

EVENING SITTING

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Crofford, and seconded by Mr. Whitmore.

Mr. Serby: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Prior to the supper break I had just concluded some remarks as they relate to the federal-provincial infrastructure program, and intend to move forward in speaking a bit about health care and families and some of the trade union legislation.

Mr. Speaker, our journey also includes the assurances that Saskatchewan people will be guaranteed some quality health care. In spite of the criticisms of the opposition, our communities are the winners as the district health boards take on the responsibilities of shaping health programs and services that meet the needs of our communities.

No one, Mr. Speaker, no one at all knows better the needs of communities than the people who live in them. Our new district boards will ensure that communities receive the best care that, in fact, funding can provide. It remains my opinion and the desire to see our government relate and address itself to the issues of regional disparities. Accordingly, our funding and our policies must and will adapt themselves to these variables, because it is rare to impossible to develop a policy or a strategy that is totally encompassing. Through the structures of the district boards and our department, a good deal of flexibility already exists, and will, to sustain efficient and comprehensive health care services for each and every jurisdiction across the province.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased that our government recognizes and moves forward to ensure the needs of Saskatchewan children and families are sustained and enriched. Families and children are our most precious resource and today they are our most vulnerable to the changes in times and structures.

Our government's commitment to address the problems of child hunger and poverty, family violence, and literacy are progressive steps of the long-term objective. The concept of community-based integrated services, like the Prince Albert project, further demonstrates how communities and neighbourhoods and professionals can work in unison to enhance the quality of life for citizens and families.

The expansion of the unified family court program will provide for a more sensitive and accessible way of assisting families to function during and after the difficult and painful processes of separation and family breakdown. The move to expand these services

to rural Saskatchewan will be most welcome and most supported.

During this session, Mr. Speaker, our government will move to further assist working people in this province to sustain equal opportunities in the workplace that allow them to balance work and family responsibilities.

Today our labour force is undergoing major changes. There are more women in the workplace. There are more single parents and women and young people remaining on the lowest-paid jobs. Our proposed amendments to The Labour Standards Act and The Trade Union Act will move to ensure fair, balanced, and a healthy climate in the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation will assist working families to function in a competitive society that places a tremendous amount of pressure today on our institution of family. As a parent and a professional, and today a politician, I support any legislation that strengthens and enhances the family.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, in mid-December of 1993, the Leader of the Third Party from Greystone was in Yorkton and she spoke to a party fund raiser where our local media attended and reported. The article in the newspaper was of December 22. In her speech the media quotes the member from Greystone saying that in the last session of our legislature our government passed labour legislation, which is true, and would do so again this session because we are catering to our party faithful.

She stated, and I quote:

What are these yahoos doing dealing with legislation that is completely irrelevant?

Did it really make a difference or make it better for the people of Saskatchewan?

Did it (really) make it better for the people of Saskatchewan?

She asks, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can hardly believe the lines. A public servant, a professional human service worker, a professional career before politics, including I'm sure, working with disadvantaged folks, people who are discriminated against, people whose rights were violated, and she asks the question, is progressive legislation that preserves the integrity and the value of families and individuals relevant?

I say, shame, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I read the comments coming from a party leader, a person whose professional credibility . . . whose personal credibility as a professional I happen to regard with some respect — or had regarded with some respect — abandons her professional ethics and, I suspect,

convictions for the sake of partisan acceptance, places in question for me, and I know the people of this province, the integrity of the member from Saskatoon Greystone.

Mr. Speaker, I can hardly wait for the member from Saskatoon Greystone to enter the debate on the labour legislation this session and tell this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan that those 70,000-plus working people, women in low wages, part-time employees, that they are irrelevant to our Saskatchewan community, because that's what this article said.

And I say that is the kind of politics that Liberals believe in — satisfying their personal egos, saying what is politically correct, and lip service to the principles that we hear so much about: fairness and equity. This, Mr. Speaker, is a new age of Liberal politics under the leadership of the member from Saskatoon Greystone.

Mr. Speaker, this government is for the people, our government is for the people, and that is why I am a New Democrat and that is why I was elected to this Assembly by the good folks of Yorkton.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Serby: — It is my belief and value that there is good in all people, irrespective of what cards in life they may have been dealt. It is true that people make their own choices and sometimes those choices we make may not be totally acceptable to everyone. But that's why we protect our democratic rights and freedoms and choices, which is what this Assembly and what we as legislators are here to preserve.

Mr. Speaker, our government still has a steep climb to reach the goals or the summit that I talked about in comparison to a mountain climb for Saskatchewan people. In our climb we will still see many obstacles and barriers and we will work hard to overcome those. Working together in partnership, hand in hand, we will get there, and when we do, I know that there will be with us a great crowd of solid, courageous mountain climbers who will direct and lead this province well into the 21st century.

Thus in closing, Mr. Speaker, upon the conclusion of this throne speech debate I will be taking my place, and on behalf of my constituents of Yorkton, I will be supporting the government and its accomplishments in the future direction as we venture upwards to complete our journey in renewing Saskatchewan. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As always, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to rise in this Legislative Assembly and enter into debate. And I think that is a healthy sign for any kind of a democracy where we can freely express ourselves and try to make our points as well as we possibly can.

I think first of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the fact that we do have a new make-up in this legislature, that it is not as we had left it in spring. And I too want to join with all of the members of the legislature that have spoken so far in congratulating and welcoming the new member from Regina North West.

I think it brings back some nostalgic memories for all of us when we remember the first time when we were in this legislature. It is kind of awe-inspiring as we traverse the halls, as we traverse the Chamber itself and recognize the history, and we recognize the heritage, and we recognize the influence that this building has had upon the lives of the Saskatchewan people since 1905.

And I welcome her and I say to her that if she still finds it awe-inspiring, a little bit star-gazing, I would say to her, don't lose that enthusiasm, don't give up on this place; it can be discouraging at times. It can be, when we get complaints, whether it is from our constituents, whether it is from the media, whether it is from the public or whomever it happens to be. It can be discouraging because you can never seem to do enough to please all the people.

But then, Mr. Speaker, there are the good sides when we do get the occasional nod, when we do get the occasional accolade and actually a person might even phone up and say, job well done, and that certainly makes it easier for us as well. So I certainly welcome the member from Regina North West.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I'm going to be relatively brief. I have some succinct remarks that I want to make to the Assembly. And keeping in the true official opposition's position that we have taken of reforming this legislature and discussing more pressing matters facing Saskatchewan people, I want to bring to members' attention the fact that last spring the Alberta government did not even have a throne speech. Instead the Premier delivered an American-style, a republican-style address to the province, and then it was on to the pressing business of the province that was at hand.

Mr. Speaker, like Alberta, Saskatchewan is facing many pressing matters that need to be addressed. And I am sorry to say that as I read this throne speech, as I listened to Her Honour, I did not see these pressing matters being addressed in this current throne speech.

I say this because the throne speech gave no specifics of how to alleviate the pain that the people of Saskatchewan are experiencing. It said nothing about the number of jobs that this government plans to create, nothing about a time frame in which to create those jobs, Mr. Speaker. In fact, quite frankly, nothing much of anything.

Further, the speech says nothing about consulting the people about casinos. Nothing about what this government is going to do to stimulate the economy or cut taxes. Nothing about the many crises facing health, facing education. Even though the throne

speech remains void of substance, Mr. Speaker, NDP (New Democratic Party) members, as we have seen them getting up one after another, like to say we're right on track, we've turned the corner.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to pursue that theme just a little bit this evening. I dare say, Mr. Speaker, that this government has turned so many corners that they are going full circle. That I would admit. And as far as being on track, I submit to you, members of this Assembly, that that is also debatable.

Now I would like to take a few moments to remind the Premier of words that he spoke while he was leader of the opposition. And he said, and I'm quoting from *Hansard*, page 80:

We're going to tackle poverty as I've described. We're going to put an end to food banks.

And we know and remember Peter Prebble getting up as opposition Social Service critic saying that poverty was going to be ended.

The Premier also said, however, and I quote again:

... this side of the House is committed that when an election takes place and when we are elected to office, we are going to put as a priority, as an objective within the first term of our government, the elimination of the food banks in the province of Saskatchewan. (And then he continues.) Nothing less will do.

(1915)

Hansard, page 77. And I notice that I've got the current Social Services minister's attention.

So the members opposite can say, we are on track. And that is what you say — we are on track. And I ask you, sir, are you on track in eliminating poverty and food banks? Are you on track?

Well I'm afraid statistics don't bear that out. Statistics prove that there's a record number of families on social services in this province. These records say that there are presently over 77,000 cases in Saskatchewan, and the numbers are climbing dramatically week by week.

So far we have 20,000 up from when the members opposite formed government. We've got 20,000 more now than when you formed government. And this is on track. So I guess if on track means setting records for the highest poverty numbers in the history of the province, then the government is right on track.

After all of these statistics reported to the public, all that the government can say is, well that may be so but Saskatchewan has a low unemployment rate.

Now it's true, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan does have a fairly low unemployment rate compared to the other provinces. But then, we've always had. When we were in government we were either the lowest

with the unemployment rate across Canada or second lowest. But ours was because there were people working. But you now under these circumstances, I submit to you, are considering that people are leaving unemployment and receiving social assistance instead. And that's not too much to brag about, I would submit to you.

And then, Mr. Speaker, there is the issue of jobs. And again as far as job creation, Mr. Premier, Mr. Speaker, what do statistics say? Statistics Canada figures released February 4, which is fairly recent, says that there are now 12,000 fewer jobs in Saskatchewan than in January of 1991 — 12,000 fewer. And that number of jobs in this province has hit a 10-year low, Mr. Speaker — a 10-year low.

So all I can say is well, so much for partnership renewal and for this government being on track.

Well further, Mr. Speaker, the government also says that they are financially on track, financially on track, and this comes from a government that closed down 52 rural hospitals in order to save money, but is now ... the converse of that is they are using \$23 million to start casinos in this province.

Further, Mr. Speaker, we have a government that will give political hacks salary boosts up over 40 per cent and then turn around and they say to the rest of the people in this province things are tough, tighten your belts, we've all got to pay.

We have a government that promised no new taxes, Mr. Speaker, and instead have raised every tax, every utility, and every fee imaginable in two and a half years.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that we have a government that has no priorities, a government that is on the wrong track.

And now there are many more examples of this government heading down the wrong track, Mr. Speaker, and I could spend my regular hour and a half speech reciting those. Some of my colleagues will pick up on some of the others, I imagine, as we go along. So I plan not to continue on that theme.

But before I conclude I want to specifically address two ministers of this government and I want them to pay attention. I want them to pay attention because what I'm going to be talking about right now for the next few moments is specifically directed to the Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Health. And to those two ministers I want to just simply say this: good job, good job, Mr. Speaker, because I'm going to compliment them. And because this is something that was missed in the throne speech but I think is something that has to be recognized.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to refer particularly to the tobacco tax and this government's reaction to the Liberal federal government's stand on the tobacco tax. Mr. Speaker, my personal opinion is it's a reprehensible step. And when I hear the Minister of

Finance getting up and saying that Saskatchewan will not kowtow to eastern Canada or smugglers or anybody who is not going to follow the law of order then I say, good job.

But I say good job more than that also to the Minister of Health and her stand when I see some of these situations arising, Mr. Speaker, when I see clips like this one taken out of the *Leader-Post*, “Teenagers like cut in cigarette prices.” I think it is a deplorable situation when we were so far down the track to cutting down the number of people that smoke. There are under 30 per cent of this population that smokes right now and it should be under 10 if we can possibly do it. It’s a backward step by the federal government, and I say to you right now that if we can do anything to support a stand like this I would urge these two ministers to continue on that track and the government to continue on that track.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — However before you think that I’m changing my normal personality, I am not, because I’m going to continue on to do a little bit of role reversal — it’s good from time to time, Mr. Speaker — because what I will say now is that . . . I don’t have a copy of that cartoon in the paper but I’m sure the Premier has seen that cartoon, and others. I have a constituency meeting tomorrow and I’m going to be showing it around because it showed the two sides of the coin. While we do this with the tobacco tax, and I commend you for that — unfortunately I can’t hold this up as an exhibit so I won’t do that — but . . . Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, but the point I’m trying to make is that while we commend what you are doing as far as the tobacco tax situation is concerned, I would just impress upon the Premier to be consistent and that he uses this same approach as far as the gambling is concerned.

Now while we say we must not allow lawbreakers to dictate what the laws of Canada are going to be — and that’s the stand that I take — I distinctly saw the Premier on television, on CFQC television in Saskatoon, where he made the statement, if I had my druthers, we would not have gambling casinos in this province. However, if we don’t — and I’m paraphrasing, Mr. Speaker — however, if we don’t submit to these casinos, we’re going to have another Oka on our hands.

That’s a dramatic statement. That’s a dramatic statement that I think does not augur well for the future of this province where we can, in quotations, be blackmailed to make certain concessions in the order of law. That is not right, Mr. Speaker; that is wrong.

Now as I’ve said before, normally I would take for a hour and a half to debate the throne speech because most throne speeches are significant, they are important, and there is meat to be discussed.

Now this throne speech, Mr. Speaker, is void of reality. It’s void and out of touch. Why? Because it does not address the severe problems facing

Saskatchewan. It does not address the real economic growth problems. It does not address the problem of job creation. It does not address meaningful reform of the democratic process. And it does not address the rural crisis in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we are spending \$35,000 a day — \$35,000 a day — discussing a throne speech that by all accounts of everyone that I have talked to, every media account that I have listened to, is vague to the utmost. It is vagueness, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you and to the people of Saskatchewan, that renders it useless.

And therefore, because we have urgent and pressing matters to deliberate on, I would now, Mr. Speaker, move:

That the House do now proceed to Bill No. 1, a Bill to amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Legislative Utilities Review Committee).

Seconded by my colleague from Morse.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The division bells rang from 7:26 p.m. until 7:27 p.m.

Motion negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 7

Swenson	Britton
Neudorf	D’Autremont
Martens	Goohsen
Boyd	

Nays — 22

Van Mulligen	Serby
Lingenfelter	Sonntag
Teichrob	Flavel
Goulet	Scott
Atkinson	Crofford
Kowalsky	Wormsbecker
Mitchell	Kujawa
Pringle	Stanger
Murray	Knezacek
Hamilton	Keeping
Trew	Jess

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, it’s indeed an honour for me again to take part in the throne speech and outline, you know, some of the major initiatives in regards to the government.

Before I get started, I would like first of all to say thanks of course to the staff of the Legislative Assembly, you know, and the new workers that we have and the existing workers from the past in regards to keeping our legislature open.

And I would also like to personally thank my staff from my office who take a lot of the issues, you know, of the people from throughout the province, whether in

Education or in SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) and from my constituency, and deal with the issues in an effective manner. I would like to say thank you to Cheryl and Fred and Adelle, Laura, Elaine, Wendy, and also Cec in my La Ronge office. Without their due diligence to the issues of the people of the province, you know, a lot of our work simply wouldn't get done. It is their hard work that makes our job a lot more easier and a lot more manageable as we carry out our daily activities.

(1930)

I would like to in this throne speech cover basically four areas. I wanted to deal with the issue of economic development and jobs. I also wanted to deal with the issues of our education and health. And as well I wanted to delve into the issue of land, and more particularly, the treaty land entitlement. I wanted to do a focus, Mr. Speaker, in the parameters of basically dealing with Northerners as well as dealing with Indian and Metis people. Some of the issues that I raise will also affect, you know, other Saskatchewanites through the province.

Mr. Speaker, before I get started I would like as well to say a few words in my own language, with due respect to all the languages, you know, of Saskatchewan and the world, and proceed to provide the overview which I will then immediately translate into English.

And I do that, Mr. Speaker, in due respect to my own personal background, you know, as a Cree being raised in northern Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, sometimes we have people from northern Saskatchewan who are in our hospitals, at the University Hospital, and sometimes they watch television programs and it's very important for them to be able to listen to the proceedings of the legislature in their own language. Many of the younger people are quite bilingual and will be able to listen to both, but for a lot of the older people, they are still pretty well only able to speak English in my constituency although some of them are, you know, quite bilingual as well. But it's also therefore a respect to them in regards, you know, to the proceedings of this House.

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

I have given a broad, general overview, Mr. Speaker, in regards to the overview of the summary there done in English, and I've done much the same in Cree.

I will therefore now proceed to give the overview of the throne speech in the English language, my second language, which I started learning when I started school at age 7. As a matter of fact, a very interesting thing happened. After 12 years of schooling, I remember a particular little story I have that I sometimes tell to students.

As a matter of fact, I was in Campbell Collegiate in Regina just a couple of weeks ago; I was invited to a class. And they were trying to find out what my background was, and so on. And of course they were interested in my educational background of my

Bachelor of Education and a Master of Education. But a lot of them were more interested in what my background was at the community level, where I was born where, you know, my first language was Cree.

And I told them that I was born and raised in Cumberland, basically a trapping, fishing, and a tourist economy. And a lot of our people worked at the mines and a lot of our people worked in the resource sector in forestry, etc. And some went to work at the railroads, and some even went to work at the DEW (distant early warning) line in the Arctic. I know some people went to work in the States. I know some people went to work at the sugar beet plantations in Alberta and so on. So a lot of our people, you know, had worked all over the place throughout North America.

So I come from quite a varied background of people with a lot of experience. People, when you listen to a northern community, tend to think that we stay in that one community all the time, without recognizing the historical aspects of people travelling. Personally I've taught school in James Bay in northern Ontario, Lake Superior area. I lived in Ontario for five years in my teaching experience, you know, and I moved back to Saskatchewan in the early '70s.

So a lot of the people sometimes tend to think that when you're born in a northern community in a trapping and fishing economy and that you have experienced these very important aspects of development in this province, that sometimes we haven't had time to travel and so on. But such is not the case, you know, from my experience.

And when I was listening to the students, they were trying to get at some of these issues of self-government and land questions. They had heard about the Qu'Appelle situation and so on. So they were very, very interested in a lot of my own personal experiences in regards to northern Saskatchewan as well as moving around throughout different parts of Canada and dealing with substantive issues of the day.

Now one of the major issues that has been raised all the time in the public, and it's an ongoing issue for everybody, is the whole question of economic development and jobs. Sometimes as we get into these debates we tend to look at a situation, as our member from across talked about, and focusing in on Oka and so on and dealing with that aspects. But sometimes we forget some of the partnerships that we've had with people of the province, particularly the partnerships that we've had with people from northern Saskatchewan and partnerships impacting on the Indian and Metis community as well as the non-aboriginal community of the North. And so I'd like to focus a little bit on that, you know, right now.

In the throne speech of course we had mentioned that we had had the opening of two new uranium mines, one at McClean Lake and Dominique Janine, you know, up on the north-west side, and the other one more on the central side of northern Saskatchewan. And a lot of the people did not know that in regards to that approval, that first mine, that Dominique Janine

was actually approximating about 20 jobs. I was very pleased when McClean Lake came in, because that one had 400 jobs.

And when you come from a community . . . and I'll mention this a little bit later on, on the impact of unemployment and the welfare history, and I'll talk about that later on. But I want to talk right now about positive aspects of it, because I think that's sometimes lost in regards to the debate.

When I look at the jobs, we now have about 1,300 mine and contract workers in northern Saskatchewan. What a lot of people don't know is that 607, or 47 per cent of the workforce in northern Saskatchewan are Northerners. When you compare that to places like Ontario or Northwest Territories where the population of Indian-Metis people is about 90 per cent, and ours is about 70 per cent in northern Saskatchewan, one recognizes that in Northwest Territories it's about 9 per cent, you know, in regards to the hiring of people of Indian-Metis ancestry.

But in our case in northern Saskatchewan, we have 40 per cent, you know, of the people hired of Indian-Metis ancestry. And I think that is a significant record, not only in the history of Canada, but I think in the history of the world. You know, there is not very many situations where aboriginal or indigenous peoples in a particular area get to partake in the benefits of development to such an extent, you know, as is happening right now in the mining industry of northern Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — When I've talked to a lot of the workers and I relate to them a lot of my experiences in regards to the time I did my master's degree, and I did an oral history project with the community of Sandy Bay. And Sandy Bay of course had built a dam in their . . . the Island Falls dam in 1927. And when they had built that dam, a lot of the workforce had come in from quite a few different places, but they used a lot of the workforce, you know, from Sandy Bay during the construction phase.

And a lot of the workers were telling me their stories, you know, that they had worked there for 40 years without a pension, but they talked about the tremendous friends that they had made with some of the workers in there and some of the respect that some of these workers gave them in return over the years, some coming back and visiting the community, you know, after many years and still keeping up with the friendship.

But they also told me about some aspects of the workforce, you know, not as respectful of them in the process. And they told me about the tough times that they did have. During that period they had a two-tiered system of wages, you know. Sometimes they wouldn't get paid the same. Sometimes they would be paid in kind, meaning that they wouldn't be paid in money, they would be paid in food.

One time they told me a story. They said, I asked them, I said, well what kind of food did you get? They said, well mainly the construction food. And I said, well what kind did you get? They said, well they gave us a lot of meat and they said it was mainly bologna in those days.

And so a lot of the people in the community told me these stories of the hardships, and they went through these experiences and some of them survived in those jobs, you know, for 40 and 35 years.

There's sometimes a myth of people, you know, from my background stating that we were lazy, etc., and that type of thing. My experience when I look back at some of the people without any pensions, without this and that, working, you know, for 40 years and their wages at the end result was not very high, and they stuck it out on these jobs. And these are the type of people that I talked to, you know, during that time. And some of the things they told me were very, very, reminiscent about the changes you see in South Africa. And some things that they did were sometimes . . . they're heard in disbelief in this day and age.

When we looked at it, we saw some people having different washrooms; they weren't allowed to be in the same washrooms. In some cases the people who had built the construction site where they had a swimming pool, houses with . . . (inaudible) . . . they were not allowed on that site. And in many cases they built the recreation centres, a golf course around that place. They were not allowed on the golf courses. They were not allowed to even go and see a movie in the recreation centres.

And a lot of the people told me about these stories in regards to the situation that you had dealt with. But yet they still survived because they still kept on working and they still kept . . . to this very day they still have, you know, a strong workforce from Sandy Bay working at the Island Falls site.

I'm saying this as a comparative analysis to what's going on today and what happened in history. Historically we have tended to see during the construction phases a lot of people got hired at the bottom end of the scale, and many times they were told they would work their way from the bottom. And the story I get is that 40 years later some people were still working their way from the bottom.

And in many cases when we were looking at these stories I was . . . when I talk to the young workers and I see their dedication and determination at the uranium mines, I give them, you know, tremendous positive encouragement because they reflect, you know, that strength and determination that previous workers before them had experienced. And it gives them a real sense of pride, you know, as they go on with their daily jobs in the northern mining industry.

Now when we have about 600 workers, Northerners in the mines, I say that the salary level is about \$13 million right now in the North. And I'd like to do a little bit of a comparison.

I had been brought up as a person in the trapping industry, and with the animal rights activity and the leghold trap being brought into . . . the ban being brought in perspective this coming year . . . The trappers used to make about 3 to \$2 million. It's dropped down now to about less than a million dollars for all the trappers in northern Saskatchewan. So when you compare that less than a million dollars and you see the mine workers — I'm talking about just the direct people who are on wages; I'm not even talking about all the contracts — it's \$13 million worth of wages.

(1945)

Now the other thing that's very important is that on the monetary side this is not only \$13 million in wages. A lot of the companies like Cameco and other companies like COGEMA are now moving in and buying goods and services from northern Saskatchewan. And they buy a lot of different goods that we have in the North. And they purchase approximately \$13 million. The contractual work in northern Saskatchewan from the northern contract groups is about \$25 million.

So when you look at it, Mr. Speaker, this indeed has been a very, very significant thing for the North. Sometimes when people ask me about the uranium industry and its impact on the North, I tell them it's more than the combined effect, you know, on the agricultural sector of wheat and barley and oats and canola. The mining industry is of such a strong base in the North that it is even more than that, Mr. Speaker. So when we talk about the development in the North, the mining sector then becomes very important.

The other thing too as I look back into the past is that the historic experience of the first entrepreneurs and workers in the North were Indian-Metis workers through the fur trade period. And we saw some transportation workers; we saw the whole history of food — buying and selling. So there's been a long historical tradition of that in my area and a lot of my grandparents used to tell us those stories. And today we see modern day entrepreneurs interconnected with the mining community.

I was at a meeting just about a month ago when we were talking about the multi-party educational training plan. And there I saw a person from Pinehouse by the name of Rene Red Iron, in discussing the issue of trying to get more people trained in different areas. And he had a construction company called Snake Lake Construction, and they were talking about the different contracts in this area. And some other contractors from the North were there and they had about 75 per cent of people from the North, you know, that they hired in there and they wanted to hire more. And that's why they were talking about more training, which I will discuss a little bit later on.

So we've seen entrepreneurs like Mr. Red Iron and many others that I know of, and one of the most

significant has been the Lac la Ronge Indian Band. They have really, really come out as one of the strong companies, not only in Saskatchewan, they're the number one trucking company in the North. But throughout Canada as an aboriginal company, they've become one of the top.

And with the leadership of Chief Cook and his council they have developed Kitsaki Development Corporation. Kitsaki Development Corporation is 51 per cent owner of Northern Resource Trucking. They have done a joint venture with one of the more well-known trucking companies such as . . . which is Trimac. And with a joint venture approach where a northern company owns 51 per cent, and with strong technical and business experience of Trimac, they have combined the trained labour from the North, you know, with the experience of an existing company, and have gone on to be very, very successful, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm very, very proud, you know, as a Northerner to be able to talk about positive aspects of development such as this company. I see a lot of the people in the Athabasca regions, the further North, are talking about the same thing in regards to developing joint ventures, you know, with people from the South and doing it in partnership. It's the same type of partnership we're talking about between business, labour and government and the community and moving forward in a positive direction. And it's in this light, you know, that they're also governing themselves as Indian people through the first nation, you know, in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker. So I'm very, very, very proud of that.

The other thing is sometimes I hear in the news that a lot of the workers who are hired in the mine are living down South. You know, they live in Saskatoon and P.A. (Prince Albert). There is no doubt a lot of the young people do live in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. But I started looking at the facts. By the news it sounded like more than half of them. When I actually looked at the facts, there is about 30 per cent. So 70 per cent of the workforce actually live at the community level in each of our northern communities.

And when I looked at it, I looked at the west-side communities and I wanted to find out, well how many of the west-side communities were involved in the mining industry. And the people from the west side, I found on the stats, on the direct wage ones — I'm not talking only about the contract, but on the wage ones — 24 per cent of them were from the west side or 143. There was also 24 per cent on the central region in around La Ronge; 145 workers were from there. On the east side, in around Cumberland House and Pelican Narrows, we had 32 workers at about 5 per cent. And very interestingly — and this is where I hear a lot of comments — they said, well there's nobody from Athabasca. Like somebody always tells me that there's two people working from Athabasca region.

When I look at the facts, Mr. Speaker, and I looked at the different communities from Black Lake,

Fond-du-lac, and we have a total of 103 workers, you know, from that area, and a total of 17 per cent of the total Northerner workforce.

So again we're seeing proper representation, not only on the southern areas of the North but in the far North as well in the Athabasca region. And I might say with the Athabasca region that they are not only trying to deal with the joining together of the communities and the bands and trying to get at the business aspect, but they're looking at joining together in regards to developing educational plans. And I worked with them, you know, in Wollaston last year to try and get at some of the training aspects and move forward with it. And so I think we've been very, very successful therefore in dealing with people from throughout northern Saskatchewan and so on.

The other thing that is raised to me quite often, they said oh yes, but they've just got the labour jobs. You know, you've got your fancy statistics and all they've got is the labour jobs.

Well I'll tell you, for the record, that the per hour jobs in northern Saskatchewan, it's \$15 an hour for secretarial staff, etc., and the labour rates are about \$20 and more. And even the mill operators, I know one person told me that they were making \$24 an hour, you know, the other day and that they were very, very proud of earning that money, versus sometimes the smaller level wages that occur in at the local level.

So they are very, very proud to be working and earning wages at the same level with other workers from the farm area and from the city area. And they feel very, very proud of that. But the main point is that it's not only the labour sector; about 60 per cent of the mill operators are from northern Saskatchewan.

Also the people who drive the heavy machinery, over 60 per cent are also from northern Saskatchewan. The place where we need to make some improvement, and this is where I saw what Mr. Red Iron was talking about, was the need to get into the area of training more people in the technical trades. And I saw we had approximately 20 per cent in that area.

The same with supervision. We had people that were in a supervisory capacity at about 20 per cent, you know, of the supervisors. So we're going to have to do some more work in the supervisory area and the technical trades.

And therefore I would like to move on to the aspect of training. But before I do that, I would like to make this point as I talk about the positive aspect. These people are very, very proud of being workers. You know for the first time they can say, we're being paid the same level as any worker in the world. Throughout the province we're being respected; we're working side by side with our brothers and sisters from all over.

And we're now looking at the different jobs and moving forward with it. They said, we'd like to help our other brothers and sisters at the local community

level. There is still a high unemployment rate, and a lot of them talk about helping their own people who are still on welfare.

And we talk a lot about the effects of welfare, the effects of alcoholism, the fetal alcohol syndrome. And a lot of the people have heard me talk about the fact that many people are dying from unemployment, and the devastating effects from unemployment.

And I know that as a government we will be trying hard to work with the communities in moving forward with the northern development fund and trying to create northern type . . . (inaudible) . . . etc., and making sure that the regional and local economic development that is part of the South is also part of northern Saskatchewan.

And I was very pleased with our document on partnership and economic development that we will be moving forth to do that.

So when we look at these things, Mr. Speaker, although that there is still a tough situation in the North, sometimes we forget that we have indeed achieved standards that is unmatched anywhere in the world.

The other thing I would like to say is that the training component becomes very important. Everybody talks about the importance of the new science and technology; the new developments in the world are going so fast and that our education system has to try and keep up.

Well I'm proud to say, Mr. Speaker, that in the North we have been working very closely with the rest of the province and trying to, you know, upgrade ourselves in regards to the latest in teaching methodology, the latest in curriculum and resource materials, the latest debates in testing and evaluation. And there's many things that we have done in the North.

I would like to say that one of the central and critical aspects of education is the linkage between education and jobs. Many of the people recognize that there has to be a strong linkage there. People figure that when you are spending money, especially when the fiscal situation throughout the world is in dire straits, that indeed we have to make more effective use of our money. And this happens, and this debate comes along in regards to what we do with the money in education.

So when we look at the educational scene, a lot of people are trying to see the linkage and trying to see a lot more futuristic view in regards to what we do with our educational dollar. And a lot of that comes in the North.

I might say that the computer instruction that we have heard about in the South is also happening in the North. We're moving forth not only at the K to 12 area, but at the post-secondary level aspect as well.

And we're seeing that we're trying to get at those

technical trades, and we're moving forth with a \$10.5 million multi-party training plan in the North. And this multi-party training plan will focus in different sectors, but it will focus a lot on the mining industry because that's where the majority of the jobs are.

And when we look at this training aspect we're also looking at something that we had talked about in the North when you combine education. When you combine the linkage you need labour market committees. I must say that when I was the principal of the community college back in the '70s, we had started this process where we worked with the business sector in the North and with labour. And together we tried to do some planning on a yearly basis as to where the jobs were going to be.

We had a northern labour market committee. And a lot of the people have been talking about this type of process in the South and throughout Canada. And it's an important development.

But I might add, in the North, that we also have a more specific mineral sector task team. And in that sense we're not only looking at the provincial government, we're combining our strategy with the mining sector, the federal government, and we're working with the P.A. tribal council, the Meadow Lake tribal council. We're working with the Jim Brady local, the Metis local. Jim Brady was historically a Metis leader from the past who was working, you know, as a prospector in mining. And they are working together with us.

And we are therefore doing a lot of work with the existing institution, the Northlands College. And we're moving forward in partnership, Mr. Speaker, and trying to make sure that when we're doing planning it's interconnected.

The other thing that's important is that many people — and we see that in Europe and we see that throughout the world — that the linkage of jobs and education is not only at the post-secondary level, it's moving to apprenticeship systems in the high school. Work experience, co-op education is moving into the high school level.

(2000)

I'm proud to report, Mr. Speaker, and you saw that in the throne speech, La Ronge and an apprenticeship training program built in with the high school. I might say that similar things are happening as well in La Loche. When Mr. Eisler wrote about La Loche and that type of thing, he forgot to mention some of the positive things. I might say that he did mention a couple of the positive things, but in this case I might say that, you know, there was this linkage, you know, occurring at the high school level in La Loche, which I'm also proud to report.

So we're trying to make that linkage between education and jobs and the computer aspect and trying to keep up with science as well as respect for our traditional culture in northern Saskatchewan, because that is also important. People have to respect

themselves, you know, wherever they go. They have to respect themselves whether they're in the legislature or whether they're at the mine. So that aspect is an important component of northern education as well. So these are some of the things that a lot of people forget to mention when they talk about northern development and education.

The other thing that some people will tell me about northern education is, well we seem to have filled the jobs in the mill operators and heavy equipment operators and the labour section; why don't we get jobs in the technical trades?

I am pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, that indeed we're going forward with that. That \$10.5 million multi-party training plan will move in to try and get more people trained, not only in the regions from La Ronge to Cumberland House, you know, to Buffalo Narrows, but in the Athabasca region. We'll be moving forward to get at the apprenticeship areas, with the electricians, you know, as well as with the heavy-duty mechanics and industrial mechanics and then moving forward in other areas.

So we're moving forward, Mr. Speaker, and we're doing, you know, some of these things in partnership with the people of the North, with the first nations and with the communities. And we're being successful, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — On a finishing comment, right now I had mentioned that in regards to employment, we had 47 per cent, you know, of the people working in the North — over 600 workers. We are proud of that accomplishment, Mr. Speaker, but we feel that we need to do more. When we made the announcement on a multi-party training plan and I was there with the Minister of Economic Development, we were not only talking about the new northern development fund, you know, for northern Saskatchewan, but we were also talking about not only the interconnection between us and the northern entrepreneurs, but we were also talking at trying to achieve the next phase, which is 60 per cent. So we are moving forward to get 60 per cent of the employment.

Some of the people were talking about and asked us at the public meeting whether we would ever, you know, approach 70 and 80 per cent. And we said, when we reach 60 per cent, we will be moving towards 70 and 80 per cent.

And it's this type of a thing that we are trying to show leadership in, you know, throughout the province, that indeed a lot of people don't want welfare in the North. What people are saying is that we want the pay cheques, you know, that people are looking forward to. We want to get to be able to put food on the table, you know, for our own children. We want to be able to do these things. Because it is important for not only our pride in ourselves but pride in our families and pride in our communities. And this is what the message is from the people throughout northern

Saskatchewan.

When I looked at the aspect of health, I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that this is truly one of the toughest issues of the day that's facing, you know, not only this government, but many governments throughout the world. And we see that in the news, you know, starvation on different parts of the world. We see the decrepit conditions, we see war devastation, the impact on destruction of sewer and water systems over there.

And I might say, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to report that on health we have been slowly moving forward in northern Saskatchewan. In the past couple of years we have been trying to get at the sewer and water question. We spent about \$6.2 million and we spent about — and this has been spent throughout northern Saskatchewan — we spent about 2.9 million on the Athabasca constituency and about 3.1 in the Cumberland constituency.

And so we've had quite a development in sewer and water systems which have been at a standstill, you know, for quite a few years. And a lot of people are very happy about that because there's a direct interconnection between sewer and water systems and health. When you have to walk half a mile to get your water in a pail when it's 40 below and it's windy, you know, coming off the lake, it's not one of the easiest tasks. And when you have sewer and water in your house it becomes very important in regards to the health of a person.

So we're moving forward with that, Mr. Speaker, and we're seeing these developments occurring at a very difficult time in our budget history. I wish we didn't have that \$15 billion debt and over \$800 million in interest payments because I know that we would be able to do more in many more of the communities if that wasn't the case. And I think it's very important that the health question be dealt with in this light.

On another aspect of health is our facilities in the North were way behind. And I know that on the west side and I know that on the far north and I know that on the east side as well as in the central area in La Ronge, I am pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, that we will be going ahead with La Ronge hospital, you know, the construction of the regional hospital. And a lot of the people are very, very happy about that. You know, they've been scraping over the years because there has been neglect in the North. Throughout all the years of the Conservative government absolutely nothing had been built in the North, absolutely nothing.

There was many places where there was all kinds of hospitals built, etc., and great big fancy buildings, whether in Saskatoon or all over the place in the province. But yet the North was completely neglected during those years. And when we came into power we promised we would go ahead with it.

A lot of the people were sceptical. They said, you're broke; we know that you can't do it. But I'll tell you,

Mr. Minister, I am proud of this government because we knew the tough situation and we knew the compassion of Saskatchewan people. We know that the people of Saskatchewan will say yes, it needed to be done. We know the decrepit conditions in the North and we know that it had to be done in light of the situation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — In regards to the health we're also trying to combine educational training. We have done teacher education. One of the best teacher education programs in the North was NORTEP (northern teacher education program) teacher education. And we now have 25 per cent of the teaching force in our schools being of Indian-Metis background. When I was growing up there was none, and when I was teaching back up there in the early '70s there was about 5 people out of approximately 400 at that time, and I'm pleased to report now that we have about 25 per cent and it's moving forward.

So we're doing success and continuing, you know, to move forward with teacher education, but we're also interconnecting that in the health field. There's what you call a NORPAP program or a northern professional access program. And we're doing it in the health field and we're preparing, you know, for the building of a La Ronge hospital as well as future areas, you know, of health workers in northern Saskatchewan. So I'm pleased to report that this government again took the initiative in this area.

The last point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is to discuss the issue of land. We have talked about working with all people in the province and cooperating with all people. Last year, Mr. Speaker, we passed the legislation which paid due respect to the famous agreement of the Treaty Land Entitlement. It was an historic agreement, Mr. Speaker. It was totalling \$450 million to purchase land to be able to fulfil the treaty obligations, you know, of the past.

I think what I will do is explain a little bit on the historical context. A lot of the people, when I talk to them and explain the situation and understand the history of treaty land entitlement, recognize the fairness and the justice in regards to this settlement. I will do that in the light of doing a comparative analysis on what happened.

When Saskatchewan became a province in 1905, Mr. Speaker, we did not have control of the resources. So I want to look at the record as it was when the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement was made in 1930 and what the situation was like at that time in history as compared to today.

But I want to go back a little bit further back in regards to the signing of the treaties. A lot of the treaties were signed in this province in the 1970s. During that time there was land settlements and land set aside for reserves, which came under section 91.24. At that time it was called the British North America Act.

And when they did the treaty negotiations, there was an incompleteness in the process. People had been moving around. Some people were uncertain of whether or not the treaty land settlement of the day was enough. I knew that a lot of the bands at that time held out on signing a treaty because they said, the land base that we were being given was not going to be enough, that indeed that they needed a bigger land base. I know that a famous leader, whether it was Piapot or it was Big Bear, and many others that held out to try and get a larger land base.

But lo and behold, it did not happen. They stuck with the formula of the day and there was therefore unfilled land entitlement — an unfulfilled section of the treaty.

Mr. Speaker, people measure those in regards to what they call date of first survey. They surveyed the land and there was some aspects that were settled and some that, maybe 20 per cent or 30 per cent, that was not settled. And it totalled about 160,000 acres of land, although there was a debate as to whether or not there was more when further research was done. But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to do a bit of . . . the amount of land that was provided for treaty Indians by 1930 on all the land settlements in comparison to other land settlements in the province.

Mr. Speaker, land is one of the most highly emotional and one of the strongest topics in the world. We see that situation, you know, the wars, the devastation here and there.

We have tried to do it on peaceful means through the treaty process in this province and it has been largely successful. It has been mainly successful. When we looked at the treaty land settlement, a lot of the people did not know that there was also land policies that affected new settlers as well as corporations, as well schools and other situations.

But I want to, therefore, look at the situation of the land and the dominion lands policy of the late 1800s and the early 1900s, and the impact it did have. The impact was quite tremendous, Mr. Speaker, because the dominion lands policy had provided for, number one, a Homesteads Act. This Homesteads Act by 1930 had provided for 31 million acres of land. Mr. Speaker, at that time there was about 900,000 people in this province. That's how effective that dominion lands policy had been. It attracted many people in this area.

And, Mr. Speaker, the dominion lands policy also extended the free Homesteads Act to a paid Homesteads Act. And the amount of land on the paid Homesteads Act was 6 million acres. So we had approximately 37 million acres of land in regards to the new settlers.

(2015)

It's very interesting from an historic perspective because when you look at the amount of the population today, we have close to a million people, you know, just not very much different from 1930.

And we also have about 40,000 acres of cultivated land in this province and we had 37, you know, million acres of land through the homestead policy.

I would say that this was very successful because we know the history of agriculture in this province and the tremendous influence it has had, not only on the economics but on the social fabric and cultural fabric of this province. It has been a tremendous and positive impact.

And when we look at some of the downturns and we look at the 250,000 farms now going up to about 60,000 and we look at the problem of loss of land, you know, sometimes we forget the historic basis of it, you know, in the early days. A lot of the people went through tough times during those periods and survived and were able to make it, and now we see, you know, the results later on.

We see also at the corporate sector we had about over 15 million acres of land provide for the railroad companies. One of the more famous companies that came from there was CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway). The CPR had received about 6 million acres of land in this province alone. And you must look at it, Mr. Speaker, because that has been very beneficial. The CPR as a company is one of the more outstanding corporations and, of course, there's mixed opinion, you know, of the CPR, but a lot of the people cannot deny the fact that they are a highly successful company.

That dominion lands policy, which provided an economic base for them which gave them a head start over a lot of businesses, provided that base for them to develop into the area of air transportation and many other fields as well. They're interlocked in many different companies and they've been very successful. Even the Hudson Bay Company, during that period in time in the province of Saskatchewan alone, received 3.4 billion acres of land.

The other thing is that a lot of the settlers wanted schools and an important aspect did develop where the schools did get land as well. And for historical purposes, a lot of these histories actually were written down in a booklet in 1934 by Chester Martin called *Dominion Lands Policy*, you know, for the people who are interested in the historical documentation of it. But in that regard there was 4 million acres of land for the schools in the province of Saskatchewan. When I saw the debate and the concern over taxation loss on municipalities and to the schools, you know, sometimes people do not remember the history of the early days.

So in summary on that history, Mr. Speaker, we had about 37 million acres of land for the farms which developed a great agricultural region in the world. We had about 15 million acres of land for the railroad companies alone and many more for the corporations, 3.4 for Hudson Bay alone, and also 4 million acres of land for the schools.

And what a lot of people don't understand is there

seems to be an opinion out there that there's a lot of land on treaties and a lot of land had been settled. For the record, Mr. Speaker, by 1930 the amount of treaty land in the province of Saskatchewan was 1.2 million acres. It was 1.2 million acres.

When I did a quick summary — and I didn't look at all the land — there was approximately 60 million acres of land set aside for everybody by 1930 and we were looking at just over 1 million acres of land for the people who had the original authority over this land. So when somebody talks to me about fairness in regards to the treaty land entitlement, you know, some people forget about it.

When I thought about it, sometimes people will say, well how was it in 1930s; it's not the same today, that it's very different today. Well, Mr. Speaker, just on that, I see the benefits of land policy, whether we do lease agreements or whether we do community pastures or whether we do this and that. I just had a quick overview on the land policy and I didn't even do the mining companies. I just had a look at even the Weyerhaeuser agreement where we had over 12 million acres of land. I didn't even look at the acreages on the new Millar Western land or on the one on the Hudson Bay area; I'm just talking about Prince Albert north and the 12 million acres of land. Very, very useful for economic development, I would say, and some Northerners are employed in the forestry area as well.

But I wanted to make a point that we do have good land policy, you know, that affects economic development in this area. I know that our community pastures and grazing lands are about 8 billion acres today. I know that I mentioned already that there was 40 million acres cultivated from the original one that I've talked about.

And I must say, Mr. Speaker, that when we look at the parks, our parks in the province of Saskatchewan are about three and a half million acres, and we're proposing some more parks and we'll be getting about 4 million acres of parks pretty soon in this province. And the other thing is that . . . and it's a very important development because in the modern-day culture today we need our parks and it's important to save our trees, you know, and our unique berries that we have throughout the province and our unique plants, etc. And I think it's important for our grandchildren to be able to see that in the future as time goes on.

But the point I want to make in regards to the land is that this year there was a great big forest fire and I forget how much we spent — it was in the tens of millions of dollars to fight that forest fire on the Primrose weapons range.

What a lot of people don't know is that the Primrose weapons range has a total land of 1.5 million acres. And the Liberals were debating this in the legislature whether or not we should be dropping the cruise missiles and dropping the bombs again in northern Saskatchewan and they gave the go-ahead to it. And indeed, Mr. Speaker, I mean one can debate pro and

con in the Primrose weapons range and so on, but the fact is it's 1.5 million acres of land.

And today's treaty land entitlement, Mr. Speaker, is just a shade bigger than the Primrose Air Weapons Range. It is going to be about 1.7 million acres of land. And I think that's an important stat to look at. We can have 1.5 million acres of land where we drop bombs, and sometimes they create forest fires and that indeed — and then we have to pay for it — but when we have 1.7 million acres of land on treaty land entitlement, you know, some people will argue about it.

But I think many times when I have spoken in public and people started hearing these historical facts and looking at it in an historical dimension, they say: why hasn't this been done a long time ago? Why is it that this has not been, you know, done in the past. And a lot of people are starting to understand.

And I was very happy, you know, with the debate that took place, you know, in the Fort Qu'Appelle area. And I was very proud of the people of that area. You know, they came out and supported the treaty land entitlement process, and it was a measure of success. And I know that somebody was talking about Oka, you know, earlier on from the other side, but here we had a situation of Fort Qu'Appelle saying yes to treaty land entitlement, and yes to fairness and justice. And this is Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, that we have to be very, very proud of.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — So, Mr. Speaker, I've gone on for quite a while, and I might say that indeed, again, when I looked at this government, and we look at the historical development in northern Saskatchewan and the impact on our partnership with Indian-Metis people and all other peoples of the province of Saskatchewan, although in tough situations, Mr. Speaker, and although we have made some tough decisions in the past couple of years, we are still going forward. We are still going forward with tremendous successes that sometimes we do not hear, and sometimes that the press does not report.

And these are the things that are the essence of Saskatchewan people. These are the essence that creates the change. These are the essence that creates a new vision and a new dynamic, not for despair, Mr. Speaker, but a vision of hope, a vision that we can say: yes, at this stage in Canadian and Saskatchewan history, that the government of Saskatchewan have taken a leadership role. They've taken a leadership role in many areas, Mr. Speaker.

And I must say that as an aboriginal person in this province, and as a Saskatchewanite, I must say that I am proud of this government. We know we have some of the things that are unfinished in regards to moving forward, but I know that we have a firm belief that the people of Saskatchewan have gone through traumatic experiences in the past, whether it was in the '30s where the downturns of the economy here and then, but they have always met it with the

challenge, and it's in this spirit that we speak about our throne speech, Mr. Speaker. We are speaking about hope. We are speaking and moving forward. We are speaking about moving forward and saying yes to Saskatchewan people and saying yes to hope and yes for the future of our children.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to begin by saying how proud I am of course to be representing the constituency of Meadow Lake. It is located in the north-west corner of the province along the Alberta border and runs eastward along the beautiful Meadow Lake Provincial Park.

What I enjoy the least about my constituency, Mr. Speaker, is how far it is from Regina. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, what I enjoy most about my constituency at times is how far it is from Regina.

The constituency of Meadow Lake is so diverse, and while this makes it a very interesting place to live, it also makes it a very interesting place to represent. I stand proudly here today as I enter into the debate on the throne speech delivered on February 7 by Her Honour, Lieutenant Sylvia Fedoruk. And I want to compliment, Mr. Speaker, the mover of the throne speech, the member from Regina Lake Centre, on the fine job that she did, and also too, to the member from Biggar on the very fine job that he did.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — And certainly I want to compliment you too, Mr. Speaker. You often face great adversity and I admire and respect the manner with which you control this Assembly. I have heard you do not wish too much praise, so I will stop and wish you good luck, Mr. Speaker, and the Deputy Speaker also, the best of luck in the coming session. I have every confidence that you will both provide fairness and leadership as we pass new and progressive legislation for the people of Saskatchewan in this coming session.

Lastly, I certainly want to take the time to welcome the new member to the Assembly, the member from Regina North West. While I am sure we will disagree strongly on philosophy, I want to wish her the very, very best. As the Deputy Premier said the day before yesterday, I believe, to be elected to this Assembly is a privilege and an honour bestowed on few people.

I want to speak briefly again, Mr. Speaker, about the constituency of Meadow Lake. I am sure that there is not a more beautiful place in the world. I have had the good fortune of travelling some in this world and each time I return home I truly believe it's more beautiful than when I left.

I am an avid canoer, Mr. Speaker, as many of my constituents will know. Every year I try to canoe a new waterway in northern Saskatchewan. Last year, along with friends, I canoed 180 kilometres down the

Churchill River system. Surely there can be nothing more powerful and, at the same time, tranquil as a trip like this. There is no wonder, Mr. Speaker, that tourism is becoming one of the major industries in our area.

To this point I want to compliment all the members of the Northwest Tourist Association, who do such a wonderful job of promoting our area. They do marvellous work in promoting this area. And I have spoken on the beauty, Mr. Speaker, in comparing it with other parts of the world. For the time being though, I shall not talk about the temperature.

To all the good people of Meadow Lake constituency, I hope that I'm able to represent you here in the Assembly for many, many years to come.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — Last year, Mr. Speaker, we put our four-year plan in place. It was a plan for recovery and restoration. We said that we would bring back common sense and competency to the managing of our finances. We said we would protect the disadvantaged and renew our spirit of cooperation and of community.

Well this year, Mr. Speaker, we want to reaffirm our journey of success. Our government put its plan in place and we made the hard choices. Many of our choices were not popular at first, but more and more I sense acceptance and a certain kind of relief from the people who believe that finally a government did what they said they would do. A government committed to restoring the fiscal integrity of this province; a government committed to the people of Saskatchewan, not a government committed to simply trying to get re-elected.

(2030)

Much of the credit, Mr. Speaker, must go however to the people of Saskatchewan — ordinary people like those of the communities of Meadow Lake, St. Walburg, Paradise Hill, Pierceland, Loon Lake, and my home town, Goodsoil. These are the people that deserve the real credit. Saskatchewan people seem to have the ability to dig in and do what needs to be done, regardless of the barriers that face them. And so, Mr. Speaker, we are working with the people of Saskatchewan. We have put our four-year recovery plan in place and it is working.

I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, it has been some time since I've heard the good members in opposition ask, where is the plan? It is because they know that we always did have a plan and it's working wonderfully.

And we receive much criticism from the third party as well. I did not look it up in the *Hansard* but I believe I would be fairly accurate in saying that the member from Saskatoon Greystone promised this Assembly she would come up with one new idea per week.

Mr. Speaker, I would applaud the third party if they

could come up with one new idea a year. We have been in government for two years now, so unless I missed it, by my count that means they owe us two. Maybe with more seats now I can expect at least one of these new ideas. I won't hold my breath though. If I had, I would have suffocated probably pretty early in our mandate.

Under our government, Mr. Speaker, there are new ideas and things are changing. The number of women entrepreneurs has increased drastically over the last 40 years. In the early 1960s, about one in ten business owners was a woman. But today that has increased to one in four businesses being owned by women. That 250 per cent increase has occurred not only in Canada as a national statistic, but holds true here in Saskatchewan as well.

Some predictions suggest that by the year 2000 fully one-third of all Canadian businesses will be owned by women. It is believed that most Saskatchewan women start their businesses with an initial investment of \$1,000 or less. New female business owners seem to have a knack for survival. After the first three years, 47 per cent of female entrepreneurs are still in business compared to only 25 per cent of us males. I'm not going to go into what this necessarily means.

Mr. Speaker, retail sales in Saskatchewan were 5.4 per cent higher in the first eight months of 1993 compared to the same period in 1992. October 1993 marked the fifth consecutive month when the province's growth rate in retail sales was both the highest on the Prairies and higher than the national rate. Final 1993 retail sales figures are predicted to achieve a 4 to 6 per cent increase which would be the best growth since 1986 and superior to the 1.8 per cent increase in 1992.

Indeed there is a renewed confidence in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The number of new businesses in Saskatchewan is rising. To the end of November 1993, 10 per cent more, to be exact, in new businesses were incorporated than in the same period in 1992.

On the national scene, Canada's largest companies plan to spend nearly \$2.5 billion more in capital spending in 1994 than they did in 1993 or a projected increase of 7.7 per cent.

On page 5 of *Business Unlimited* magazine, it says, and I quote:

Optimism suggested in these figures may be partly anchored, in Saskatchewan, in recent manufacturing growth.

Not in Alberta, Mr. Speaker, not in British Columbia or in Ontario, but in Saskatchewan.

Manufacturing shipments in the province rose 5 per cent by October 1993, compared to the same period in 1992. This increase was dominated by growth in the manufacturing of machinery, wood products, and plastics.

Well we have a lot of good news, Mr. Speaker, and the results are showing. I want to quote from an article in December 20, 1993 issue of *Northern Pride*. The headline says, "Meadow Lake economy enjoys strong year".

The past year has seen unprecedented growth in Meadow Lake, according to the town and provincial records.

Bylaw enforcement officer Bill Grona said the town has already issued permits for 42 new residences this year — the greatest number he has seen since he started the job in 1985. There have been 96 building permits issued in total so far, including for renovations and additions. Last year that figure was 94.

Herman Stang, a tax appraiser for the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency, said Meadow Lake's growth has been by far the greatest in his district.

"Meadow Lake is growing, so buildings are growing with it."

Population has also increased, with Saskatchewan Health putting it at 4,711 — up nearly 400 from 1991.

"We've had maybe one of the best years for population," said Mayor Dave Bridger, adding the increase was also visible in other areas.

Economic Development Council chairman Walter McNabb said new business in the town was another certain sign of growth. A new A & W restaurant, a Ford dealership, a post factory, a new newspaper, and other business expansions all point to a strong local economy.

PineRidge Ford Mercury owner Bill Griffiths said he did some research on the subject before he and his partner, Larry Moeller, opened the dealership in August. He attributes his good business projects to tourism, forestry, agriculture and ranching.

Griffiths' and the Ford's research found there were sufficient sales to justify a third car dealership in Meadow Lake. PineRidge was the only new franchise opened in the province (last) year, (Mr. Speaker.)

I want to speak briefly, Mr. Speaker, about agriculture. And I would like to begin by complimenting all those involved in developing the Ag 2000 strategy. I'm fully aware that this will not resolve our problems overnight, but I think farmers are tired of quick-fix approaches.

There are a lot of positive things happening out there in our farming community. The minister in the Department of Agriculture and Food has for the first time in many, many years laid out a plan for the future. If farmers and the public are interested, they can now

see clearly what our direction is well into the next century.

I want to speak about some of the positive things in agriculture, Mr. Speaker. Agriculture implements among Saskatchewan's 100 manufacturers rose 19.6 per cent in 1993 over 1992, and some Saskatchewan companies achieved sales of 30 to 50 per cent higher than in 1992.

In the western Canadian agricultural implement industry as a whole, 1993 sales hit well over \$1 billion. This is a level never before achieved and a net increase of 30 per cent over 1992.

And things are changing on the farm itself. I refer you to a recent article in the *Regina Leader-Post*, "Wheat acreage likely to drop."

Canadian wheat acreage will slip again in 1994 as farmers (will) seed more land to canola, durum and special crops in the hope of better returns.

Forecasters at an international grain outlook conference here said high-flying canola is poised to hit a record 12-million seeded acres, up from 10 million last year.

"The big increase last year occurred mainly in Saskatchewan and first-time canola growers have had very good success."

Prices that were good through the year peaked in January at levels not seen since the 1988 drought.

Meanwhile, farmers looking at soaring prices for high-quality durum are expected to increase seeding 25 per cent or more.

Field pea acreage last year jumped 85 per cent, (Mr. Speaker), and this year could jump another 60 per cent to reach 2 million acres.

Farmers really are beginning to diversify and I give credit first of all of course, Mr. Speaker, to our Saskatchewan farmers, but also to both the current and former ministers of Agriculture and Food. I believe the leadership that they've provided, their willingness to make some tough decisions which were not very popular, certainly have contributed in a large part to our recovery.

Since I come from a fairly large family, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about children and the family. The United Nations has declared 1994 as the International Year of the Family. It is a year in which the accomplishments and contributions of families in all of their diverse forms will be promoted and celebrated.

It is also a time to promote the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms accorded to all individuals. Saskatchewan's action plan for children outlines a process that will include government,

non-government organizations, communities, families and individuals in ensuring that our children will grow in environments that support their well-being and enable them to reach their full potential.

One of the new initiatives under way which falls under the auspices of the action plan is a program called Children First: coordinating community action. In this program communities identify their own needs and are supported in their efforts to design and set up holistic and integrated services. To date, there are about 20 different initiatives in various stages of planning and implementation. Government is working with aboriginal communities to develop Indian child and family service agencies as well.

You know, Mr. Speaker, before I decided to let my name stand for the nomination to the New Democratic Party, there were tremendous struggles that went on in my mind. If I was elected, would I face the wrath of unhappy constituents? Would I be happy in the job that kept me constantly on the road? And very coincidentally, Mr. Speaker, it was you who said to me about four or five years ago, you said that the honour of serving the public in this capacity would, if I were fortunate enough to be elected, be something that would give me much personal satisfaction.

After two years, Mr. Speaker, your words could not be more true. I have found this to be an incredible privilege, serving my constituents in Meadow Lake, and there has never been a moment of regret.

I ran for basically two reasons, Mr. Speaker. The first was because I believed that it was important that there was more openness and accountability to the people of Saskatchewan. The second was because I believe the public was demanding a government that would assume some sense of fiscal responsibility. Perhaps part of what makes my job so enjoyable is that I believe that our government has to a large degree fulfilled those two objectives.

My whole background in the credit union required that I be open and accountable to our membership, and of course that we had to be fiscally responsible. So you see, Mr. Speaker, this new job has been a fairly easy transition.

By the way, I also enjoy chairing meetings, so don't get too complacent in your position there.

Back to accountability. I want to refer to chapter 2 of the *Report of the Provincial Auditor* for the year ended March 31, 1992. I quote:

The Government moved from providing what the Financial Management Review Commission viewed as the weakest and least useful financial statements in Canada to providing one of the most useful financial statements issued by a senior government in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, these are powerful words. The proof is in

the pudding. The people of Saskatchewan can be comforted in knowing that, if they so desire, they will receive full and can receive full disclosure of the province's finances.

On the second objective of finances, again the proof is there. We have taken a projected deficit of \$1.3 billion in 1991 and reduced it to 295 million in 1993 — a reduction of over \$1 billion in just two years. Our budget projections are ahead of schedule despite cuts of 62.2 million from Ottawa. Through good management our province's borrowing requirements have been reduced by more than \$227 million.

The government is on top of its budget plan even though it has spent 31 million more on social services, 4 million more on agricultural programs, 15 million more on environmental programs, and 2 million more on education, that they had not originally planned to spend.

Increased royalties of 61 million and an increase in corporate taxes of nearly 19 million have allowed the government to remain on target with its four-year deficit elimination plan. In the Pierceland area, for instance, the natural gas activity has virtually exploded. And I pardon the pun for using the term exploded.

I sincerely believe that much credit has to go to our Minister of Energy and Mines. This was certainly evidenced at the recent SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) convention when the mayor for Kindersley complimented the minister for his extreme competency. Perhaps the member from Kindersley would like to do the same some day.

Anyway, in our area in the month of October of 1993, Mr. Speaker, there were 332 active gas wells out of 446 capable, which produced a total, Mr. Speaker, of 215 million cubic feet of gas per day. The average in 1992 was only 182 million cubic feet per day.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is one of the only provinces to get its finances under control — under control. Investment houses are already speculating that Saskatchewan could be the first province in Canada to get an actual credit rating upgrade.

(2045)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — Referring to Saskatchewan, Salomon Brothers says that:

The province most beleaguered by the rating agencies also is the one with the most impressive attempt to attack its fiscal problems.

Richard Kay of Nesbitt Thomson says:

While all Canadian provinces face similar problems of large deficits and debt loads as well as high taxes, Saskatchewan is

demonstrating leadership in finding and implementing solutions.

Before I finish, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister responsible for SaskTel. As we move forward on this journey of renewal, the minister saw that with all the activity in Meadow Lake, cellular service was a necessary service. Besides the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from Meadow Lake would then be able to report all of the good news on an ongoing basis. The decision was therefore made with SaskTel officials to have cellular service extended to Meadow Lake ... to the Meadow Lake area by the summer of 1994.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — I assure you however, Mr. Speaker, that even with this convenience my bill will remain substantially lower than the member from Shaunavon. I have a lot of good news, Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of good news, but not even I could talk that much.

And finally in closing, I want to pay a special tribute to the incredible work that the Meadow Lake tribal council has done this year. The tribal council was involved in an historic signing with the Minister of Social Services in mid-December of 1993.

I want to read from an article in the *Meadow Lake Progress*, Mr. Speaker. It's entitled, "MLTC to control child care."

A long hard struggle came to a partial end on Tuesday afternoon at the Flying Dust Gymnasium when Social Services Minister Bob Pringle signed an agreement turning over responsibility for child and family services to the Meadow Lake Tribal Council.

The agreement will only come into effect after the tribal council has also penned a similar agreement with the federal government and the funding is settled some time in January.

As an aside, Mr. Speaker, I believe that has now been signed.

Executive director Ray Ahonakew said it had been MLTC's hope to pen both agreements on the same day but there are still a few hurdles to clear.

Senator Fred Martell was glad to see the step taken which brings the tribal council one step closer on the road to self-government. He thanked the chiefs for being united in their stand although they have not always agreed with the decisions.

"You have always made an effort to work as a team with partners. We are very fortunate we have what we have today."

Chief Richard Gladue, chairman of the

Meadow Lake Health and Social Development Authority spoke about all the things which led to the signing of the agreement. "When we first embarked on signing our health agreement, we had a vision."

The vision included healthy people who are prosperous and strong as well as self-reliant and self-sufficient.

Gladue sees education and awareness as the key to any process and self-government is no different. He also sees a need for a strong economic base.

"The more we talk about self-government the more we know what that means and it is happening here today."

Gladue said the vision of health care goes far beyond treatment and includes healing and wellness. "This agreement provides us with one more tool."

Within the framework there will be a community family worker and an office. "This will be a valuable part of the human resource team."

He said apprehension and placing children under care will still remain a provincial responsibility. He (also) said that the negotiations were challenging and often complex, but he (complimented) the government for taking up the challenge.

And I too want to compliment them once again, Mr. Speaker.

The Meadow Lake tribal council was also instrumental in bringing to a conclusion the blockade that took place on the Wiggins Bay road. As a result of an agreement that was signed with NorSask and the province, it sets up a structure for co-management agreements. These agreements will allow for direct input from the affected community when the harvesting is taking place there. Such things as traplines, traditional hunting areas, berry-picking areas and wild rice fields are all things that now will be taken into effect before the wood is harvested.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, the Meadow Lake tribal council will be hosting the 1994 Provincial Indian Winter Games from February 24 to 27 of this year. This will be a major undertaking, and I invite all members to come to Meadow Lake to take part in the activities.

There is so much reason to be optimistic, Mr. Speaker. Things are getting better, and I want to give my assurance to the people of Saskatchewan, and especially to my constituents of Meadow Lake, that I will continue to represent them to the best of my ability. I will of course be voting in favour of the throne speech and I urge all members to do the same.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure and a privilege to enter into the debate today, a privilege I know the new member from Regina North West will take seriously, and I welcome her to this Assembly.

I congratulate the mover of the throne speech, the member from Regina Lake Centre, and the seconder, the member from Biggar, who shared with us their approaches to the service they provide to this province, a service well grounded in our journey of renewal, based on our principles of community, cooperation, and compassion. They are colleagues that I also appreciate and respect for their commitment to the renewal of our economy.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I know you are someone who will help us on our journey by ensuring that our deliberations here will occur with democratic spirit of lively debate and thoughtful deliberation.

And unlike the member from Rosthern who tried to short-circuit the tradition of having members speak to the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, I feel indeed privileged to stand in the Chamber and give the views of my constituents on the throne speech, but also to hear the intelligence and the wit of the members as they give us a picture of their constituencies and how things are going throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

When I look at the legislative agenda before us, Mr. Speaker, I can say this session will also mark a session of renewal, a renewal of hope for the people of Saskatchewan. We have faced difficult choices and we've tackled them with innovation and initiative. While we can look to other jurisdictions led by Liberal or Tory governments, they have chosen to either aimlessly slash important program areas and services to people or to impose their solutions with no consultation and involvement of the communities.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that the highest taxed provinces in this country right now are led by Liberal administrations. And in monitoring what Saskatchewan Liberals have said in this Chamber in the last few days, I've been noting that with their suggestions and their ideas that they've put forward that they've doubled the deficit in the province of Saskatchewan within the last 48 hours.

Interesting to see how they would be able to finance those without raising any new taxes, Mr. Speaker.

It is also even more interesting, when I had an opportunity to speak to the members that have come to us from Alberta, that they noted before the election the Liberals in Alberta were saying that the Conservatives were not going to make cuts that were deep enough for the province of Alberta, and we know what's going on in that province right now.

And just when I'm lulled into thinking that the politics of fear that were demonstrated over the last number of years in this province are finally dead, and lulled into thinking that maybe a Liberal isn't a Tory after all, I open my mail and get a plain white envelope that's addressed to myself at my home that says the Grit bandwagon's rolling and it's going to roll right over me, says a member. It says it's rolling . . . will roll right over you, Doreen Hamilton, and your seat's targeted plan for your retirement. Old-style politics by an old-style party, Mr. Speaker.

It would be intimidating if I weren't familiar with the members of my constituency, Mr. Speaker. And as I stated to you in the first session of the Legislative Assembly, I would now like to also reintroduce you to those constituents who restore my faith in the democratic process and the decency of the new politics of Saskatchewan, the politics of New Democrats in honesty and integrity and openness who would sign letters rather than drop them off in a plain white envelope with no signature, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce you and my colleagues in the Assembly to the people that I have been elected to serve. They are the people of Wascana Plains. They live on the edge of our fair city, which gives them a connectedness to rural life and to the environment. They have young families and many have teens ready to enter post-secondary education. They are business leaders and employers and people who have moved here from other places to be employed in the city of Regina by the efforts of the REDA, the Regina Economic Development Authority, making overtures to them to come to a city in Saskatchewan.

Some are seniors who have lived through difficult times in the past and who have worked hard to improve the quality of life for all of us. They told me, Mr. Speaker, that any journey of renewal has to have a first step that takes the people of the province back to restoring the confidence in our ability to manage its financial affairs.

Well, Mr. Speaker, these steps have been made on our journey. They've made our journey difficult. But together we've been able to make great progress, and right now I would like to thank my constituents for their support and the part they've played in this mammoth task.

So here we are at the beginning of the next leg of our journey — the fourth session of the twenty-second legislature, a session that I believe will take us further down that road to renewal. And whose road map do we follow to guide us on our way? The important anniversaries mentioned early in the throne speech point to those who 50 years ago fought to preserve democracy so that today we live as free men and women. Their sacrifices allow us to bring forward new ideas to further many principles of democratic reform. The struggle to protect democracy is an important fight that is important as now . . . as it was then, it is now. And it is why that we are known as Democrats.

Our course is also charted for us by the courage and wisdom of the people who elected Tommy Douglas and those of the first Co-operative Commonwealth Federation government — a social democratic government. This legacy sets our course, grounded in a deep commitment to economic and social justice.

Clearly the way to achieve this is to seek full employment, jobs for Saskatchewan people. This is the first of three key principles in our *Partnership for Renewal* — an economic development strategy for Saskatchewan. We are now working with communities and development organizations to form a number of regional economic development authorities. Regina is a working model of success in this area. They brought together members of all sectors of the community to build on existing strengths, capture new opportunities that would provide sustainable employment for their people.

These new regional authorities will tell us what we can do to help them, what we can do to facilitate their plans, their marketing and promotion. And it's quite a contrast to the Tory strategy of throwing out massive dollars to fly-by-night friends on ill-conceived plans through SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation) financing, through Sask Development Corporation's financing, only later to see them collapse or require major refinancing to go on with their projects. Mr. Speaker, no sustainable jobs. And we still — the people of the province of Saskatchewan — foot the bill.

It's also quite a contrast to the people that would look to the Saskatchewan Liberals, who have a complete lack of a job strategy, because what we've only heard from them is that they would cut taxes and the private sector would somehow create the jobs. But at what cost, Mr. Speaker, when we cut taxes? What jobs are lost when they cut even more programs and services to the people of this province?

The Liberal leader said that she would submit a new idea a week — as our other colleague and member had mentioned — and our Economic Development minister still awaits one idea. Well we look over and we've got three members of the Liberal Party. But I think in looking at the mathematics of it all, that three times nothing will still be nothing. Nothing new in job creation from the Liberal members opposite.

(2100)

Our throne speech outlines many ways that we can create a positive climate for renewal — the tourism authority Act; the trade development corporations Act managing all provincial export marketing services; a research and technology commercialization plan supporting product and process development for internal market opportunities; a transportation policy council; the new Saskatchewan opportunities corporation Act to replace SEDCO with a new corporation that's mandate is focused and defined and that is accountable to the Legislative Assembly. An information technology and telecommunication

strategy committee is already at work to make sure Saskatchewan benefits from the electronic highway project. These are just to name but a few initiatives that will help us to maintain the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that many of my colleagues can tell you of the projects in their constituencies that have been put in place through the hard work and dedication of the people of their constituencies and of the small businesses in Saskatchewan. We've heard some of them this evening and they restore my confidence and faith in the spirit of cooperation and community that is now renewed throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

And I look back to Tommy's first term 50 years ago that was based on a campaign slogan "Humanity First". Clarence Fines, a man whose life we celebrated and honoured in the condolence motion earlier this week, made sure that the budget of that term reflected this slogan.

In his budget speech on March 14, 1945, Mr. Fines said:

What we require today is a revolution in our attitude toward the purpose of public finance. The budget, rather than a monetary budget alone, must also become a human budget. Such a budget is one that I have presented to you tonight.

That human budget included medical, dental, hospital, and nursing services for old age and blind pensioners, and mother's allowance recipients and their dependants. It provided free books to school children in grades 1 to 8, where formerly only readers were given to the grade 6's.

In monetary terms, Fines succeeded not only in restoring the province's credit standing but also in the successful financing of public development and socialized undertakings as set out in the 1945 budget.

When he presented his last budget in 1960, 15 years later, Fines reported that it was his 16th balanced budget and the province would be out of the debt, the Liberal and Tory debt that they inherited, by the end of that fiscal year — 15 years to get out of the debt.

With that information, we can see that there is not much that has changed today. Our last budget, we put a human face on the budgeting process of Saskatchewan once again. We are once again getting the province out of the mess of the last 10 years and we will by the end of our term, balance the budget in the province of Saskatchewan.

In the tradition of Tommy and Fines and other social democrats, our session too puts a human face on the issues of children and families and our youth. It updates labour legislation to reflect the growing number of women in the workplace, single parents in the paid labour force. The amendments to The Labour Standards Act will have greatest benefit for the 70,000

people working in Saskatchewan's lowest wage jobs, most of whom are women and young people in our province.

Amendments to The Trade Union Act will encourage a healthy climate for job creation and economic development.

As I looked over the work of our last session, with the improvements to The Occupational Health and Safety Act and Workers' Compensation Act, I came across two interesting facts, one that has already been mentioned by our member from Yorkton, but I think it's worth repeating. It was a quote from the Leader of the Liberal Party in December 22 issue of the *Yorkton This Week*, and she was quoted as saying: What are these yahoos . . . Now the respect to people in a democratic process and represented people in these chambers being called yahoo was enough to make me take note and say, where's the respect for democracy?

But then I was completely shocked when she went on to say: "What are these yahoos doing dealing with legislation that's completely irrelevant?" Irrelevant to the working conditions of over 70,000 people in the lowest paid working jobs in this province? — shocking and shameful to the people of this province.

Then I also noted that she went on to vote with the PCs (Progressive Conservative) against the amendments to The Workers' Compensation Act, the changes in the Act that would better protect workers and improve the compensation process.

This from a party that says they have a program to put people to work with safety and dignity. But at least it clarifies for me, Mr. Speaker, why three Liberals are needed on the opposite side of this Chamber. There's one to argue one side of an issue, another to argue the other side of an issue, and one to sit on the fence.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Hamilton: — Typical Liberals. This was an onerous task for only one member to carry all three of these in the last year, but she did quite a job of it.

Mr. Speaker, in this International Year of the Family it is very important that we pass amendments to legislation which will improve the working conditions faced by Saskatchewan people. It will be interesting to see what the members opposite have planned, but it sounds to me like after the speech from the leader opposite, that I know what the plans are. She's going to collapse to the corporate agenda that says, I'm going to take my ball and go elsewhere. She's going to collapse to the corporate agenda because those are where the donations come for the Liberal Party, and she's going to forget the harm and the hurt that the Liberal Party put upon this province and the country when the Liberals passed NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) in the federal legislature.

An Hon. Member: — The left-wing out of office; the right-wing in office.

Ms. Hamilton: — That's the way it goes for the Liberals, who said that they would be able to congratulate people when they do a good job and then totally ignore the growth in the six sectors of the economy that were mentioned by the member from Meadow Lake.

But, Mr. Speaker, New Democrats have a plan to assist families. We will continue the action plan for children, focusing on prevention and support for Saskatchewan's families. The Ombudsman Act will establish a children's advocate. Legislation will accommodate the expansion of the Unified Family Court on a province-wide basis. The victims of domestic violence Act will provide remedies to address situations of immediate danger and minimize disruption to the victims' lives. We have a plan for the people of Saskatchewan, to enhance their lives and provide better quality for everyone's lives.

And that brings me to talk about the issue of health care in Saskatchewan. Much has been said about what we have been doing in health care. And I want to say, what have we been doing in health care? We've reduced 400 governance boards, many of them overlapping in their boundaries and jurisdictions and responsibilities, to 30 health districts, and created an integrated, streamlined system which will give us more for our health dollars. We have decentralized the decision-making process — a fact that clearly respects individual communities' needs to make their own decisions. We are now stressing taking a personal and local responsibility for health. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a smart move for it is ultimately up to each and every one of us to play a part, to make changes to meet the future, whether or not it is in health, agriculture or social services.

We have a lot to be thankful for in the legacy of Mr. Douglas and his government, who provided the road map for our path and our way and our journey of renewal. We have a lot to be thankful for in the health system that he developed and sponsored and drew up, that was going to be publicly administered, publicly funded, and would protect universality for all people.

And we're moving forward to protect those principles of medicare. A health care system, a system based on a philosophy — the wellness model. Thirty new health districts empowering Saskatchewan people, communities and health professionals to plan and deliver services to best meet their community's needs. It's not been easy.

In the same way that a parent can set standards and provide principles and, most often, some financing to their teens and children coming of age, we must now, after we've set the standards that have been there for years and years in the province of Saskatchewan and updated them, set the principles in motion for the second stage or the second generation of health care. We now must let those district boards become autonomous bodies to manage the affairs of their own lives.

In the case of the health districts, there are some who

feel we should be managing the districts ourselves, and that we would know better from a distance how to best provide a good quality of health care for everyone. But we know that individuals who are close to home, close to their families, and close to those they serve on the district health boards are the best equipped to make decisions based on community needs and to move their districts to programs and services that will make their communities healthier. Not a health system focused on illness and treatment, but a system based on the philosophy of prevention and healthy public policy in all aspects of our lives.

Change is difficult for anyone, but history will record the courage of those today who are reorganizing and reordering health care so that we would once again be looked on as the saviours of medicare for not only this province but this country. There are others that would see it collapse under the burden of the weight of the system that had been delivered up to date. And we are not prepared to let health care become one system, a private system, for those of wealth, and the rest of us stand in line and wait for what's left after that process is done.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's because of these important steps, steps in job creation, steps in protecting the families and the working people of the province of Saskatchewan, steps that I care deeply about and that mean so much to the people that I represent, it's because of this I support the throne speech. I'm in favour of the strong foundations it lays down. I'm delighted with the journey of renewal described by Her Honour, the journey we began over two years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the great folk-singer, Woodie Guthrie, has a song called "Hard Travellin'". The recurring refrain in that song is: "I've been doing some hard travelling . . . way down the road." It's a good song. I'm not sure anyone would like me to open up with a rendition of it right now. But the people of Saskatchewan have done some awfully hard travelling in the past few years. They have stood by us and we are thankful for their courage and their dedication to renewal of Saskatchewan.

They saw the Conservatives come forward and say, follow me, follow us down the path. And they knew that the ordinary people of Saskatchewan were the casualties along the way. They've seen the Liberals come along and say, follow us, and then go off in three different directions.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan see that the New Democrats are the ones who have regained the path mapped out by those generations before us, the ones who hit the beaches on D-Day and the ones at home who began the rebuilding of Saskatchewan — Tommy, Woodrow, Clarence Fines, and Charlie Cuming, a CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) MLA from 1944 who's still living in Regina.

Those pioneers set the way for us so that we can prepare for our children and the generations after

them. Our accomplishments will be their legacy. And if we value what they record of us in history, we will leave them with more than we found.

I believe we have a good chance to do that. I believe we are on the right track. I believe we have a document which trumpets an equal measure of progress, justice, and compassion. And as many speakers before me have said, we can't have one unless we have them all.

So because I believe our vision is clear, we have the people of Saskatchewan to help us with their compassion and their cooperation along the way, there is a promise of success at the end, and I am happy to support the motion before us on the Speech from the Throne.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(2115)

Ms. Stanger: — Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to be once more taking part in the debate on the Speech from the Throne. This is my fourth such debate. And although I am still a rookie in the House, I am more and more comfortable with the House and with the government and its plans as reaffirmed in the throne speech and my part in the plan. I am more than comfortable actually; I am thrilled that we are on the right track and that the journey of renewal is well under way and its successful completion is now in view.

A well-known phrase of John Kennedy's pops into my head: a journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step. We are well past that first step, Mr. Speaker. And I want to congratulate the members from Regina Lake Centre, a good friend of mine, and the member from Biggar for their eloquent discussions on the throne speech and its implications.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — I want to join my colleagues in the legislature in welcoming our newest rookie, the member from Regina North West. I know she will find this Assembly rewarding and challenging.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I want to wish you well as we begin a new session as head parliamentarian and lion tamer extraordinaire.

Mr. Speaker, as I said last session during the debate, I'm proud to represent the people of Cut Knife-Lloydminster. I want to congratulate my small-business people who in the last three years have hung in there through thick and thin and now are beginning to tell me, when I go down Main Street, that things are getting better.

I want to congratulate my health workers who have worked so diligently in the health reform. I can tell you that if it wasn't for the health workers — and not only

working during their working day but their volunteer work that they have done — our Twin Rivers Health District would not be in the state that it's in today.

I want to congratulate the farmers of Cut Knife-Lloydminster. We have farmers that have begun diversification years ago and they are continuing on this path. And we grow some of the best pulse crops in the province.

I also want to tell you that we have the most innovative and dedicated educators, right from K to the college level.

And also the seniors, the seniors who I enjoy so much, the seniors who give me so much good advice. These are the people that keep me going when the days are getting tough. They come and they say, keep on working hard for us; we need you there. Thank you to all the seniors in my constituency.

And the children. I can tell you, members of this House, I was an educator for 23 years and I appreciate the children in my constituency. They are a great inspiration to me most days when you get down.

I am particularly proud at this point of our first term because the hard work is beginning to pay off. The sacrifices that all the people of Saskatchewan have made are proving to be worthwhile, as we knew they would be. As the mover and the seconder said, we have restored fiscal integrity in government. Instead of going \$1 billion into a hole, into a black hole, we are nearly to our announced target of a balanced budget in 1996. When we reach that goal — and we will — and when deficit budgets become a thing of the past, that all that will remain is a simple task of paying off that \$16 billion. Now that's another journey, an even longer one. But we will take the first step for that one too.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have restored fiscal integrity without increasing the suffering of those least able to protect themselves. Others have mentioned this but I would like to go into a bit of detail because I want to assure people that there is a difference between governments and there is a difference between politicians.

My constituency borders Alberta. My constituents live with the constant barrage of how much cheaper things are in Alberta. Alberta has no sales tax; Alberta has oil; Alberta has Gretzky; Alberta has the West Edmonton Mall; and so on. But, Mr. Speaker, Alberta also has Peter Pocklington and he got rid of Gretzky, and also has a government now with an attitude that makes Peter Pocklington look like Santa Claus.

Don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker, I love to visit Alberta and have many friends there, but I live on the correct, the compassionate side of the border. In Saskatchewan we have reduced spending across the board but we have not cut social spending; rather we have increased it. In Alberta the Klein government has cut social services by 18 per cent, where rates were already among the lowest in Canada; has increased

also the number of free bus tickets out of Alberta however.

The Alberta government is fighting its deficit by cutting child care subsidies by 20 per cent. It's cutting its health budget by nearly 18 per cent, with hospitals in Calgary and Edmonton facing close to 30 per cent cuts. These health care cuts are simply slashes off the budget. There are no reforms, my friends, no adjustments, no realignments — just cuts.

We announced in the throne speech an action plan for children with the creation of a child's advocate. Alberta is cutting kindergarten funding by 50 per cent this year. And just think what it'll mean next year when families have to pay 8 to 900 per cent to send their children to kindergarten. You know who will be suffering — it's the children. Native education is being cut by 7.5 per cent. Home education is being cut by 50 per cent.

In Saskatchewan we are working to get more and more individuals and organizations involved in the decisions that affect their lives. Our government is open, collaborative, and cooperative.

In Alberta the government has taken over complete control of all education administration from the local boards. All decisions will now be made in Edmonton to the extent that local boards will not be able to tax, and also all directors and superintendents will be hired directly from Edmonton. All this in free enterprise, individualistic Alberta.

Just goes to prove what I have always known. Our government is different. We confront our problems with a compassionate, cooperative approach — our approach which attempts to consider all people, not just the fortunate few.

And we should not just mention Tory governments, Mr. Speaker. Other governments have budget problems and are trying to solve them. The Liberal government in New Brunswick, for instance, in a spasm of participatory democracy, took over complete control of its health system, abolishing hospital boards and centralizing all activities in its hand. God forbid that the people have a say in what their money is going to be used for.

And, Mr. Speaker, while we are talking of courage and sacrifices and hard choices and leadership, what, whatever are we to make of the federal Liberal government's cave-in to the smugglers and dope kings of Ontario and Quebec? As a parent and a tax-abiding citizen and a taxpaying citizen all of my life, I am absolutely mortified. I'm not often speechless, as my colleagues know, but it almost makes me speechless.

But here I think I'd better move on to more pleasant subjects. My point is, the Saskatchewan New Democratic government has acted quite decisively; quite courageously acted in concert with the people it represents. This session has been hard, but it has, as Her Honour said, marked a renewal of hope for the people of Saskatchewan. We have tackled adversity

with innovation, initiative, and with compassion.

And I would add to what Her Honour said, we have acted in the honourable tradition of previous New Democratic governments. The Douglas government brought in hospitalization and then universal health care. The Blakeney government created the fiscal security to carry on with medicare and expand its health programs. In that great tradition, this current government has instituted the wellness model — an innovative and as necessary and appropriate in today's society as medicare was in the decade of the 1960s.

If you can imagine, in the first term of the Douglas government they introduced paid holiday time — a startling innovation in its time. And who would do without paid holiday time today? Allan Blakeney undid seven years of Liberal heavy-handedness by creating both The Trade Union Act and The Labour Standards Act, which we will be amending this session.

Those Bills were to their time what the holiday pay was to an earlier time what our amendments to the workmen's compensation Act and Occupational Health and Safety Act are today. Courageous, necessary moves by all three governments.

And as the member from Regina Lake Centre said, we have acted forcefully and strongly for the family and for those individuals marginalized by society. We are working on wellness across the board. And as many of the speakers have said in the last few days, much of wellness depends on a secure economy.

And here too there is much to be pleased about. Good things are happening across the province. And in my constituency of Cut Knife-Lloydminster we have the rural district health board just finishing an assessment evaluation of our services. What is exciting about it is we are able to tell where we are doing well. We're able to also tell that in the ages of 6 months to 19 years, our people are underserved.

We are going to have to work hard to provide better services, better counselling, better services for teenagers, all kinds of services. And the health board is beginning an initiative in this area and I just ask the members to watch what will be happening in our constituency.

The city of Lloydminster is ready to go. They have to have an agreement with both the province of Saskatchewan and the province of Alberta. There has to be a memorandum of understanding, but the folks in Lloydminster have been ready and their health professionals are ready to go in their district also.

On the agricultural front — pardon me, I seem to have a marble in my mouth — I was very interested in the remarks on diversification made by the member from Biggar. I noticed as well that he participated in the debate on the west coast lockout and talked about the Wheat Board.

What I also noticed was that the Liberal member from Shaunavon did not speak in the debate. That surprised me. I'm sure his constituents expect to hear from him on agricultural matters as they once did.

They want to hear him comment, as he did in *Hansard* on March 3 last year, speaking in favour of the Canadian Wheat Board, and I quote:

And I look . . . the private member from the constituency of Greystone, her comments on the Canadian Wheat Board. And I quote: (from *The Western Producer*, she) . . . has at times been critical of the degree of control exercised by the Wheat Board over the grain marketing system. She says Saskatchewan must be more self-reliant and farmers should be more directly involved in marketing their own crops.

That (says the member from Shaunavon) isn't what I hear farmers saying. It must be different farmers writing to members opposite than what deal with myself on a daily basis because they're not saying that.

So once the member from Shaunavon supported the Canadian Wheat Board and single-desk marketing. I'm sure those same farmers who wrote him last year expect his continued support of the Wheat Board as do many farmers from Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

And as I said previously, our ability to bring in and carry on necessary innovations depends on a healthy economy. Bills, after all, must be paid. And I'm happy to say that the indicators are good — modest but hopeful.

The Partnership for Renewal is working, contrary to what the members opposite said tonight. The Conference Board of Canada predicts that Saskatchewan's economic growth will exceed that of the national economy in 1993. Its forecast has been . . . remember these are not our statistics; this is the Conference Board. Its forecast has been revised upward to 3.9 per cent from 1.7 per cent. The board also predicts that Saskatchewan will post an average annual growth of 2.3 per cent from 1995 to 1997. Not spectacular, but it is better to grow than to shrink.

(2130)

From January to October, manufacturing grew by 5 per cent. Crude oil production is up by 9.2 per cent and uranium sales are up 14.9 per cent. In the area of Lloydminster, drilling has increased. In 1992 we drilled 149 wells; 1993, 407 wells. And the total for the province, 1992, 837 wells; and this year, provincially, 2,274 wells. Good news for the oilfield.

Tourism inquiries increased in 1993 by 28.6 per cent, and it will be even more enhanced by the cooperation coming about from the tourism authority Act announced in the throne speech. Mr. Speaker, restaurant receipts are up, retail sales are up, even catering services are up.

The key word in all these statistics is up. Not off the board, but up — slowly, steadily rising. And we have said over and over that we are not after the spectacular. We had enough of boom and bust economies in our history. Rather we want to establish a framework which will provide sensible, slow, steady, and viable growth. Mr. Speaker, we are doing that.

I want to mention two things quickly in my own constituency. Cut Knife will soon have operating an oil and solvent recycling plant. The construction of the building has been done mostly by local workers using local materials, and it will employ mostly local people as it processes and recycles 400 barrels of oil and 400 barrels of solvent every day. And Morgan HydroCarbon Inc. has discovered a new heavy oil pool at Rutland. Start-up of a 5,000-barrel-a-day facility is planned for the second quarter of 1994. Good news, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues, the cabinet ministers, and the Premier for all the efforts and assistance they have provided in my constituency. In the past two years every cabinet minister has been in my constituency, some two or three times. And the two that haven't, we have made appointments to do so in the next few months. That is an incredible feat when you realize the distance that Lloydminster and my area is from Regina.

Never has one of my colleagues or cabinet ministers refused to meet with constituents when I requested a meeting. This government does not only talk of open, accountable government, it lives it. You do not . . . If there is someone in the House that doesn't believe me, ask my local media in Lloydminster or the city council in Lloydminster how many ministers have visited from the Alberta side versus the Saskatchewan side.

I'm honoured to have this opportunity to speak in the throne speech debate. I'm sorry to say that I have heard that in certain quarters folks think that these speeches are a waste of time. Well let me assure you that I believe in our parliamentary traditions. This House is a symbol of the democratic process which I value highly. If you listen to my speeches or read them, you will realize that I mean every word that I say.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — Where else do people have this chance, except in a democratic system such as ours. And it is very rare in the world, I am told by Mr. Blakeney, a past premier of this province. He said to me the other day, Violet, there's only eight democracies like ours out of 146 countries. And I agree with him.

Democratic reform is important, but believing in the basic democratic principles we have followed is the first step towards reform. If one does not believe in this House and the basic principles that developed our parliamentary system, how can one speak of

reforming it? People who do not think this House is worthwhile do not have the patience to listen to others' opinion. Good debate — notice I said, good debate — provokes thought, and thought is the first step to establishing policy.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we have taken our first steps on our journey of renewal. The people of Saskatchewan, in cooperation with the government, have set a course to financial freedom thereby giving us the choices we need to create a society that is just and equitable.

Because I believe the journey of renewal is the right one to take, I am proud to support the motion in support of the throne from the . . . throne speech. I always get mixed up on that. I'm going to read that. I am proud to support the motion in support of the throne speech.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank my colleagues for their support at this time. I want to congratulate the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster on an excellent presentation and I know you speak from the heart, and I very much value your contribution to the Speech from the Throne.

Before I get rolling, Mr. Speaker, I do want to of course commend you and the Deputy Speaker for the job that you have been doing to maintain order in this legislature. And I would be remiss if I didn't also commend the member for Moose Jaw Palliser, when the House goes into Committee of the Whole, for the fine job that he does when he is in the Chair.

I want to deal tonight, Mr. Speaker, with an issue that has received a fair amount of attention in recent weeks. And it's an issue that I haven't heard anyone frontally deal with — I apologize if somebody did — in their speeches. But the issue I want to deal with is that of ministerial assistants' pay raises and the manner in which ministerial assistants are paid.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, there has been no shortage of ink, there's been no shortage of reports on the television. I hear colleagues saying no shortage of misinformation, and frankly it's a view that I share and that's why I wish to address it right now.

Men and women who work in the public or work for corporations, work particularly where there is a collective agreement, where there's a union to speak out on their behalf, will be very much aware that for many decades now they've had the option of seeking a reclassification of the work they do. In a reclassification of work, there's no magic to it. Virtually every job that I, and I suspect many, many . . . most other working people have had, you get hired to do a job and you go learn the job; you do the best you can and sometimes you even get acknowledged for doing a good job. And lo and behold, you get other duties piled on.

And over a period of time — it may be months, it may be years — but the job evolves and you often wind up doing something significantly different than what you were hired for. In the absence of applying for a different job — that being the job that you're doing at the moment — there is reclassification for working people to request.

And it's not unreasonable. Not all reclassification requests are granted in the affirmative. That's certainly patently obvious to working people. Just because you request a reclassification doesn't mean you're going to get what, in your heart, you know is fair.

I don't mean to denigrate any former bosses I may have had, but at times, even as good as they were, they didn't recognize the inherent value of my work to the extent that I would have liked them to. And I do want to stress I'm not denigrating any of my former bosses. Others would argue that they recognized the work that I was doing all too well. And in fact, I deserved a reclass but in the opposite direction that I thought I did.

The situation with respect to ministerial assistants, Mr. Speaker, was somewhat different in that we formed a government after the general election in October of 1991, and what initially you have to do is, of course, you get sworn in and the Premier chooses and has his cabinet sworn in, and the cabinet ministers then say, oh, we've got this huge job. We've got a million people, all kinds of agencies and Crown corporations and people demanding answers.

And of course as an individual, a cabinet minister cannot possibly keep up to even just answering the phone in their office. If the minister were to try and answer every single call that came in, they would, I think, have a great deal of difficulty to put it mildly. So ministers then hire staff. And this happens everywhere.

But what we found was that there was no guidelines set up for ministerial offices in terms of how many ministerial assistants they could have, in terms of how the hiring process would take place. There was no guidelines in terms of, well here's the ministerial pay, here's the scale, here's what is normal.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, what the situation was, was that the exception was the rule. And I know that sounds absurd, but frankly that was the position — it was absurd.

I recall in my years in opposition in Crown Corporations Committee asking several ministers about a particular individual that was working out of the then premier's office and yet paid for by Saskatchewan Transportation Company. And lo and behold, nobody at STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) even knew this individual. He clearly never worked there but worked directly out of the then premier, the member for Estevan's office, and was paid for by STC.

Now clearly this is not right. Nobody would deny that a premier requires aides. Nobody would deny that a premier needs staff nor that cabinet ministers need staff to operate their office. In fact I think people tend to complain bitterly if the Premier or the cabinet don't respond when they're called upon. So we accept that the Premier and the cabinet ministers need staff.

In light of the milieu, the lack of rules that there was in October of 1991, ministers hired ministerial assistants, staffed up their offices within the guidelines that our government set up, the initial guidelines. And I have to stress they were initial. There was an awful lot more to think about in October of 1991, an awful lot more to think about than gee, what should the fine-tuned pay scale be; or what should the fine-tuned conditions of work be; what should the fine-tuned regulations around ministerial assistants be?

(2145)

So the offices were staffed up. Of course pay had to be agreed to. I think there's very, very few people I know that would agree to work for — I'm going to choose the Minister of Energy because I have a liking for him and he can hear my remarks firsthand — but nobody would even work for the Minister of Energy without knowing what they're going to be paid, at least in pretty general terms. They'd have to know if the pay range was going to be a dollar a day or a hundred dollars a day or whatever. So the hiring took place.

The initial problem that the government had, outside of simply what to pay ministerial assistants and how many ministerial assistants to hire, the initial problem was how on earth to finance next month's payroll, the December payroll; how to keep the bills paid; how to get the creditors to in fact lend the money that we required at that particular moment.

And of course that issue got dealt with. We were on the very edge of the financial cliff and we're probably back a few feet from the edge of that cliff, although it's still a pretty precarious situation.

But subsequent to that, the government had an opportunity to lay out very specific regulations, to lay out a very specific chart with respect to the pay that ministerial assistants would have. And the government said, all ministerial assistants will be hired at the bottom of their range and they'll move through five steps. They'll get an increment worth roughly 4 per cent per year in each of the five years and they will not participate in any other economic gain.

So there's an increment system which . . . I have always worked under an increment system outside of the government and it strikes me as quite a logical thing for us to have here. The alternative of course that we could have followed would have been simply to hire people at more than market value and paid them too much right from the beginning. Overpay somebody and then you don't have to give them an increase, but I don't think that very many of us would agree with that.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Regina North West in fact used this in the by-election campaign, and I don't think I fault the new member for having not spread things with as much accuracy as indeed could have been. Indeed I think the new member from Regina North West got a very bad briefing from her leader. I think a very, very bad briefing, as a result of which I saw during the campaign, a letter saying that if you were a ministerial assistant, you would have received a twelve and a half per cent pay raise.

Well I've got some very good friends who are ministerial assistants and the only difference in their pay cheque now from when they were hired — in one instance 13 or 14 months ago — the only difference in that ministerial assistant's cheque is that we have taken more deductions by way of taxes so the take-home pay is less. The gross amount of the cheque is identical to the day that that ministerial assistant was hired, and that is common throughout the ministerial assistant ranks. There were fewer than 20 ministerial assistants that got reclassifications, and the pay raises, I'm told, averaged right about two and a half per cent.

But, Mr. Speaker, I get somewhat confused when we talk about this because the Leader of the Third Party is fond of talking about the new politics, the new politics. And I don't understand how it is that when three secretaries receive a reclassification and receive a modest increase that this is somehow to be attacked.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Third Party in fact received a reclassification not very long ago — received a reclassification by virtue of, as soon as the Leader of the Third Party got another member, under the rules of the Legislative Assembly the Leader of the Third Party was reclassified and because that leader had to supervise now one more person, a colleague, that leader was entitled to a reclassification and in fact took a reclassification of 17 per cent.

I'm not, Mr. Speaker, arguing that the Leader of the Third Party should not have accepted a reclassification. The rules of the legislature — the rules of pay for members right from the Premier to back-benchers — the rules are very clear. And clearly under the rules, and the way that we're paid, you get a reclassification under certain conditions. If I were to be named a cabinet minister, I would receive some additional stipend.

But it really strikes me odd that in this new politics, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Third Party would decry three women who got a reclassification — three secretaries who got a reclassification would get blown up all out of proportion. And this is somehow terrible and yet, within the same new politics, it is perfectly all right for the Leader of the Third Party to take and grab a 17 per cent pay raise. I think that's hypocritical. And I just haven't quite squared this old and this new politics.

Mr. Speaker, we had earlier today . . . just before question period it is customary that we would introduce guests, and I was pleased that the Leader of

the Third Party had invited former members of the legislature to be in attendance for question period and, I understand, when the Leader of the Third Party spoke in her response to the Speech from the Throne. I am always pleased to see former members interested, involved, part of the proceedings, and indeed acknowledged for the role that they have played in the past.

But, Mr. Speaker, again I get confused between the new politics that the Leader of the Liberal Party is so fond of talking about, and the actions; because you see, Mr. Speaker, after the former MLAs were introduced, the Leader of the Third Party then introduced what was called a family of . . . the Liberal family in the gallery. And you know, I hear that amongst this elite family of Liberals there was a person there that is known to have been none other than a major adviser to the former Devine government, a former adviser . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I think the member knows full well he is not to refer to members by their last name in this House. Previous government.

Mr. Trew: — I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I gather I didn't talk of the member for Estevan. I apologize for that error.

The bagman, the bagman for the former Progressive Conservative government, the Regina bagman, was introduced — this is part of the new politics — but was introduced as part of the Liberal family.

Now I don't know, it seems to me — others will have to judge, Mr. Speaker — but it seems to me, if we're talking new politics, let's get into new politics. If we're talking about this person that was introduced as part of the Liberal family, this bagman was the same person that organized for former cabinet ministers in that government, the former government, to have their liquor cabinets well stocked at taxpayers' expense.

Maybe that's the new politics. I thought part of the new politics was to do away with that. We don't have any taxpayer liquor in ministers' offices nor in the Premier's office. Don't have it. Why should my constituents or yours or anyone else's pay for liquor? But I just struggle, Mr. Speaker, between the examples of the new and the old politics.

Now I know that what I just spoke of is public knowledge because it was dealt with in Public Accounts. And the Leader of the Third Party was there when the Public Accounts . . . when that transpired. So I just struggle with how one could say this is the new politics when it's a senior adviser to the former government that was so thoroughly disgraced, so thoroughly ousted in the last . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. We have about three or four people speaking at the same time. And I only see one person standing, so I think we should give that person the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Trew: — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question I

have is, in my mind is, why in the world would anyone knowing that this was the record, why would a leader of a party welcome a senior adviser of the former government with open arms and then have the audacity to say this is somehow the new politics? This is the new politics.

I wonder . . . I'd love to believe that the Leader of the Third Party is sincere. I'd love to believe that the actions would somehow match the words. It just seems to be a bit problematic because the actions, Mr. Speaker, don't match the rhetoric. I think action should be straight up, straightforward, this is the direction we're going, and proceed.

I don't think we need to dig up relics of the past, particularly relics of the past that clearly caused so much problem, that clearly led our province down a dismal prairie trail to the point where we were stuck in a mud hole. We weren't saying whoa, but we were sure stuck in a mud hole. And that is turning around and I'm pleased with that. But I just have trouble with the new politics and the old politics, trying to square it.

Mr. Speaker, I am really proud of our government, of our government that it . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. It now being 10 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 10 p.m.