

March 8, 1993

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. Roy: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am just going to pick up on the debate on the throne speech from where my comments left off this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I was speaking this afternoon on our major initiative when it comes to economic development in this province. And as I indicated, it is very important that this particular document lead us into the next years and get us prepared for the 21st century, Mr. Speaker. Some of the major initiatives that have been involved in this particular economic development strategy include the continuation of the community bonds development program. Mr. Speaker, we've added and expanded to that program and certainly it is positive out in rural Saskatchewan and right across Saskatchewan. We've also, Mr. Speaker, in this particular document, got the worker-sponsored venture capital program which also will be a major stimulus, I believe, Mr. Speaker, to Saskatchewan and rebuilding our economy.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we've added the Premier's action committee on the economy and, Mr. Speaker, the mandate of this committee, of course, is to look at the provincial economy and keep track of where we're heading, but also to look at the *Partnership for Renewal* document, and as I indicated, there are some very specific time lines in this particular document and we want to ensure that we will meet those guidelines and those time lines as established in this particular document, and the PACE (Premier's Action Committee on Economic Development) committee will certainly ensure that that is brought to fruition.

I think an important area of economic development in this province certainly has to be the value added industries in this province. Certainly we're seeing major interest in value added activities in this province. In fact, I met this past fall with some people from the Saskatchewan Food Processors Association, which indicated to me, Mr. Speaker, that their activity in this particular area had increased by about 100 per cent, and their membership had climbed by 50 per cent. Mr. Speaker, this demonstrates that Saskatchewan people, again with the ingenuity for coming up with these creative ideas, are looking at all sorts of programs and ideas to rejuvenate the economy and we're very pleased to see that and again this document speaks to that, and continuing to stimulate that area.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — We're also very pleased to be looking at regional economic development authorities in this province. Now what these authorities will do in the

province is to coordinate and streamline economic development in the province. And that is very important. We have to look at what the federal government and what the provincial government is doing in areas, in a particular region of this province, and try to bring some coordination and some planning to economic development. I firmly believe that the regional economic development authorities are going to play a significant role in streamlining economic development and guiding us into the 21st century as far as Saskatchewan economic development, Mr. Speaker.

I want to talk a bit about the impact that federal economic policies have had on this country and in particular as it relates to this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the Free Trade Agreement and the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that when you see people like Simon Reisman and Gordon Ritchie, who were major architects and major negotiators on the federal government when it came to free trade agreements, saying that the North . . . or the Free Trade Agreement . . . And in particular, the United States of America is breaking the letter — if not the spirit — of this particular agreement in many areas, I'm telling you this is a serious indictment of this particular agreement, and we should be asking ourselves, Mr. Speaker, we should be asking ourselves as a government in this country, but as a government in this province, and we should be asking the opposition in Ottawa . . . or the government in Ottawa to not move ahead with a North American Free Trade Agreement until we have renegotiated some of the sections of this Free Trade Agreement that are so offensive to Saskatchewan and to the rest of this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Now we realize, Mr. Speaker, that Canada and Saskatchewan needs trade — absolutely. And in particular in Saskatchewan, exports are a significant portion of our economy. We do not deny that.

But what is offensive to us is that we are seeing a regular . . . a breaking away of the agreement by the United States of America. And one area that I find very offensive and the one that I think is not working is the whole area of the dispute settlement mechanism in the Free Trade Agreement. Because what is happening, Mr. Speaker, is that we are seeing . . . and in particular, in the whole area of the pork industry, Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing is that the United States of America is placing duties and is going after the Canadian industry, but by the time it goes through all the steps in the dispute settlement mechanism, you have the possibility of breaking a particular industry in this country. And that is unforgivable and it must be stopped, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to ask the federal government to not proceed with the North American Free Trade Agreement until we can settle the provisions in the Free Trade Agreement that are hurting Saskatchewan, and in particular, Canada as a whole. And until we . . . and I might add they should wait until we have a federal election in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Mr. Speaker, I want to talk now to a very important subject — one that should deserve a major priority and which this government is addressing — and that is a significant industry in our economy, and that is agriculture, Mr. Speaker. I want to take the members opposite on a little journey back in history because obviously they have forgot what national agricultural policy is all about.

Mr. Speaker, right from the start of agriculture in this country, the responsibility, under the Constitution of Canada, falls in large part on the federal government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Now, Mr. Speaker, that's not to say that the provinces do not play a role in agricultural policy. They do. But not a significant role. The responsibility has always resided in the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, the province of Saskatchewan has nearly 50 per cent of all the arable land in this country. It has less than one-fifth of the population. Mr. Speaker, there is no conceivable way that the taxpayers of this province can hope to finance a major industry like agriculture. This is why it's always been a national responsibility.

Now there's a perception out there, Mr. Speaker, that the agricultural crisis has somehow came up overnight. Mr. Speaker, it's always been here. Agriculture has always had problems. If you go right back to the early 1960s, we have lost 1,400 farm families each and every year through the good times and the bad times. Mr. Speaker, that tells me that agriculture has been going through a major rationalization process since the 1960s. But I want to go back to agricultural farm policy and in particular federal agriculture policy.

Mr. Speaker, I have a document here that's called *Growing Together*. It was put out in 1989 by the federal government — November, 1989 to be precise — by the then minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Don Mazankowski. And, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to farm safety net support programs, this particular document tells us that the first line of defence in the agricultural industry is the market-place. Farmers go out on their farms, grow their crops that are best suited to their particular farm, try to find niche markets for their crops irrespective of what other farm programs are telling them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the second-line programs in this particular policy paper were GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) and NISA (net income stabilization account); those were the second-line programs. And, Mr. Speaker, what they said — and it's right in that document; everybody should read it — that the first line of defence, which is the market-place, would not be adequate enough especially in light of the major trade war between the Americans and European Community.

Now what they said is that GRIP and NISA would fill in some of those income gaps over those years. But they also admitted in that document that GRIP and NISA would not be adequate to fill in all those income gaps. And that is why they put in place a third line of defence program.

And what this third line of defence program does, Mr. Speaker . . . And I might add that the federal government, in conduit with the provinces, put together a federal third line of defence committee that would monitor how much farm income was going into each province. Remember — the federal government put their own committee together to monitor. Now in 1990 crop year, Mr. Speaker, the 1990 crop year, their own committee identified a \$500 million shortfall — \$500 million shortfall. Has that money been paid out? It has not. And I'm not here to ask 1.5 billion; I'm not here to ask 2 billion; I'm asking the federal government to follow its agricultural policy which is set out in this document and pay the \$500 million that their own committee has identified for the 1990 crop year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — I want to tell you again, and especially the members opposite, the fact is we're asking for \$500 million that their own committee identified. The cost overrun on the helicopter contract being proposed right now, the cost overrun is \$1.4 billion, by Kim Campbell I might add.

Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely reprehensible. They are going to allow \$1.4 billion cost overrun on the helicopters, but they're not even going to put their \$500 million which their own committee identified. And where are the members opposite, Mr. Speaker? Where are the members opposite? They're looking in thin air, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am telling you, that is unforgivable. But I want to tell you that the federal offloading in agriculture is consistent and relentless and we have to take a stand on that. We've just seen lately with the \$80 million chopped off the Western Grain Transportation Act — unforgivable again, Mr. Speaker. Again another \$80 million that has been put on the backs of the provinces and a province like Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you another area that farmers out in my constituency are telling me that is very important is the cash advance program.

And, Mr. Speaker, the former premier, the member from Estevan, when the cash advance was terminated by the federal government, what did that member say, Mr. Speaker? He said it is short-term pain for long-term gain. That's what he said, Mr. Speaker.

And they stand up now and say they're sympathetic with farmers. What a charade. Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that they would stand up and make those kind of comments.

(1915)

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask everybody out there, and in particular the farmers of this province, if you think once the next election is over and the Conservatives or the Liberals — the Liberals have been very silent on this particular program . . . Mr. Speaker, I believe that this program is going to be toast. Mr. Speaker, they're going to terminate it. And farmers are very concerned about that. It

is a very good program and one of the finest we've had for a long time.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I do not subscribe, I do not subscribe to all the gloom and doom and pessimism that surrounds the agricultural debate today. Mr. Speaker, I believe that agriculture will play a fundamental role, a significant role in the rejuvenation of the Saskatchewan economy. I can stand up here, Mr. Speaker, because I am an active participant in the agricultural industry. And I can tell you that there is plenty of farmers out there, despite this serious financial strait-jackets they're facing, despite all the major hurdles that they have to overcome, they are looking at agriculture in a bright and optimistic note, and they're willing to work with the Government of Saskatchewan to ensure that they will be here tomorrow, and they will contribute significantly to the future of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Mr. Speaker, I want to turn a little bit now to the area of health care reforms in this province, and I want to tell you that I believe in my heart of hearts that this is one of the most important decisions and initiatives that this government has undertaken.

It's important, Mr. Speaker, because we realize how important health care is to the people in the province of Saskatchewan. It is something that is rooted deep in the very fabric of Saskatchewan society. And let me tell you that this government takes this very seriously. And what I hear out there, Mr. Speaker, is people telling me that if anybody they wanted to reform health care they want it to be a New Democratic government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Mr. Speaker, we've worked with the stakeholders in the health care. We've told them that this is a developmental, evolutionary process. We want them to take a look at all their options in their particular districts and their areas, to take the time. But, Mr. Speaker, we also want to emphasize that we are going to be setting a time line and that that time line, hopefully, will be achieved for the formation of health care districts.

Mr. Speaker, we firmly believe as a government that the future of health care will be significantly improved. We will have a better, more efficient, in particular most cost-efficient program after the implementation of this particular initiative, Mr. Speaker.

M. le président, mes chers collègues dans la Chambre, je voudrais vous dire un couple de mots en français dans ma langue natale. Certainement c'est un grand plaisir pour moi de me mettre debout ici ce soir pour vous parler de la condition de la province, et en particulier, le problème des finances dans la province.

Je peux vous dire que la situation, le défi en avant de nous, pour les gens de la province, c'est un gros défi, M. le président. On voit que le montant dette publique qui a été accumulé durant les derniers 10 ans par les chers membres opposés, M. le président, est rendu à un niveau inacceptable. Il faut prendre contrôle de cette situation; il

faut reverser le fait qu'on continue comme gouvernement à accumuler des déficits chaque année. C'est impossible, M. le président.

Comme j'ai dit ce soir, on parle de renouveler l'économie dans la Saskatchewan. Mais comment qu'on va renouveler une économie si on continue à créer de la dette puis on est rendu un point, M. le président, que les investisseurs mondiaux, tout autour du monde, ils vont regarder avec chagrin sur le Canada parce que pour eux, ils veulent avoir un ambiance qui vont donner du pouvoir et qui vont confortable de venir investir ici dans la province.

Alors c'est très important; je suis très encourageant et je supporte mon gouvernement pour les initiatives qu'on a prit. Certainement c'est difficile pour les gens et je pense qu'on s'en va dans bonne direction et je suis fier de dire qu'à la fin de la journée je pense les gens de la Saskatchewan vont nous supporter et nous dire oui, vous avez fait les bonnes décisions.

M. le président, je pense on a tout vu les taux d'assimilation à qui arrive tout autour du Canada et certainement dans la province de la Saskatchewan. Les taux sont les plus hauts dans le Canada. C'est inquiétant pour moi, comme francophone, parce que je vois que notre langue, notre culture continue à être assimilé. Et je veux vous dire, comme député francophone, mes chers francophones en province, qu'il faut essayer de prendre des contrôles pour reverser ça.

Nous le gouvernement reconnaissent ça et on a dit dans notre discours de trône qu'on ne fait un commitment pour essayer d'amener la gestion scolaire. Certainement on veut essayer de pousser le gouvernement fédéral pour faire certain qu'il nous aide la province pour financer cette programme, parce que pour nous la province, avec le dette comme j'ai dit, avec le déficit, c'est très difficile. Mais on a fait un commitment à la fin de la journée, je suis optimiste que le gouvernement de la province vont avancer avec ce projet-là.

Alors, M. le président et mes chers homologues dans la législature, je vous dire que ça me donne un grand plaisir d'être capable de me monte ... de me mettre debout ici pour m'exprimer dans ma langue natale.

(Translation: Mr. Speaker, hon. colleagues in the Assembly, I would like to say a couple of words in French, my mother tongue. Of course it's a great pleasure for me to be standing here this evening to speak to you about the condition of the province and in particular, the financial problems in the province.

I can tell you that the situation, the challenge before us, for the people of the province, is a great challenge, Mr. Speaker. We see that the rising public debt which was accumulated during the last 10 years by the hon. members opposite, Mr. Speaker, has risen to an unacceptable level. We have to take control of this situation. We have to reverse the trend for the government to accumulate deficits each year. It's impossible, Mr. Speaker.

As I said this evening, we have to revive the economy in

Saskatchewan. But how can we renew the economy if we continue to create debt to the point, Mr. Speaker, that investors around the world look to Canada in sorrow, because they want to have an atmosphere which will enable them to feel comfortable investing here in the province.

So it's very important. I'm very encouraged and I support my government for the initiatives they have taken. Of course it's difficult for people and I think that we're going in the right direction. And I am proud to say that at the end of the day I think that the people of Saskatchewan are going to support us and say yes, you've made the right decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I think we've all seen the rate of assimilation of those who arrive all around Canada and certainly in the province of Saskatchewan. The rates are the highest in Canada. It's disquieting for me as a francophone, because I see that our language and our culture does continue to be assimilated. And I tell you, as a francophone member of the legislature, fellow francophones of the province, that we have to take control and reverse that.

As government we recognize that and in our throne speech have made a commitment to try to establish francophone governance. Certainly we want to try to push the federal government to make certain that they help the province finance this program, because for our province, with the debt that I've mentioned, with the deficit, it's very difficult. But we made a commitment at the end of the day, optimistic that the government will go ahead with this project.

So, Mr. Speaker and hon. counterparts in the legislature, I do say to you that it gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to stand here today to speak in my mother tongue.)

Mr. Speaker, and, fellow members, I want to end my presentation, my debate, in saying that I believe that the initiatives and the steps that the Government of Saskatchewan have taken are the right decisions. I firmly believe that. I think we cannot continue on this path.

We have close to an accumulated debt of 14-point-some billion dollars. How are we going to create a climate of confidence for investors to come and invest in this province if they know that the finances of this province are nearly over the financial precipice? And I think that is absolutely important. We can talk long and hard about economic development, but unless we take the tough, difficult decisions to reverse our financial situation, we will never be able to attract the kind of investment that we as a province need, and our children need, and future generations need.

Mr. Speaker, this really is a journey of renewal for us all. We've taken the right path. The future is just ahead of us. We just have to strive for it and we will achieve it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for this opportunity to respond to the Speech from the Throne. My remarks, Mr. Speaker, will be brief and I'll touch only briefly on the many fine and important

instances of legislative or program and policy change promised in the Speech from the Throne.

Before I do so, though, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you for the very fine and even-handed job that you are doing in bringing order and civility to this House. I have been impressed, Mr. Speaker, with how you have conducted yourself in your tenure as Speaker and how you have asked the members of this House, on all sides, to conduct themselves. I recognize that you do not have an easy task, but I think you are to be commended for your patience and your persistence in that task. Thank you.

I also want to acknowledge the mover and the seconder in the debate from the Speech from the Throne. They have commented eloquently, passionately, and caringly upon the many significant trends that are set forth in the speech and I thank them for their contribution.

For me, Mr. Speaker, one of the more important reasons for letting my name stand for election to this House was the opportunity to be able to participate in a direct and meaningful way in the process of change — change from a selfish, inner-directed, grasping, and greedy approach that characterized the '80s and the Conservative government; change to a process that emphasizes the social democratic values that I cherish.

And, Mr. Speaker, upon listening to the Lieutenant Governor read the Speech from the Throne, I was impressed with how strongly the approach that our government intends to chart over the next few months is guided by strong and clear social democratic principles. Critics may complain that we're not moving fast enough, but they can hardly complain that we're not moving at all.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the clearest example I can give of the embodiment of social democratic principles in the throne speech is the whole question of tolerance and respect for others that is inherent in many of the pieces of legislation promised for the upcoming session. It doesn't require the wisdom of Solomon or the genius of an Einstein to be aware that the vast majority of the legislation that we will be introducing this session would never, ever have seen the light of day under either a Tory or a Liberal government.

No, Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne and the legislative action promised within it is clearly the work of strong and dedicated, fair-minded and community-oriented social democrats. I point out, for instance, our plans to expand the employment equity program in the public service to make sure that fair employment opportunities are available for people of aboriginal ancestry, women in management and non-traditional roles, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. This latter addition, members of visible minorities, is very important and is a clear recognition by our government that we must actively ensure that all people, regardless of country of origin, have opportunities without discrimination or racism to contribute meaningfully in the life of this province.

I am also very proud, Mr. Speaker, that our proposed

Occupational Health and Safety Act will include a special framework for dealing with sexual harassment. The underlying social democratic principle guiding this and other pieces of legislation, it seems to me, is that of respect; respect and tolerance and celebration of our differences in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — This is very important, Mr. Speaker, and it's a clear indication of just how different — and how values-driven — our government is from the opposition parties. We have as a value and we have as a practice a clear recognition of the need to enhance social justice for all people. And we will do that, Mr. Speaker, despite the pettiness, the narrowness, and the fearmongering of individuals who wish to retain their special positions of privilege and their racism and sexism and intolerance. Those things are unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, in a civilized country, and our government will be moving to correct the injustices that have been caused by these things.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1930)

Ms. Lorje: — I am proud, Mr. Speaker, that we will be introducing amendments to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, family status, or the receipt of public assistance. I know that some people are running around this province right now predicting all sorts of doom and catastrophic gloom if we should happen to do this, and quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I'm more than a little irritated about the falsehoods and the hatred that's being generated over this issue.

What we are aiming for in this legislation is not so catastrophic and it hardly ranks as special privilege. We are not creating special rights for certain individuals; we are not encouraging people to run amok in the streets. No. What we are doing is saying very clearly that respect and tolerance for differences are important social democratic values that are necessary in any civilized society.

The sky won't fall in when the legislation is passed, Mr. Speaker, but for thousands of men and women in this province, life will be just a little easier as they carry on their day-to-day existence knowing that they will not unjustly be denied a job or housing or public transportation simply because they happen to be different. And society will not crumble because we protect their right to be different.

You know, Mr. Speaker, a lot of heat and very little light has been generated by the smokescreen that has been thrown up about our government's plans to prohibit discrimination against gay men and lesbian women. At the heart of it, I believe, is a basic fear and intolerance of difference that is unrealistic, hateful, and hurtful. And as a proud and strong social democrat, Mr. Speaker, I reject the intolerance guiding this opposition to our legislation.

I also want to point out that there are two other major areas where people have suffered discrimination that we

will also be moving to prohibit with this legislation. People sometimes say to me, well there really is no discrimination against gays, so why bother with this legislation? When they say that, I know that they are ignorant of the many stories of pain and humiliation that gay friends of mine have experienced.

And while I have never — because of my sexual orientation which happens, by a quirk of birth, to be the majority one — while I have never experienced the sorts of hatred and loathing that these friends have experienced, I am nevertheless completely convinced that we need to move, and move quickly on this legislation.

And that is because, Mr. Speaker, I have personally and directly experienced the discrimination and biases caused by the typecasting in the other two areas that we will be moving to legislate on, that is family status and receipt of public assistance.

I will give you two quick examples of the kind of needless pain and harassment that can occur for people. When I was in my 20's — which was a long time ago to be sure — I can still remember the experience indelibly that occurred to me when I applied for a job. The man interviewing me leeringly asked whether or not he should hire me even though I had all the necessary job skills that were required. His reason: well I had recently married and he was concerned that I might end up pregnant on the job. That, Mr. Speaker, is intolerable and unwarranted discrimination on the basis of family status.

And while I was growing up, my widowed mother was forced to rely for a time upon public assistance to feed herself and her six children. And how vividly I remember riding the school bus and having other children taunt me and smear bologna sandwiches in my hair and call me a welfare bum. That, Mr. Speaker, is intolerable and unwarranted discrimination on the basis of receipt of public assistance.

And, Mr. Speaker, our legislative amendments to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code will send out a very clear and strong message to the hatemongers of this world that it is not acceptable to indulge in such behaviour.

I want to turn now, Mr. Speaker, to some general remarks about the experience of being in government for the past year and a half. I meet people on the street and they say to me: why would you do it? Why would you want to be in government right now when you have to deal with such a crippling deficit? They seem to think that one can only enjoy being in government if one has largesse to distribute, and that being an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) should be the equivalent to being a Santa Claus.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, this is a tremendously important and significant time to be in government. No, it's not fun. And no, it is not personally rewarding. But it is tremendously challenging and stimulating, and it is very, very important.

One only needs to look around the world at examples where the democratic process has broken down or was

non-existent to be inspired by the challenge and the honour that we have here in this House. As I consider the alternatives, I have to say that I'd far rather be here in government, even in spite of our economic difficulties. It is challenging and it's exciting to be in government at this time.

It seems to me that almost any buffoon can govern when times are easy. We certainly have had some sterling examples of that over the last 10 years. But it requires an extraordinary dedication and commitment to democracy and to social democratic principles to govern in times such as these.

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

Ms. Hamilton: — Asking leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Hamilton: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through to the members of the Legislative Assembly, 30 Wells Division-83 Cub Scouts Regina, Saskatchewan. They're members of Cubs and Scouts in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. And with them this evening are chaperons Gilbert Gech and Del Hammerlindl. And I would ask all of the members of the Assembly to join with me in greeting them this evening. We'll be getting together for a discussion shortly in Room 218 and a picture together with them on the steps.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

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

Leave granted.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to welcome the Boy Scouts here tonight. As an ex-Queen's Scout, I appreciated the scouting opportunities that I had and I wish them the best in their scouting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

Ms. Lorje: — Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, it is a privilege and an honour to be part of government during these exciting, challenging, and difficult times. So I want to thank the people of Saskatoon Wildwood for giving me this privilege and opportunity, for it is indeed a tremendous opportunity.

We are, in this province and in this country, on the

threshold of major change. For years people have talked about the developing and the developed countries and have divided things up that way. What is becoming increasingly clear, Mr. Speaker, as we face the horrendous deficits created by 10 years of profligate spending by right wing, incompetent governments here and federally, is that a third category of country could potentially emerge.

If we are not extremely careful and prudent and fiscally responsible, Mr. Speaker, we could add to the categorization of developing and undeveloped countries, a third category of undeveloping countries. It is clear that we are at the threshold of a crisis now. It is also equally clear that we have, through our budgets and our legislative agendas, initiated the kinds of solid, common sense, and compassionate actions that will prevent us from sliding into the status of an undeveloping province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — People may complain about our preoccupation with the deficit; however it is the means to a goal of financial freedom and dedication to social democratic principles that is extremely important if we are to maintain our status in this world.

So it is challenging, and it is exhilarating to be part of government right now — to be part of the process of making government more effective, more focused, debt free, and guided by the principles of compassion, caring, and tolerance, and of the careful balance of individual and societal rights.

The purpose of government, it seems to me, is to provide a template of law and order that has been generally accepted and clearly developed from the general wisdom and acceptance of the people. The purpose of government, it seems to me, is to work as legislators to leave things a little bit better than they were when we got here. How I wish that the opposition had been guided by that very benign and minimally intrusive principle: to leave things a little bit better than they were before they got here.

You know in preparing for this speech, I reviewed some of the statistics of the financial plunder and carnage visited upon this province by the hon. members opposite. I won't once again recite the litany of the debt, the scandals of patronage and unjustified grants and pay outs to Tory friends that categorized the government of the last 10 years. I won't talk about the dubious diversification strategies. No, what I will do is simply remind members of this House of one very straightforward and important statistic: if the previous government had created jobs at the same rate as the rest of Canada, we would have over 32,000 more jobs in this province right now . . .

An Hon. Member: — How many?

Ms. Lorje: — Thirty-two thousand more jobs in this province, and the population of this province would have been 1.1 million people if they had created jobs at the same rate that the rest of Canada did.

But that isn't what they did. They gave the money away to

dubious schemes like GigaText. They were free spenders. And what they did was they concentrated capital in the hands of a privileged few and they heaped a mountain of debt upon the rest of us.

And so, Mr. Speaker, our government, our New Democratic government, must now come in and follow through on a very modest goal — to leave things a little better than they were when we got here. And to do that we've outlined a clear plan of action that eliminates the privilege that members opposite have tried to carve out for themselves and their cronies. For that, Mr. Speaker, is surely the essence of what being a social democrat is all about — the elimination of privilege and the creation of opportunities for equality for all people.

We will, Mr. Speaker, through a careful plan of action, eliminate the privilege that had crept into the process of government. Instead we will create, through consultation and strategic partnerships, a situation where everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in the rebuilding of this very great province. Unlike the members opposite — the Tories and the Liberals, whose slogans seem to be to deal with image rather than issues, to deal with privilege rather than principles, to work for entitlement rather than empowerment — we will strive for a just and caring and compassionate and debt-free society in Saskatchewan.

And that is why we have chosen the path of fiscal and social justice reform that we have. We have chosen not to push the people of this province further into debt. We have chosen not to throw our hands up in despair. We have chosen to recognize the winds of change and to manage that change. Like a kite that flies highest against the strongest winds, we will, together with the people of this province, work to eliminate unjustified privilege, to restructure government so that it is more effective, and to rebuild our financial affairs so that all of us together can enjoy the challenges and opportunities of that change.

(1945)

The decade of the '90s will be viewed by historians as a decade of change, where the people of Canada grappled with the greed and the excesses of the '80s and prepared their children for the next century.

This throne speech and the upcoming budget are necessary building blocks in that process of change. I welcome the change. I'm stimulated by the challenges and I am confident that our social democratic principles will guide us successfully and compassionately through the changes. Tomorrow will indeed be a better time for all of us together.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again it gives me pleasure to rise in this Assembly and ask the government of the day what happened to all the election promises that were made a short 16 months ago.

And this time, Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of the amendment that was proposed by my colleague because

obviously what we see in this throne speech means that if someone doesn't come along with an amendment that makes some sense, that adds some depth to the plan, we'll be bereft of anything at all. And it behoves the opposition, as it did in the last session of this legislature, Mr. Speaker, to add something to a government plan that is big on words but very, very thin on details and implementation.

It's a little bit like the performance that we've seen in this legislature from the government, a huge government, 55 members of the Assembly. And they can hardly get on their feet to support their own throne speech, Mr. Speaker. It's like pulling teeth around here to get the government members up. I think we'll be lucky if there's 20 of them speak before we're done this particular exercise in this House.

Cabinet. We've seen the cabinet grow from 12 to 14 to 15, and now up to 18. We've seen two cabinet ministers, two new cabinet ministers entering into this debate. I wonder if the Premier expanded his cabinet so that he would at least have a couple of them enter into their own throne speech.

I mean this is the game plan, Mr. Speaker, the document, the plan that the folks of Saskatchewan are supposed to adhere themselves to as they charge off into the 1990s. And what do we have? Almost no one willing to stand up and speak to it, to defend it, to show the vision.

And it's been very evident by their participation, Mr. Speaker, in this throne speech, that there is no enthusiasm by the government members. They know that the campaign promises of '91 are beginning to ring more hollow every day; that voter after voter and taxpayer after taxpayer in this province is saying: you didn't tell me the truth in October of 1991.

It's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP (New Democratic Party) promises were on a card 4 inches by 8 or something, because they obviously wanted to keep it very simple and very small so that they hoped that no one would notice.

But they did say a number of things, Mr. Speaker, about taxes and about the way they would handle the economy and how they would bring social justice to people. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? None of those things that I have . . . I thought would be coming, at least in the second throne speech because they didn't show up in the first, well it hasn't showed up in the second one either.

And obviously the enthusiasm I've seen from government members tells me that it probably won't show up in the one after this because this NDP Party in Saskatchewan doesn't intend on keeping any of those promises made in the last election campaign. They don't intend on keeping any of them.

I've sat in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, now over the first week and a half of this session and listened to the feeble defence of this government's performance in agriculture, still the number one industry in the province of Saskatchewan. And have we heard any one of them stand in their place and say that our vision, the confidence that

we will instil, as a government, in agricultural people in this province will get the crop planted in 1993, with the confidence that farm families need to have to go out and face the future?

An Hon. Member: — Not one.

Mr. Swenson: — As my colleague says, not one.

And I've listened very intently. I listened to the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg — as my colleague says, the doc in the corner. I've listened to the member from Shaunavon. I've listened to the member from Humboldt who instigated the special debate. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? After about five feeble minutes of justifying what they have done to agriculture in this province, they quickly light up the blame thrower and go talk about other entities, about the federal government, about the lack of responsibility of everybody in the world except New Democrats. New Democrats who told farm families in 1991 that we can do better. We can do it with less and we will go to Ottawa and we will show farm families how we'll bring the money home.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we got the bill for the plane trip. That's what they brought home. They took their friends to Ottawa and got laughed out of town, and then they brought the bill for the plane fare home. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? There hasn't been a thing since, except more and more bills for Saskatchewan farm families and the rural communities, the rural communities that live with them and off them.

These people, Mr. Speaker, these people are going into the spring of 1993. It's warm out there, the snow is gone, the wind is blowing. And those farm families were promised, they were promised by the Premier, Mr. Speaker, after he admitted in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, after he admitted that he shouldn't have touched the GRIP program, they were promised that this spring New Democrats would go out and consult with the people and revamp the program so that the confidence and the vision would be there in the spring of '93.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is now I believe March 8, and what have we heard from the government? Nothing. What have we heard from the government's friends? Nothing. We have a throne speech that talks about visions for the future. Well, Mr. Speaker, farm families are hoping they don't see visions of frost and drought and the things that they saw in '92 — and an absolute ineptitude by this provincial government, an ineptitude to do anything about it.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, how any rural member of this government can go out and face the very constituents that elected them a short 16 months ago, the very constituents that they promised so much to and have been such a dismal failure to, and then have the audacity to come into this Chamber and present this throne speech, this throne speech that is so bereft of any hope or imagination or vision, and say to farm families, we've got it figured out. Stick with us; we're going to do better in the future. Well let's just hope, Mr. Speaker, as far as agriculture goes, that that particular vision of the New Democratic Party isn't the one that the member from Rosetown-Elrose brought

into this Assembly last spring.

Mr. Speaker, you can go through this particular document section by section, and it's almost sad to say that every section is treated the same way that agriculture is. We get fancy words. We get mouthing some . . . the New Democratic Party government saying that, well we've gone out and consulted with people and this is what we've told me. But when you actually go through it, Mr. Speaker, you see that it is one betrayal after another.

I've been very curious to hear some member of the government stand up and say, you know, a year later — a year later after increases in personal taxes, a year later after increases in corporate taxes, a year later after increases in sales taxes, a year later after double increases in utilities — that this government would come forth with a study that says that all of these things have been good for the economic wherewithal of this province. And this study will show that we've got tens of thousands of new jobs because of it, that we've got the economy turned around, that people are investing in Saskatchewan in ever-increasing numbers. The rate of outflow has stopped, that people are coming back into the province. There are fewer people on welfare. The employment rate is the best in Canada. Because I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that very quickly after the last election, this same government had a study almost instantly picked out of the air saying what the downfalls of harmonization were. It only took a matter of weeks, Mr. Speaker. And there it was for all the world to see. The jobs had left, people were leaving the province — all of these things that the New Democrats campaigned against. But have we seen a study from this government, Mr. Speaker, saying that these things have occurred, all of these wonderful things because of their record? No. We haven't seen that.

The member opposite that spoke prior to me talked about a dubious strategy for economic development. Well I say to you, Mr. Speaker, this throne speech is dubious on economic development. This government's performance is dubious on economic development. And I would suggest to the many ministers of Finance over there that perhaps they should come forward with a study, that perhaps they should lay out to Saskatchewan people exactly what raises in personal, corporate, sales, and utility rates have done to the Saskatchewan economy.

And I think what they would find a year ago to today is that there is 10,000 less jobs, that there are more people on welfare today, that Saskatchewan no longer for the very first time in I don't know how long doesn't have the lowest employment rate in Canada, that we're much closer to the national average than these people care to admit, and that people are leaving this province by the tens and the hundreds and, I would suggest to you, by the thousands on a monthly basis.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to be back to where we were in the mid-'70s, the last time these people had power in this province, where Saskatchewan sank to 890,000 people. And I would suggest to the many ministers of Finance over there that 890,000 people in this province isn't enough to provide the safety net that we all enjoy, the education and the health and the policing and the social services and the reduction of the deficit that we all want to

be part of.

Because as people continue to leave this province, we generally lose our best, Mr. Speaker — the people with the get-up-and-go; the people that will work that extra hour in a day. Those are the people who will leave this province because this government has no vision, because this government is simply taxing them to death without showing how they're going to bring about the economic wherewithal to pay for the things that we enjoy in our society.

And once again, Mr. Speaker, do we see the plan in the throne speech? No, we don't. And my fear, Mr. Speaker, is that come budget time on the 18th, that we're simply going to see more of the same — more taxes, more outflow of migration, more despair amongst the people of this province who we should be encouraging and helping to build our economy.

(2000)

And it's things like we see, Mr. Speaker, things that we see in the health care sector that tell you that this government is bent on covering up, not moving ahead.

This was the government in the health care side. This was the party that said we can always do medicare better than anybody else; we're the founding fathers of medicare; we know how to do it smarter; we know how to do it more efficiently; we're the only people that can manage medicare. They promised that to Saskatchewan people in October of 1991.

And what have we seen? We have seen more people connected with the wellness model split apart from their health care system than in any decade probably since the 1930s. We have seen chiropractors, we have seen optometrists, we have seen people faced with diabetes on a daily basis, people that take oxygen in order to maintain their life support, people all over this province who tried to stay in their home, people that tried to work within the system so that they could remain and be productive individuals, not use the hospital system, not use the heavy care facilities — the very epitome of wellness, Mr. Speaker — we have seen them all separated and driven from that system that New Democrats always said was theirs. And now, Mr. Speaker, on top of that we see the New Democratic Party government in this province going to close down much of the infrastructure in rural Saskatchewan. And they're going to do it by pitting community against community.

The Minister of Health stands with pride in this legislature and says, no, I'm not the one that's going to wear the goat horns here. I'm going to make the men and women, the volunteers, the taxpayers, the people that work so hard to keep many of our rural institutions a part of our community, they're the ones that are going to wear the goat horns because the responsibility I sought when I offered myself up to govern this province, I don't want any more. I don't want to face some of the realities of change. And because I'm a New Democrat — I'm the founding father of medicare in this province — I'm going to be able to do this to our rural communities, and I'm going to be able to get away with it.

Well I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that this opposition and this party is not going to let them get away with it, that there's going to be many tough questions asked, and that people out there, people like the Victorian Order of Nurses and others, are going to stand up and fight this government for the wrong-headed moves that they are making to dismantle a goodly part of the health care system in this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, as you go down through this document of betrayal, this throne speech that gives no hope and vision, the same things can be said in the area of education. The quote that my colleague gave today in question period, the quote of the Premier of Saskatchewan when he was in opposition and campaigning so hard to become the Premier of our province, about how you can never short-change education, that you can always find the money no matter what — we all remember those remarks; they were only 16 months ago.

And what do we find in education today? We found what came up in question period, with community being pitted against community, with the minister giving a commitment to just one figure in the House and then we find that figure tripled in reality.

Now maybe the minister didn't know. Let's hope for the communities for Loreburn and Strongfield that that minister now wakes up and smells the coffee and say there's been an injustice done here, that the promises made have to be kept, not more promises made and more broken. And it's like that all across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, community after community.

I mean did the minister really believe, really believe that people were going to accept her story about a leaking roof, when there are communities all over this province that have got the fire marshall involved with their particular school. Or they've got another problem that they feel is insurmountable, and they're looking for direction, and they're looking for leadership and they're looking for someone that will take hold of the agenda, and instead they find a government and a minister that simply tries to pit one group of taxpayers against another.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, how does that square, how does that echo with the words of the Premier who said, when it comes to the education of our children, you can always find enough? I didn't hear him say anything about pitting taxpayer against taxpayer, community against community, school against school.

And I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that once again what that is is the betrayal, the betrayal of the Saskatchewan voter and the Saskatchewan taxpayer. And there is nothing in here to give any hope or vision to the area of education — any hope at all that it is going to change, that the policies espoused by the Minister of Education in question period today are going to change.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we come down to one of the great myths of this current NDP administration, and this is the whole area of the debt and the deficit and accountability.

And there probably won't be enough hours in the night, Mr. Speaker, to run through the entire litany.

But I can say to you, sir, and to the members of this government, that a lot of people are starting to catch on with what has been perpetrated on Saskatchewan people over the last year and four months. A lot of people are starting to talk about this government and the stories that they've told in order to try and cover up the hypocrisy and the betrayal of the last election campaign, the fact that people were misled, and because those promises can't be met we have to find suitable excuses.

I'd like to quote, Mr. Speaker, from a letter to the editor in the *Regina Leader-Post* of Saturday, March 6 and it says:

(it) is not correct in suggesting that if we are just strong enough to bear through enough austerity, the problem will be solved. Deficit and debt problems have to be solved by means of economic growth and development in this province, along with strict controls on government spending. The government's role has to be to encourage that growth and development; it cannot just be to demonstrate its commitment to responsible management by increasing taxes and cutting expenditures.

The author goes on to say:

This administration has clearly suggested that it does not know how to put in place the tax base required over the next . . . years to pay off the debt.

The people, including businesses, in the province are already taxed to the limit of their capacity, or willingness, to pay for government programs.

Mr. Speaker, that was Isabel Anderson, associate professor of economics, University of Saskatchewan, responding to the former Minister of Finance, who took it upon himself to write a letter to the same paper some time ago with a bunch of these misconceptions mouthed in that particular piece.

Ms. Anderson, who is a well-respected professor at the University of Saskatchewan, has taken great exception to some of the things that this government has done because what she says is they aren't telling the whole story, that we keep only getting part of the goods.

And that was reinforced today, Mr. Speaker, reinforced today on a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) talk show. And this was *The Noon Edition* phone in with Barry Burgess. And I hope that some of the government members took time to listen to it. On there Mr. Burgess had a professor, Harold Chorney, who is the public policy and economist from Concordia University and the same Ms. Anderson from the University of Saskatchewan — both people well qualified in their fields, both people who are trusted with educating young people in our society.

And it was interesting, some of the questions that were given to the eminent professors today by Mr. Burgess's call-in phoners. And one of them quoted my colleague,

my colleague from Wilkie who entered into this throne speech debate a few days ago. And he used some numbers attached to the deficit. And it was interesting to notice some of the government members pop out of their seat with a short response, not well defined, but obviously it had gotten under their skin, so somebody quickly went out and tried to dig up some material.

And in his speech the member from Wilkie used a deficit number.

So the person called in today from out at, I believe it was Vanguard, and asked the two eminent professors, one from our province, one from outside our province, given the numbers that they saw in the financial statements of the previous government leading up to 1982, if the member from Wilkie's numbers had any relevance.

Well, lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, the responses from the two professors said, yes there was a great deal of relevance, that the member from Wilkie was probably a lot closer to the truth than any of the government members have been in this debate. I mean these are people, Mr. Speaker, who simply take down what the actual numbers are and look at the debt. They do it in an analytical process, Mr. Speaker. They're not somebody that's out on any particular political agenda. And they say by analysing the numbers that they come up with the same numbers as the member from Wilkie.

Well lo and behold, the deficit of the province of Saskatchewan, all \$15.7 billion of it — and half of it rests with the same people who were governing this province in the 1970s and the 1980s, the same people who bought the used holes in the ground, the same people that got in the oil business and the uranium business, the same people that wanted to be in every business that was ever created. And they did it with borrowed money, with American money at high interest rates.

And yes, Mr. Speaker, we have a large deficit in this province. And some of it was the responsibility of the former PC (Progressive Conservative) administration. And some of it was the responsibility of the former NDP government. And it's time they accepted it. And it's time that they told the people the truth, because you know what, Mr. Speaker, a lot of people out there, a lot of taxpayers, a lot of business people don't really give a darn.

What they care about, what they care about, Mr. Speaker, is somebody putting in place a plan that will draw taxpayers to this province, that will say to the ones that are here, to the men and women of the business community, to farm families, to the creators of wealth in this province: that there is a plan in place to create enough wealth to pay on our deficit, Mr. Speaker. And at the same time there is a plan in place to cut government spending in a rational real way that doesn't destroy the infrastructure of either urban or rural Saskatchewan, that doesn't have the words rural revenge attached to each and every move.

And it will be interesting, Mr. Speaker, it'll be interesting as this budget comes in, if there is some kind of a long-term plan that says that to people or will we get more of the same; and will we simply get from this government

a Bill brought into this House to redistribute the boundaries in this province in such a way that they hope they can get rid of enough rural members, that their betrayal of Saskatchewan taxpayers and voters won't be punished in the next election?

(2015)

That is my fear, Mr. Speaker: that this government that talks about being open and accountable, that talks about being on the leading edge of reform in this province will simply bring in a Bill to try and gerrymander themselves into a position to win the next election and not have to face Saskatchewan people with the betrayal of October, 1991. Because I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that more and more Saskatchewan people each day are catching on to what was perpetrated by these people on the province.

It's like the member from Kinistino standing up and embellishing at great length on the Free Trade Agreement and saying how we have to change it. We have to do the things that will make Saskatchewan a better place to export from and direct denial to the Minister of Economic Development who can come flying back from Cuba and Mexico and say we've got most to gain. And then all of a sudden somebody jerks his leash and he's back, he's back spouting the party line.

And why is he doing that, Mr. Speaker? Well I quote from an article from the *Leader-Post*, Saturday, March 6. Bruce Johnstone says:

Of course, the NDP's position on free trade is largely dictated by its friends in the labor movement, who oppose free trade with all the protectionist fervor of a U.S. industry lobby group petitioning the Department of Commerce for a trade ruling against a foreign competitor.

Since the NDP's trade union friends are bankrolling the party, when labor speaks, the NDP listens. And what labor is saying very loudly is: NO DEAL!

And the headline, Mr. Speaker, is: NAFTA bashing by NDP becoming a little tiring.

And yet what do we get from the member from Kinistino tonight? Instead of talking about the plan that is supposed to be in place, it's more of the same rhetoric, more of the same betrayal, the same mouthings that were there in October of '91. Mouthings that mean absolutely nothing to the reality of the world that we face today.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, that is why it was incumbent upon the opposition to bring forward an amendment to this hollow, hollow throne speech, this throne speech that has yet to prove to Saskatchewan people that this New Democratic Party government has earned the ability to govern this province in any shape, form, or way.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I will be supporting the amendment of my colleague and voting against the main motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The division bells rang from 8:21 p.m. until 8:24 p.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 8

Swenson	Toth
Neudorf	Britton
Martens	D'Autremont
Boyd	Goohsen

Nays — 38

Romanow	Lautermilch
Van Mulligen	Calvert
Thompson	Hamilton
Wiens	Johnson
Simard	Trew
Tchorzewski	Serby
Lingenfelter	Sonntag
Shillington	Roy
Koskie	Cline
Anguish	Scott
Solomon	McPherson
Goulet	Kujawa
Kowalsky	Crofford
MacKinnon	Knezacek
Penner	Harper
Upshall	Keeping
Bradley	Kluz
Koenker	Langford
Lorje	Jess

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's certainly a pleasure for me to rise today in support of the debate on the throne speech. The throne speech, Mr. Speaker, is like a breath of fresh air for Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harper: — It sets forth a new path for Saskatchewan, a path of recovery, a path of cleaning up the mess left behind by the former government.

And, Mr. Speaker, in the last week I had the opportunity of holding six public meetings in my constituency. And the people of my constituency expressed to me the concern over the horrendous debt that we've inherited in this province.

And at the meeting in Norquay, I think I heard it described best, Mr. Speaker, when one of my constituents referred to the situation that we have inherited as government in this province, as a situation when he was a young lad in his teens and his folks would leave home for the weekend and he would be left home himself. Of course on Saturday night, being a young lad like he was, he would invite down his friends and they would have a party. But Sunday morning he would wake up, head feeling not too well, and knowing he had to clean the mess up before 4 o'clock because his parents would be home then.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's what we've inherited in this province is a mess, and now we're about to clean it up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harper: — But more of that later, Mr. Speaker. At this time I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 8:29 p.m.