program that will help farmers in financial difficulty in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this government will do what it can within the tough fiscal restraints that we are in. We'll do what we can to help the farmers out of this crisis, but we can only do so much. We will continue to remind the federal government that it has the finances, it has made the commitment, and it has the responsibility to help the farmers through the low prices created by the world trade wars.

Mr. Speaker, the speaker yesterday from the opposition also hit us on 1992 GRIP, the changes we've made to 1992 GRIP. And he said, Mr. Speaker, that:

I predict, Mr. Speaker, in the next election you won't win one rural seat — not one rural seat.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I predict that in the next provincial election we will win more rural seats than they will.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, after nine and a half years of government, they finally brought a GRIP program in in the last year — a hurried-up program in the spring of an election year. And the farmers were so enthused by it that they turfed them right out of office. After they had seen what 1991 GRIP would do for them, they turfed you out.

Mr. Speaker, the same member from the opposition yesterday:

I recall the place practically coming down in boos (speaking of the rally in Saskatoon) . . . coming down in boos for your Premier. That's what they were doing. They roundly booed him from start to finish . . .

I think that speaker from the opposition yesterday is slightly confused. He has the right building, but I think he has the wrong time. I think he's remembering when his former premier stood on that ice there, on centre ice, and they booed him continually. He's in the right building but he's at the wrong time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — He goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, that he says we'll be a one-term government. But I'm not so sure. We may be a one-term government, but if things keep going the way they are for the opposition, they won't even make this one term as an official opposition. It was 50 years from the first time you administered this province to the next, and it'll be 50 years before you're even back in the opposition side. And it will be 50 times 50 before you ever administer this province again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, in health care this government has set upon what is called the second phase of the medicare program. That is the reorganizing and the revamping of the health care delivery system, the development of health care districts, and this giving increased community control over the health system. It will be encouraging the adoption of a wellness approach to health which emphasizes disease prevention, positive lifestyles, and community-based health programs. And it promotes the coordination and integration of health services to provide a more responsive and efficient health system.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to point out that during the election campaign of 1991, people were telling me — and I'm sure that they told others — they wanted a government that told them the truth. And that's why they hired 55 NDP members in this House and only 10 Conservatives.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: — Mr. Speaker, they told us they wanted a government that would make the tough decisions, but do it with compassion and caring, protecting those that needed protection. And again, that's why there's 55 NDP seated in this House and only 10 PCs (Progressive Conservative).

Mr. Speaker, they wanted the truth and we told them the truth. They wanted the books open, and we did that. They wanted us to make the decisions that had to be made to gain fiscal control of this province again, and we have done that. And as we have done it, we have tried to do it with fairness, with compassion, and yet protecting the people that need it.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this government is on the right track. It has set the right agenda. I will not be supporting the amendment. And, Mr. Speaker, I will support the direction of this government and I will support the throne speech. Thank you, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whitmore: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm very honoured today to speak on the throne speech that was presented last week by the Lieutenant Governor, a speech that deals with the question of vision, direction, where we want to go, not just next year or the year after that, but where we want to go in the 21st century. And that's clearly what we've outlined in that throne speech.

My time is limited today in what I can speak about, but

that throne speech outlined three specific documents that have been put forward by this government: the area of economic development, the question of partnership and communications with the people out there and discussing what they want in terms of economic development. The other one is the wellness model, discussion on where we want to go in terms of health care. We now see the desire of people out there who quickly want to get involved in terms of establishment of these district boards. They know change is coming and they want to participate in that and have the community involvement to create the kind of health care system that we want.

The other document that I want to talk about briefly is in the area of agriculture. "Forging Partnerships in Agriculture — An outline for discussion." Something that hasn't been done in this province for a long, long time. Going out and talking to the people and determining the direction that we want to go 10 years, 15 years down the road in terms of agriculture. Building upon our strengths that we have. Our vision.

And I would like to quote a couple of statements that outline the kind of positive things we see in agriculture. It is not all gloom and doom, as the members opposite would let us know:

Saskatchewan potential is strong.

There is great potential for Saskatchewan agriculture and rural communities.

We have a strong production and transportation infrastructure in place in this province, the envy of many of our competitors.

We have a population of skilled and resourceful farm families who consistently out-produce most other regions.

We build on our strengths. Saskatchewan people are resourceful, innovative and co-operative. Collectively, in small groups and in larger communities, they will develop the new ways to make the principles of co-operation work on behalf of long-term stability of our rural way of life.

Interesting words. Words that have been lacking for the last nine and a half years. Particularly the word of cooperation.

In my short time that I have left, I want to briefly review the nine and a half years that the members opposite had in terms of agriculture. We heard great platitudes in terms of offloading by the member of Estevan the other day.

An Hon. Member: — You're going to tell us how to get a Senate seat.

Mr. Whitmore: — That's right. As my member opposite has said, we heard great platitudes from the member from Kindersley talking about, you know, how wonderful it was under the previous administration. I want to quote out some of the record. I want to correct the record.

Crop insurance. You want to talk about offloading in terms of the area of crop insurance. At one time it was funded equally by the federal and provincial governments. What did the previous government do? They agreed with the federal government to offload and pick up a share of 25 per cent by the taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — Tough negotiations.

Mr. Whitmore: — Exactly right. My member opposite says, tough negotiations. They didn't even bother to cut a better deal for producers by saying, why don't we share it one-third, one-third, one-third and at least give a break in premiums to the producers of Saskatchewan. They were afraid to say that to Ottawa. They didn't do that. And they stand up and say they cut a better deal.

Farm support programs. Western grain stabilization may not have been perfect but the maximum contribution a producer made to that was \$2,400. What came along? GRIP. What are the premiums? Higher. Is that delivering a fair system to the producers of Saskatchewan? Is that the way, Mr. Speaker, to produce a fair deal? I say no. Negotiations again.

1988, the drought program. Clearly federal responsibility. The province of Saskatchewan is now faced with a bill that we must pay back to the federal government of \$15 million a year — \$15 million — because we got tied into offloading by the federal government. And the previous administration sat by and let it happen. They simply said yes, here's our cheque-book; how much do you want?

The production loan program, something farmers who now have it, wish they had never seen. But the \$25 an acre was given out. And what has happened since then through this administration, through ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan) is that at the same time when we face financial difficulties, we then saw the heavy hand of trying to collect this money which was very difficult to collect. And we are trying to deal with that problem that should have been solved five, six years ago that has accumulated. We are trying to solve that now as a government. And that is their record in terms of agriculture.

GRIP '91. I heard the member from Kindersley yesterday talk about how wonderful GRIP '91 was. I know he comes from an area where durum is produced. He should go talk to his durum producers and how pleased they are with an overpayment they received. How wonderful a bill. Silence on the durum overpayment. Not a word from the opposition and we now have to deal with that problem. That was '91 GRIP.

We tried to correct '92 but it showed sometimes when you build a house on a poor foundation it has difficulty standing up anyhow.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whitmore: — If there was a failure that we made as a government, the failure was that we should have kicked it out entirely and started with a new program now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whitmore: — But we had a federal government that would not react. It simply shut the door because, quote: it wasn't an election time. And they were simply hanging out the producers of Saskatchewan to dry because they were being totally uncooperative.

An Hon. Member: — Being political.

Mr. Whitmore: — Being political, as my member says. Let's talk about the question of bank land. Under the previous administration, look at the number of acres that have been turned over to financial institutions. We have tried to deal with that except for one little case. And my member opposite talked about the federal government politics. The six-year leaseback was at least providing hope for people to continue to farm.

And what is the word from Ottawa? My representative in Ottawa, being the previous minister of Agriculture said, no way. No way we will help the producers of Saskatchewan. We don't care how good the deal is. We will not help it. Politics — politics comes into it again.

That is the advantage of a vision, Mr. Speaker. A vision outlines where we want to go in 10 years and puts the guidelines out there and allows people to participate in that and say where they want to go rather than dealing with the question of what's going to happen this year or next year with no vision, no light. And that's how they treated agriculture, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order. It now being 1 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Monday.

The Assembly adjourned at 1 p.m.