

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Clerk: — The following petitions are hereby presented and laid on the Table: by Ms. Lorje on behalf of the Saskatoon Foundation of the city of Saskatoon; by Mr. Boyd on behalf of the Full Gospel Bible Institute of the town of Eston.

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition we have received from approximately 180 residents of the RM (rural municipality) of Reno, mostly from the Consul area. Mr. Speaker, the residents are deeply concerned with the government's decision to remove road signs indicating the location of Cypress Lake. The petition reads:

We, the undersigned taxpayers of the RM of Reno No. 51, hereby petition the Saskatchewan government to replace the two Cypress Lake road signs that were removed from Highway 21. These signs are of the utmost importance for major directions.

I so submit.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today and privilege to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly a special person, my sister from Alberta. Cheryl Chelle and her son are with us here today. And I wonder if they would stand and be recognized, and all members would join in welcoming them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Diseased Bulls on Provincial Pastures

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we'll be asking several more questions we have received from Saskatchewan residents. I just want to say that this initiative has been very well received by the public and since we asked the first question last week, many more have come in.

Mr. Speaker, my question today is from Elgin Myketiak of Chaplin and it deals with an issue the Minister of Agriculture should be very familiar with. Mr. Myketiak writes: I want to know why the government used known diseased bulls in pastures in '92 and '93. In '93 we had 50 per cent of our good young cows not bred. Our loss was 23 out of 46. This is too great a loss for anyone to bear by themselves because of someone's poor management. When is the government going to announce some form of compensation for us?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — I would thank the member opposite and his constituent for the question.

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, we obviously did not use known diseased bulls. Trichomoniasis has surfaced in a couple of breeding pastures, I think two or three of our pastures. And are still tracing it and may find more. It's been found in several of the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) pastures. We have taken steps to deal with that disease this spring. We have been testing bulls that have been exposed.

We are only taking, in those breeding pastures where we know we have a problem, only taking in cows with calves at foot so that we don't bring the disease back from the farms. And we are taking measures to deal with this as best we can.

This is a problem that is fairly serious, and of course in a community pasture we bring a lot of cattle together and it creates a major problem. We're taking all the steps that we can and working with patrons to deal with that problem.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Trade with Mexico

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is from Peter Mesluk of Prince Albert. Mr. Premier, I want to know what initiative has the government undertaken to ensure the province of Saskatchewan is well positioned to take advantage of the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico?

Do we have a trade office in Mexico? Are we actively soliciting business with them, and if so, how successful have been our endeavours? And is there money available to entrepreneurs to assist them in the marketing of their products?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to answer the question to the hon. member opposite. Mexico obviously has been, and continues to be, a trading partner of the province of Saskatchewan.

Recently when a number of business people attended and travelled to Mexico, there were a number of very interesting proposals put to the business people of Saskatchewan. We are shipping a great deal, now, of fresh pork to Mexico. A number of the specialty crops which Saskatchewan farmers have switched to — peas, beans, lentils — are being shipped into Mexico.

And with the legislation that we now have on the order paper, as of today, the Trade Development Corporation of course will see Mexico as one of our growing trading partners.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Firearms Legislation

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, my question is from Garnet Ball of Alida. And he writes: Mr. Premier, I want to know — regarding firearms legislation coming into affect on April 1, 1994 — is your government going to have the firearms acquisition certificate training program in place and running by April 1? Or are we going to have to wait for your people to get their house in order?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member and the member of the public who put forward that question, because it's a very important question and very timely.

All of the applications that are made before March 31 will be received and dealt with under the old rules; the new rules don't come into effect until April 1. So that I don't think we'll have any difficulty dealing with applications made up until the end of next month. And the member of the public who asked that question should probably be advised of that fact.

Applications received after that? Well we're trying to take as reasonable and practical an approach as we can to this question, and we're working internally and with the federal government in order to smooth the transition to the new legislation in the province of Saskatchewan. We haven't yet determined to what extent we will . . . or just how the training program and that sort of thing will be put together, but we'll try and be as sympathetic as possible to the concerns of Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Native Self-government

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier as well. It is from Stuart Matheson of Regina, who phoned this question in a couple of days ago. Mr. Matheson wants to know: if our constitution says Indian affairs is a federal responsibility, why is the provincial Justice minister getting involved in the matter of native self-government? And if the government turns over 550 million in social spending to aboriginal people for self-government, will there be a corresponding cut-back in the provincial public sector?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, it is true that the constitution gives jurisdiction to the federal government with respect to Indians and Indian lands. The federal government has been interpreting that in recent years as being restricted to Indians while they are on Indian lands, which means reservations, and they've clung tenaciously to that policy position in spite of all of our efforts to get them to see that the true meaning of those words includes Indians whether they're on reserve or off reserve.

There are a large number of Indian people, of course, who live off reserve — about 52 per cent in all. There are also non-status Indians and Metis people who are

aboriginal people under the constitution and probably fall within the definition of Indians.

I tell the member as I've told him before . . . told his colleague before that we're not turning over \$550 million to aboriginal organizations. We are though prepared, as every other province in Canada is, to enter into self-government discussions involving the federal government which will result in some programs that fall within provincial jurisdiction being turned over to aboriginal people.

They will be in social services and justice and education and health and fields like that. That involves us in these discussions and we can't help but participate in them. And in the end, some portion of the money now being spent in respect of aboriginal people will be turned over to these aboriginal organizations for their administration.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Costs for Piper Aircraft Bid

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic Development. Mr. Minister, today we have learned that the price tag for your failed attempt to bring Piper Aircraft to Saskatchewan was \$650,000. Mr. Minister, would you provide details to the House this afternoon of where and how this money was spent?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in Crown Corporations Committee this morning to questions being put in the committee, that as a result of the due diligence that was being done on the Piper Aircraft deal, that is, studies of the product liability, due diligence being done by consulting companies, that in fact the price tag was \$656,000.

I want to say as well, Mr. Speaker, that in doing deals of this magnitude, one should not be surprised if private or public sector people doing deals would spend a little bit of money doing due diligence. For example, had the previous administration done some due diligence on Imp-Pak Packaging — I say this to the former premier — we would not have a bill of \$21 million for a plant that sits empty in Swift Current. We would not have a dam which cost us tens of millions of dollars to dig a hole where there was no water flowing through. We would have known that we shouldn't have spent that money.

So I would say to the member opposite that he should check with business people — for example, our private sector partner, Paul Hill . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Next question.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I would tend to agree that the \$650,000 spent would have been a good investment for Saskatchewan if Piper Aircraft would have actually wound up in Saskatchewan. It would have been a good investment if the NDP (New Democratic Party) had actually brought the thousand jobs and millions of dollars of

economic activity to Saskatchewan as the minister announced in his big announcement at the news conference in the Hotel Saskatchewan back in January of 1992.

Mr. Minister, could you tell us in your outline of costs of how much that was spent for the big announcement that you made at the Hotel Saskatchewan back in 1992? How much did that cost?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the logic that when you do due diligence on a project then you should automatically finish the deal, tells us why we are billions of dollars in the hole. They made up their mind that they were going to build a dam on the Rafferty. And people told them that it didn't make any sense because there was no water flowing in that particular spot. But because the premier of the day had made up his mind to dig that hole in the ground, he believed he would continue on spending close to several hundred million — several hundred millions of dollars — on that project.

Now had he spent 100 thousand or 200 thousand and the results had been, you shouldn't build that dam, he would have saved the people of the province tens of millions of dollars.

Now I want to be very clear to the member from Kindersley, that if you farm and you spend some money doing research on whether or not you should build a hog barn for example, and the results are that there's no economy, would you continue on, because you had spent some money, to build the hog barn? Or would you say to yourself that it's a bad deal?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I'd remind you that Piper Aircraft is alive and well in Florida today and doing very, very well, Mr. Minister. I also want to remind you that the opposition warned you not to make the announcement with such great fanfare and set yourself up to be outmanoeuvred by other interests.

But you wouldn't listen to that, Mr. Minister. After all it was January of '92 and those were pretty heady days for the NDP, Mr. Minister. You'd just won an election, you just got a new haircut, a new suit, and you're starting to think that you are captains of industry, Mr. Minister.

Well \$656,000 later, and Piper Aircraft is still in Florida. The co-generation initiatives you promised are down the tubes. You remember the famous 700 club, Mr. Minister?

The Chairperson: — Order, order. Does the member have a question? I want the member to put his question.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, when are you going to start delivering on your

promise to bring companies like Piper to Saskatchewan?

Or is it simply an indication of your economic development record, Mr. Minister, one of failure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that after 10 years of GigaText and Rafferty and Supercart and all of the deals, it was interesting that one did feel like they knew something about business when we came to office. I want to say as well, speaking of new suits, there was no one who wore better suits than the former premier. But it didn't lead to any good deals being made. Mr. Speaker, we often use the term, all dressed up and nowhere to go, after 10 years of Grant Devine.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — But no, seriously, Mr. Speaker, jobs are important to the province of Saskatchewan. And if you look at the deals like Norquay, community-based economic development like Norquay, you will see what economic development is all about. PGS (Plant Genetic Systems (Canada) Inc.) moving from Belgium to Saskatoon to do research on canola.

There are many, many projects that have moved to Saskatchewan because it makes sense. And I'm proud to say that we have finished doing deals like the previous administration where we lose hundreds of millions of dollars because of nonsensical decisions being made because the due diligence was not done.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Gaming Revenues

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister in charge of Gaming. Mr. Minister, we finally have some of your numbers on VLT (video lottery terminal) betting. Mr. Minister, VLTs do not give people a sense that they are playing with real money, just credits. And I quote you from the 23rd in the *Leader-Post*:

While it's true more than \$1 billion will be wagered, most of that will take the form of credits that are bet again instead of being cashed in.

Is it true that VLT gamblers, often under the influence of alcohol, have to make a conscious decision to cash out, physically leave the machine, and go to the bar to get paid for their credits? Do I understand the minister to say that most of the money bet as credits is not actually coming out of people's pockets and therefore it is not considered real money as far as the government is concerned?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I find the questions from the member from Greystone interesting. I recall estimates last session, she was encouraging me to hurry up with the

installations of the video lottery terminals because we were losing in the neighbourhood of 50 to \$60 million a year.

Now this year she stands in the legislature and she indicates that she wants this government to balance the budgets. But, on the other hand, she tells us that we shouldn't generate revenue from the video lottery terminals.

And I say to the member from Greystone that in the study and in the figures that I've released, there is a full 12 per cent of the people of this province who leave Saskatchewan to gamble in Alberta and in Manitoba and in the United States.

And I say to the member, Mr. Speaker, we are going to stop that outflow of capital. We're going to inject it back into rural Saskatchewan and urban Saskatchewan through the Consolidated Fund. We are well aware of the number of dollars that will go to the machines, we're well aware of the number of dollars that we'll generate in profits, and we're well aware that we'll put it back to the communities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Minister, either this money is real or it isn't. You can't tell us the money is not real because people did not physically put it into the machine, and then turn around and tell us that it is real because you want 7 per cent of it, credits and all.

Mr. Minister, if the credits aren't real money, then how do you explain the fact that \$75 million is actually 7 per cent of this \$1.2 billion in fictitious money that didn't come from anyone?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, the figure that we release and the money that we talk about quite clearly is real money. But I want to say to the member from Greystone, the issue is not how many coins go into the video lottery terminals; the issue is the fact that the member from Greystone can't make up her mind on which side of this issue she sits. Last year she tells us to hurry up; install the video lottery terminals. This year she says we aren't going to generate the kind of money that we suggest we will.

I say to the people of this province that the member from Greystone is sitting on the fence on this issue. And as I told her last week, the only thing you get from sitting on the fence is slivers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Minister of betting and booze can't seem to come up with the right answer here. We'll try again.

Mr. Minister, what you are doing is calculating your profits on those credits. The result is that you're taking far more than 7 per cent of the cash bet in local communities. You are taking that cash — cash, not credits — out of Saskatchewan communities to feed your government's addiction to revenues.

And if you took 7 per cent of the cash — now just figure this out, Mr. Minister, on your own numbers — if you took 7 per cent of the cash, you'd be getting closer to \$17 million. But your greedy government is taking 7 per cent of \$1.2 billion figure and that is \$75 million in profits — not credits — cash profits.

Is it true, Mr. Minister, that \$75 million is closer to 25 per cent of the \$297 million in actual cash bet? Now is that not correct?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, let me say to the House, and to the people of Saskatchewan, that it's dangerous to give a Liberal a calculator. And that's quite clear.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to speak in this House about greed, let me talk about the federal budget. And let me talk about the hypocrisy that the member from Greystone displays. In this federal budget, members of parliament and the senators froze their salaries. Now being consistent with the Liberals, and being consistent with the Liberal that she is, she takes a 37 per cent increase and then she asks for a freeze.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that the government put together a budget that indicated we're going to generate some \$75 million of revenue from the video lottery terminal programs. It's going to go to the Consolidated Fund and it'll be delivered back to the people of Saskatchewan in terms of health care and education and highways.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. I don't know about members, but I can't hear the questions nor can I hear the answers. I think the members . . . just tone it down a bit and let members ask their questions and the minister answer the questions.

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Minister, either this money is real or it isn't. Either people are betting it or they aren't. If it isn't real money then you can't have 7 per cent of it. And if you're only taking 7 per cent of the actual money that is bet, then \$75 million is not 7 per cent of 297.6 million. Or perhaps the NDP don't know how to use a calculator.

So are these credits real money being bet by real people, or are you getting 7 per cent of something that doesn't exist?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, let me say this to the member from Greystone. The \$15.6 million that we're going to be putting back to the hospitality industry, to the hotels and the restaurants in terms of their share of this revenue, is real.

And I want to tell you as well, Mr. Speaker, that the \$65.7 million that we're putting back into the economy when we took the PST (provincial sales tax) off of restaurant food is real. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that our commitment to the small-business community in this province is real.

But what I want to say, that what is also real is the flip-flop of the member from Greystone who last year asks us to hurry up and get this money into the coffers, and this year tells us we shouldn't be doing it. That's real as well, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Crow Benefit

Mr. Kluz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I was wondering if the member from Rosthern has any objections, and I would wish that he would put it on a point of order. The member can put it after question period on a point of order.

Mr. Kluz: — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. It's not every day a government member gets up in this Assembly and asks a question. But recently I was in my constituency, on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, and farm families are very concerned about the further cut to the Crow benefit announced on Tuesday by the federal government.

Yet with such cuts, which have a devastating effect on rural Saskatchewan, the official opposition and the third party have deliberately failed to raise this issue. And I think I know why. And it's not because the farm families in their constituencies aren't concerned. The official opposition and third party failed rural Saskatchewan, so I am raising . . .

The Speaker: — Does the member have a question? Would the member please put his question.

Mr. Kluz: — Yes I have, Mr. Speaker. I'm raising this important issue on behalf of all farm families. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I consider myself doing their job.

The Speaker: — If the member doesn't question, I'll go to another member. I asked the member to put his question.

Mr. Kluz: — Is this further erosion to the Crow benefit by the federal Liberal government maintaining the course which was set by Mazankowski and Mayer of the former Mulroney administration, and, Mr. Minister, what are you planning to do about this?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the member raised that question. I think the . . . certainly my constituents are concerned about that and I know there are many people in this province that are very concerned about agriculture, although the opposition parties seem to be very silent on it.

Yes, the member is absolutely right. We've had talk of the reforming of the Crow benefit, which is the single biggest program, agricultural program, for

Saskatchewan. Half the benefit of that program comes to this province, and we've had, back in the times of Otto Lang, talk of reforming it. They made changes, but guess what? There was a whole lot less money in that program.

We had Charlie Mayer talk about making changes to that program, and reforming was the word. Guess what? — another 10 per cent cut to it.

We have now Mr. Goodale, who was in his career an assistant to Mr. Lang, saying we should reform this program; by the way, we're making another 5 per cent cut and we're taking a further amount of money out of Saskatchewan producers.

And, Mr. Speaker, as to what I've been doing about it . . .

The Speaker: — Next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Saskatchewan Energy Conservation and Development Authority

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, my question was going to be to the Minister of Energy and Mines, but in his absence perhaps to the Premier or his designate, whoever he would like to answer this.

In March 1992, the Premier of Saskatchewan announced two major initiatives that would be on the cutting edge of economic development and energy development. In fact he even included them in major announcements in the Speech from the Throne.

The first was the advent of co-generation, which was scuttled, Mr. Speaker; in fact it was announced during the federal budget that that was over.

The second was the establishment of the Saskatchewan Energy Conservation and Development Authority. Now, Mr. Premier, next month marks the second anniversary of that Authority. I'm wondering if you could report to this Assembly what actions the Authority has taken? Could you tell us what tangible results, if any, and any benefits to the people of Saskatchewan that have been reaped as a result of you establishing this Authority?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to answer that question for the member opposite. The Energy Authority has been very busy working on exploring and examining the energy options for Saskatchewan.

When the Energy Authority was formed, obviously it was formed because the previous administration had committed to a nuclear power plant in Saskatchewan and there were no studies done, and we decided that we had to have someone do a study on this project before we were to make any kind of moves on energy generation. And the Authority has been very busy and

you can look forward to a report from this Authority in conjunction with the energy strategy report that will come out probably sometime in June of this year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1430)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Partnerships 1994

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House that effective today, the Government of Saskatchewan will again fund a summer employment program for students called Partnerships 1994. The program, Mr. Speaker, is expected to create 2,000 jobs in Saskatchewan between May 1 and September 30 for students who will be continuing their post-secondary education.

The program will help students earn money to continue their studies and also will provide them with work experience and skills training. The Department of Education, Training and Employment will provide a wage subsidy to employers who create a job for students in the summer. Businesses, farms, municipal governments, non-profit organizations, will have the opportunity to apply under this program.

This program will encourage employers to consider the hiring of students of aboriginal ancestry and students with disabilities. Application forms will be available immediately. And through the approval process, we will ensure that there is a fair distribution of student jobs across the province.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to providing job opportunities for the young people of Saskatchewan. Together with employers and communities, we will be taking steps to ensure these students can make a social and economic contribution to our province.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would like to compliment the government on carrying on with the summer employment program for students. It's been a program that has been in place for many years and has served many Saskatchewan students very well.

Employment in the summer for students is very important for them to continue their education, Mr. Speaker, but other types of employment are also necessary. Students should be able to be employed within their area that they are studying and such things as co-generation, Mr. Speaker, would have enhanced that possibility for students. So while we compliment the government on carrying on this program, it's important that the government develop some economic initiatives that will give students real jobs,

Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 14 — An Act to amend The Fuel Tax Act, 1987

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Fuel Tax Act, 1987, be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 15 — An Act respecting Certified General Accountants

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill respecting Certified General Accountants be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 16 — An Act to amend The Revenue and Financial Services Act

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Revenue and Financial Services Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Ms. Lorje: — Before orders of the day to make a statement regarding the Prairie Ventures trade show in Saskatoon.

Leave granted.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased that the House has given me leave to make this private member's statement, because there is a very important thing occurring in Saskatoon today, tomorrow, and Saturday. I refer to the Prairie Ventures trade show, occurring at the Prairieland Exhibition, the Jubilee Building.

The Prairieland Exhibit Corporation, together with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Sask Water, and PFRA are major sponsors of this newest of trade shows, designed for economic development on the Prairies.

Mr. Speaker, as we struggle with markets for our traditional commodities, new products with new markets are necessary to the Saskatchewan economy. Events such as Prairie Ventures demonstrate in a very vivid way the drive that exists in Saskatchewan for a more diversified approach to business. We are seeking new and successful ways to develop the

resources and opportunities around us.

I am very proud to be part of a government that sponsors efforts such as Prairie Ventures. Prairie Ventures will give people access to information and new ideas on how they can take their new venture from the idea stage to the consumer.

Market information, financial advice, production tips, and answers to key questions are all available at this show. Prairie Ventures is an excellent example of how the agricultural and economic sectors of Saskatchewan have recognized the need and are focused on the opportunities for diversification.

The drive to succeed is there, Mr. Speaker — producers and others can tell you. There are countless opportunities: elk, bison, llamas, exotic birds, fruits and vegetables, specialty crops, processing, and manufacturing. The opportunities are there. And Saskatchewan is taking advantage, good advantage, of those opportunities.

Prairie Ventures, occurring this weekend in Saskatoon, shows that we are realizing success in our goals through partnerships of associations, private operators, and government. That's the Saskatchewan way, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roy: — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the House to make a statement on economic development.

Leave granted.

Mr. Roy: — Mr. Speaker, the budget document presented recently identified a major concern of Saskatchewan people, and that is jobs and economic development. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to provide today to the House an example of the economic recovery that is happening in Saskatchewan, not only in Regina but right across the province.

This morning, Mr. Speaker, Saskem Manufacturing of Regina held the official opening of their new manufacturing facility at 1305 Halifax Street. This new facility, which is bringing in \$380,000 of new investment, is going to redouble the workforce from 10 to 20, and they expect to create five new jobs in the next two years.

As well, Saskem is the largest manufacturer of specialty chemicals in Saskatchewan with markets across Canada and the Seattle area of United States.

It is companies like these that benefit from the measures we have introduced such as reducing taxes on manufacturing inputs, and reducing the small business corporate income tax rate — important stimuli, Mr. Speaker, to small business to expand and create jobs.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to bring this important news to the attention of the members. And I ask all members to join me in congratulating

Saskem's president and general manager, Mr. Don Punga, and all the management and staff of Saskem Manufacturing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it would relate to questions 32 and 33, I would table the responses.

And as it relates to question no. 26, I would table an amended response.

The Speaker: — Answers to questions 32 and 33 have been tabled.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. MacKinnon that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance.

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you for recognizing me, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to complete my remarks from yesterday. And speaking to this year's provincial budget I've already made two points. Briefly, the first regarding public trust and accountability.

In summary the legislature has a Provincial Auditor, two all-party committees, and a committee of the full legislature that provides for scrutiny of public spending. The public, the media, all elected representatives can attend any or all of these sessions. It's difficult to know how we could achieve more scrutiny and accountability, but as with any system it only works if we use it to its full and intended purpose.

The second point I made had to do with concerns regarding the total impact of reductions and third-party payments to schools, universities, municipalities, and individuals such as farmers. My main point was that these groups directly control and spend two-thirds of the entire provincial budget. So it's impossible to balance the budget without working in partnership.

We've not asked them to do anything that we have not had to do, and as the minister of municipal services pointed out yesterday, many municipalities have substantial reserves which if put into use could be creating economic activity and renewal. And many municipalities are fortunate in this regard.

Which brings me to my final topic which I didn't have time for yesterday. I'm going to speak to federal financial issues. As we know, federal efforts have a great ability to affect our provincial finances. So, Mr.

Speaker, where is the money, who has it, and how do we get it into circulation?

A healthy economy is like a healthy body, Mr. Speaker, but instead of blood it has money pumping through its veins. And like a healthy body, the blood has to circulate through the entire system. No part can be left out or it will become diseased and die.

As we know, Chrétien's first federal budget is filled with uncertainty and already his government is entering phase 2, planning for next year's budget. He will have some significant social and economic choices to make.

So here's some ideas that I contribute freely to Mr. Chrétien and Paul Martin as they begin their hunt for money. First of all, to find money you have to go where it lives, to seek it out in its natural habitat, so to speak. The banks might be a good place to start.

The Globe and Mail, December '93 reported on the six best-paid bank bosses in Canada. Salaries ranged from \$1.8 million, plus stock options, to some poor guy who only made \$489,000. And by the way — it brought a tear to my eye — and by the way, the article stated that these pay rates were not linked to performance. These are our familiar banks, Mr. Speaker: Montreal, Toronto Dominion, Nova Scotia, Royal, and National Bank.

And then I go back to *The Globe and Mail*, 1992 for illustration. In the third quarter of that year, the six big banks made half of all the profits earned by the country's 153 biggest corporations — half — six banks made half the profits. If we add this information to two years of research on federal tax data done by Gordon Ternowetsky of the University of Regina, many of these banks paid no tax and laid off large numbers of employees.

There are two things wrong with this picture. These major banks, many of whom paid no tax, are receiving major tax breaks while showing record profits and paying record salaries to upper management while laying off junior staff. Put another way, you and I pay taxes, people who make 10,000 a year pay taxes, and your taxes subsidized many of these banks to increase their profits, while putting people out of work, foreclosing on businesses, mortgages and farms.

So to go back to the statement that six banks earned half of all corporate profits of the largest 153 corporations, suggests the transfer of too much of society's wealth from productive sectors of the economy to banks. This should be a concern to the public, to other corporations and small businesses, and to all of us here in the legislature as policy makers. Because this is an illustration of where wealth really exists in our society.

And I hope Mr. Martin will have the courage to take this on, even though his federal Liberal Party receives considerable election financing from these groups. It isn't doing us any good as a country and it won't do banks any good if they help to kill the economy.

As long as maximizing profits continues to be the only value driving financial markets, it's going to continue to distort all other priorities and relationships in our society.

A friend phoned me last night, who had just read an article from an investment house that said, we don't have a spending problem in this country, we have a revenue problem.

(1445)

In their assessment, governments have been doing a pretty good job at cutting back. But revenues have declined due to a 10 per cent reduction in taxes on wealthy individuals and wealthy corporations. In other words, the burden on those with the ability to pay has been going down, not up.

So before we accept a national exercise that may result in cuts to our valued social security network, let's urge the federal government to end subsidies and tax breaks that benefit a privileged few, that serve no national purpose, that are not tied directly to creating jobs nor to returning wealth to our economy.

If those wealthy interests are concerned about their continuing ability to profit, they also have some tough decisions to make. They must take some of the profits and tax breaks that have been sucked out of the economy into CEOs' (chief executive officer) and shareholders' hands, and let this money flow back where it can reduce prices, create jobs, and stimulate the economy.

Yes, as the Premier likes to say, we're in this boat together, and I want to say that our oar is in the water. We laid out a plan, we implemented the plan, and our plan is working. We have taken a balanced approach and we're delivering on the promise. The ball is now in the federal court. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting this budget.

Thanks very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to join today in debating the February 17 budget address. I'd like to begin with a thank you and congratulations to the Premier, the Finance minister, and my cabinet colleagues for the vision and commitment reflected in this budget. And equally, a thank you to the people of my constituency, Rosetown-Elrose, and to the people across Saskatchewan who have directed and advised us on our strategies, and who have made the tough adjustments that allow us to say today that we have the lowest per capita deficit in Canada, excepting that we still have a very significant, might I say tragic, debt that will constrain us for years to come.

This budget is the result of a long and careful planning process. In 1991 when we took office, this province was burdened with a staggering debt. Our

government set a course to return this province to its previous financial stability. The balanced-budget plan introduced by this government on the advice of you, the people of Saskatchewan that we are elected to serve, will secure the future of this province.

Compare this to the damaging, lacklustre, and directionless announcement of the federal Liberals on Tuesday . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Harper: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask leave for the introduction of guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all the members of the House, a couple of constituents of mine from Kamsack, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Shukin, who are seated up in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. Harry and Barb came in from Kamsack this morning, despite the storm. They travelled their way down to Regina here to have some business with the government in regards to the Doukhobor heritage trust fund.

And I hope they've had a good day here. I'm sure they've had, and I'm looking forward to spending some time with them this afternoon. And I'll ask all members to offer them a very warm welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE) (continued)

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, as I was saying, compare our government's well-balanced plan to the damaging, lacklustre, and directionless announcement of the federal Liberals on Tuesday — lowering taxes on cigarettes while raising taxes on seniors, professing to cut government expenditures by reducing employment insurance benefits to 80 per cent of recipients while increasing total government spending.

Might I say that by comparison, we in Saskatchewan have reduced our spending by 3 per cent in each of the last two years.

And for farmers, nothing. No mention in the speech other than the threatened review of capital gains rules. From McKnight to Mayer to Goodale, no change. The Tory cut-backs on Crow benefits are continuing unchanged. Liberal or Tory, it's the same old story.

Mr. Speaker, our government has created a climate where people can once again have a feeling of security, security that had been robbed by our mountainous debt, security robbed even more by the huge annual overexpenditures which the previous administration created — 1 billion dollars per year of spending beyond our income, security robbed by unprecedented mismanagement.

The people of Saskatchewan are beginning to feel their security again. They have accepted our responsible approach and together have made the sacrifices necessary to overcome the challenges and hardships created by this debt and deficit. The credit goes to them. We are on the road to recovery but there is yet another challenge we must address.

Now that we have our finances under control, nothing is more central to the long-term health of this province than sound environmental management. Just as we have put our financial house in order, we must also recognize our environmental deficit and begin to deal with it with the same vigour, energy and commitment.

We are confronted with a global challenge as humanity continues to use and misuse resources to such an extent that the earth is reaching its capacity to sustain life. The by-products and wastes of our consumer lifestyle is excessively polluting our land, our water and air, threatening species and habitat and directly impacting on the web of life.

Yesterday in *The Globe and Mail*, the American Association for the Advancement of Science identified the tragedy and challenge of facing the reality that tens of thousands of species of plants and animals become extinct each year before we have had a chance to define where they fit in the great framework of life on earth.

In Canada, we must face the fact that we are part of the 25 per cent of the world's population who use 80 per cent of the earth's resources. Each of us consumes the output of 15 acres of land while the earth has only four acres of land per person to offer, including forest lands. It is easy to see every day on television that our consumption of resources has given us a high quality of life, but it is a quality of life that is stark and brutal in contrast to the impoverished lives of the great majority of the world's people who must live with much less than their four acres because we demand so much more than our four acres.

The earth's resources and its capacity to accept our waste are quite literally running out. We cannot close our eyes to the environmental impact of the social inequity which has allowed us to remain the favoured few while poorer nations ravage their own resources in a desperate attempt to survive in a world economic system dominated by developed nations.

As we witness the degrading of our planet, we are coming to realize that our future no longer lies in exploitation but in stewardship. Our stewardship of the globe begins with stewardship in our own backyard. We cannot misuse and overuse the world's

resources and expect to avoid the consequences. When forests disappear, or soil degenerates, or water is poisoned, when species are eliminated, or crops fail, or fish can no longer be found, all of us are at risk. We must take practical actions which are compatible with the global reality.

The economy and the environment are very closely linked with each other and with the health of our communities. And, Mr. Speaker, we as a government are challenged by the need to ensure that all three are maintained in balance. On February 17, with the announcement of the 1994-1995 budget, this government continued decisive steps to bring Saskatchewan back to the forefront of competitiveness and economic strength. Just as February 17 was budget day, today is an equally important day for the future of our environment.

Mr. Speaker, it is not on any calendar; it is not the date of a significant commemorative event; and it is not the day of an important gathering. But today is a day of great importance nevertheless, because today is a day when each of us can make a renewed commitment to ensure the future of our environment.

We are custodians, keepers of this land, protecting it for the future of our children and our children's children. I am always encouraged by children who send me special messages. For example, Mr. Speaker, one young person from Prince Albert, from the Queen Mary School, has written to me. Let me read her letter:

Hi, my name is Jamie Fedrau. I'm in grade six at Queen Mary School. The first thing I want to say is "thank you"! I think the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (N.A.W.M.D.) is a good idea to save our wetlands. Wetlands work like a filter system. Phosphorus, nitrogen, and metal are cleaned out of clean, healthy water everyday. My only request is that you help do more to save our wetlands. I may be only a kid, but I want our Earth to stay healthy and clean just the same as everyone else. Sincerely,

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — As we continue on our journey of economic and community renewal and restructuring, our concern for the environment will not be lost nor will it become an obstacle. The environmental and resource policies we develop will complement social policy, trade, and development.

Some of the most competitive nations, such as Germany and Japan, also have some of the strongest environmental regimes in the world. Germany has the most stringent rules for stationary-source air pollution control — rules that have challenged business and industry to find new solutions, which have resulted in new technology. Germany currently holds the lead in patents in air pollution abatement technology. Protection of the environment has created both economic growth and job opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, globally, nationally, and locally, leaders are working together to address our environmental problems. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro was a tremendous opportunity for the world to join hands and work together to help solve our environmental challenges. Since that time several countries, including Canada, have pledged to work toward a cleaner, healthier world.

Here at home, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment has played a key role in ensuring our country continues its momentum towards sustainable development. We have built a new sense of partnership by strengthening our relationship with ministers of forestry, economic development, and energy, and by opening the process of policy development to the public.

We have laid the foundation for more integrated harmonization of environmental policies internationally and within Canada. We are concentrating on implementing the two agreements from the Earth Summit, one on biological diversity and the other on climate change. And we have set out an environmental action plan for the 21st century.

We are working closely with other western provinces on harmonizing economic and environmental policies in western Canada to make our businesses stronger and more competitive here and internationally as well. Energy and environment ministers from all parts of Canada are working together to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2000 and achieve progress to reduce emissions by the year 2005. We have also pledged to reduce solid waste by 50 per cent by the year 2000.

Western provinces are working together to develop regional strategies for managing hazardous waste, waste reduction, and recycling programs. These national and regional actions are supported by provincial strategies and programs that when combined will make a significant difference in our environment.

Saskatchewan's strategy has been outlined in a draft document entitled *Securing a Sustainable Future*. This draft strategy has been released for public review and comment. The purpose of this comprehensive strategy is to focus our efforts on integrating key environmental and resource management initiatives. Our vision for this strategy is to provide a framework whereby we can achieve balance and harmony between human activity and the environment.

This draft strategy will set the province's environmental agenda for years ahead. The strategy has four main goals: environmental protection, the first, protecting Saskatchewan's environment and the well-being of our citizens; sustainable development, securing the environmental and economic future for our communities; national and global responsibility, meeting our obligations and opportunities as citizens of the world; and the fourth, improving the management tools, improving the decision making through partnership and public involvement.

Some specific action items relating to these goals are identified in the strategy. We will be developing a clear and concise compliance policy which emphasizes prevention over mitigation and implements the polluter-pay concept.

The contaminated sites team will oversee the registry of sites and the preparation and implementation of remediation plans for sites which have been identified as presenting a risk to human and environmental health. We will be implementing actions supporting the provincial conservation strategy, including integrated water management, sustainable agriculture, environmentally safe and sustainable mining, and a sustainable energy industry.

(1500)

We will be making use of economic instruments to reduce pollution, create jobs, and enhance economic competitiveness in our province. Two main types of economic instruments will be considered: pollution charges on major sources aimed at reducing emissions, and levies that support waste reduction and recycling. We will also be undertaking a reform of The Environmental Assessment Act.

Mr. Speaker, our environmental strategy is closely related to and interdependent with the major social and economic strategies of this government. The environmental strategy is one of the series of complementary strategies including the *Partnership for Renewal* economic development strategy, the wellness model, and the *Agriculture 2000* strategy.

The *Agriculture 2000* document — the strategic direction for the future of Saskatchewan's agriculture and food industry — outlines the need to promote the implementation of environmentally sustainable agriculture. As a farmer and as a member representing one of the finest agricultural areas of Saskatchewan, I am particularly pleased with this initiative.

The farmers, businessmen, and citizens of Rosetown-Elrose from communities in every corner, Kyle, Beechy, Dinsmore, Lucky Lake, Rosetown, Elrose, Milden, Macrorie, Birsay, Zealandia, Stranraer, and my home town of Herschel, have long been leaders not only in farming but in developing new technologies, as well as in health and economic development.

Our wellness model recognizes that an expanded view of health considers factors such as housing, employment, education, and the environment. And again the Midwest District in our area was the first in putting their imprint on history as leaders in development of this model.

Similar connections have been made to the *Partnership for Renewal* strategy. One of its three main goals is to secure and build on existing strengths based on sustainable development. And again the regional economic development agency planning in my area is at the forefront of innovative economic development agency work in our province.

In our area the economic development agency is working on projects that are visionary, including renewable energy resources, waste management initiatives, value added processing, and pursuit of new crops which will meet new, yet-unfound market opportunities.

The challenge ahead of us is to turn these strategies into action. And the way to do this is through a partnership approach. And I say with pride that the people of Rosetown-Elrose are on this road, taking action innovatively in cooperation with each other and in partnership with the larger community of communities of which they are a part.

We have taken many steps in this direction as a government as well. In forestry the province is developing an integrated forest management plan with specific emphasis on biodiversity — that is to say, the conservation of trees, wildlife, and all other resources which have been part of the forest but which have received far too little attention.

This strategy is the result of a public participation process involving first nations and Metis groups, individuals, forest companies, as well as other stakeholders who have a keen interest and commitment to integrated forest management.

To encourage community-level environmental stewardship, three pilot projects on sustainable community planning are under way in the areas surrounding Estevan, Davidson, and Creighton-Denare Beach. There are many partnerships in place to jointly manage or co-manage our natural resources and the environment. We have a partnership in place to work with James Smith First Nation with a goal to involving all stakeholders in the area in a process to co-manage natural resources in the Fort-à-la-Corne and Hudson Bay trapping block areas.

The Sipanok management area development agreement has set in place a council of various stakeholders, again including first nations and other community representatives, who will work together to manage the forest, fur, fish, and wildlife resources over a 1,260 square-mile area north-west of Hudson Bay.

Another clear indication of the government's commitment to co-management and the leadership of affected peoples is the Saskatchewan wildlife memorandum of understanding with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, and this government. This memorandum formalizes first nation involvement in the management of our wildlife resources.

We are working in partnership with NorSask Forest Products on co-management within its forest management licence agreement. In turn, NorSask has established many local co-management boards. This ensures that local communities and stakeholders play an integral role in determining how and where forest

harvesting is undertaken. This process guarantees that local values, customs, and traditional practices are integrated into economic development decisions.

In this way, the Wiggins Bay Road blockade, otherwise known as the Meadow Lake blockade dispute was amicably settled. The legitimate grievances of the blockaders were answered by establishing a dialogue and a process where community needs are listened to and taken into account.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that these initiatives, both with the first nations on wildlife management and the co-management exercises in the north-west, are world leading initiatives and initiatives that are getting the attention of governments, nationally and internationally.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to work with affected groups and individuals to identify and solve problems, make decisions, and plan for a sustainable future. Through our various strategies, government and stakeholders can achieve balance and harmony between human activity, our economy, and the environment.

In past years, many decisions were based solely on the economics surrounding an issue. We have moved away from this. In Saskatchewan we have many examples of business, industry, and government working together to ensure environmental stewardship is considered as a central part of corporate planning.

In 1993, Weyerhaeuser Canada announced plans to address air emissions and landfill issues at the Prince Albert pulp and paper mill. This \$128 million program is funded entirely by Weyerhaeuser as an expression of their commitment to the future of our environmental well-being.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, the small-business sector is a major contributor to job creation and economic growth in Saskatchewan. By working closely with business, we can ensure that economic growth continues to provide us with a healthy community while keeping pace or leading in technological innovation.

This morning I had the opportunity to address the Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council in Saskatoon, a group of community representatives and businessmen committed to waste reduction and new approaches to reuse resources through recycling. It is increasingly obvious that there is good business in good environmental management, and Saskatchewan businesses are doing it.

Innovation and creativity must come from both the private sector and the public sector in order to take advantage of new opportunities that are available to us because of our commitment to environmental responsibility.

My friend and colleague, the member from

Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, introduced me to her constituents, Vic Ellis and Terry White, who are partners in Energy Concepts Incorporated, which is an excellent example of this. This small business builds energy-efficient homes and they've taken an innovative approach which challenges the traditional approaches.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — The wildlife damage task force and our consultation initiatives regarding hazardous wastes are examples where the business community is involved in developing solutions to existing problems.

Mr. Speaker, recently Canadians were surveyed regarding our natural resources. It was confirmed that our natural resources are a source of strength and pride for Canadians. These natural resources represent a major source of recreation, relaxation, enjoyment, economic strength, and jobs for our nation. Canadians understand the importance of natural resources as a source of economic prosperity. But they are not willing to accept that economic growth and employment can only be achieved at the expense of our environment or without proper resource management.

Our recent decisions regarding uranium mining demonstrate that economic development and all the benefits in terms of jobs and investment that flow from it can co-exist with sound environmental management practices.

Mr. Speaker, we can once again be optimistic about the future. We as a province are on the road to renewal, and part of that road is our commitment to a sustainable future. We have both the responsibility and the opportunity to right the wrongs of the past.

The budget presented by my colleague the Minister of Finance is a reflection of strong government leadership and policy. It will take us forward, building on our existing strengths, working together for a better tomorrow. Working with business and special interest groups, we have the opportunity to involve Saskatchewan people in decisions that will have a significant impact on the future of this province.

By making a commitment to this process and a commitment to sustain and protect our environment, we will provide a future that is bright and full of promise for our children.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I received many letters and visits from young people in this province. Their energy and spirit demonstrates a concern for the future and the condition of the earth they are inheriting. We as decision makers have their future in our hands. What kind of legacy are we leaving them? As the saying goes, we don't inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. Mr. Speaker, today we renew our commitment to a future that is bright and full of promise.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to enter into debate in this Assembly. I've said that many times and I mean it even more today, especially when the member opposite was kind enough to let me go ahead so that I can get on with some of my other duties later. We always appreciate chivalry, even when it works in reverse.

There are several topics that need to be discussed, Mr. Speaker, even though the budget itself didn't really touch on them in the way that people in our province would have liked to have seen happen. It is a shallow budget with a lot of innuendo and references that could possibly happen, but no real substance.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is the problem that we face in our society today. We have a lot of vague sort of promises that people might do something to help us, but nothing substantial, and therefore we live in a time of fear and anxiety.

Fear for those people who have jobs because they don't know how long they'll have them; and anxiety for our young people who know very well that they don't have a future in this province. No future, no expectations, only the possibility to go to school until you're old and grey and take one course after another because that's all we offer to our young people.

More and more courses, more and more educational programs, go back to school, get higher training, but we don't have any jobs. Nothing created, nothing provided for that end of the trail when we get out of school for our young people.

It is nice, Mr. Speaker, to know that we have a democratic process still in our province, where we can stand up here and debate these issues. Where the government members can put forward some of their ideas and the old principles of democracy still work. Where we have the opportunity to stand in our place and point out those things that could go wrong, and might go wrong, and hope for that moderation of government that can come, especially now that we are into the two and a half year part of the cycle and going downhill into the election.

And now we will see a government hopefully that will start to listen to the people, because it certainly hasn't happened in the past. Two and a half long years of no one listening and no one caring. And that's the message that I get from the folks that I hear from, both by letter, telephone, and meeting them on the street.

The budget, Mr. Speaker, was entitled *Delivering the Promise*. Delivering the promise of what? A promise of no hope, of no future; a promise of emptiness, a promise of no medicare any longer for our province, a medicare program that has been destroyed, literally bankrupted.

A health care system that leaves rural people more inclined to have to leave rural Saskatchewan than ever before because they know now that their very

lives are on the line every time they go to work. Because if they do encounter an injury, they'll be on their own and they'll face death alone because there's no help for them nor can there be any help, because it's all been taken away.

Drug plans that have been destroyed, literally ripped apart — a part of our health care system that we had become, as a people, used to and dependent upon for the security and safety of our lives for ourselves and our loved ones. And it's gone. Gone with so many other things, like the dental plan for children, no longer there. One program after another, Mr. Speaker, ripped up, torn away, and destroyed. They ought to call this the government of absolute destruction.

I watch people go past my constituency and through the middle of it on No. 1 Highway. And they only have one lane highway on No. 1 going out of Saskatchewan, but it has two lanes at the Alberta border to accommodate all the traffic that wants to leave this province, and nobody coming back.

(1515)

And what do we offer for promise from this budget? We offer for promise in this budget an agricultural program. Not GRIP 1 (gross revenue insurance program), not GRIP 2, but GRIP 3, the sequel, the replay. *Agriculture 2000*, GRIP No. 3. Nobody liked the first one, everybody hated the second one, and absolutely no one is going to benefit with the third one because there's no money in it. It is a travesty and a disaster beyond compare.

It is so ironic, Mr. Speaker, that so many promises can be broken by a government who took office only two and a half years ago. Two and a half years of a steady downhill fall, like a lead balloon dropping straight through the floor.

And they talk about job creation, Mr. Speaker, job creation. The budget document once again indicates that the NDP priority for the 1994 program will be job creation. Well, Mr. Speaker, I put it to you and to the people of Saskatchewan very simply this way. How many people do you know that are looking for work? How many people do you know that are on unemployment insurance and welfare? Are there less now than you knew two years ago? How many people do you know that are looking for work and can't find it?

Tell me about job creation when you can point to people who have found work. I want to see the proof through the actions of the reality that people actually get the jobs.

The best job we've got for people right now in this province is to educate our young people so that they can leave. And this is nothing new, Mr. Speaker, because it is a repeat of NDP policy and philosophy that goes back to before the '60s and through the '70s. Nothing new under the sun for these people because they don't have any new ideas. They're a bankrupt government, biding their time, hoping that their

popularity of 50 per cent won't slide so far before the next election that they are totally, totally turned out to a man and to a woman.

The NDP government's commitment to job creation can be found in every NDP throne speech delivered to this Assembly since forming government in 1991. Let me give you a few examples, Mr. Speaker. The 1992 throne speech, I'll quote a little bit of it:

In spite of Saskatchewan's financial problems, there is reason for hope and optimism . . .

In total, there are currently more than 700 companies which have expressed an interest in either relocating to Saskatchewan or expanding their operations here. If these businesses proceed with their plans, they have the potential to create or maintain more than . . . (1,600) jobs.

That was on page 3. Can you believe that, Mr. Speaker? Show me where those 1,600 jobs are. I want to see them. Show me those 700 companies that were coming to Saskatchewan to develop and relocate here. I'll put it even easier: show me five. Give me some examples of this great success story.

Let me go on, Mr. Speaker, to the 1992 budget.

One of the most important priorities for Saskatchewan people (is) . . . stimulating economic opportunities and creating jobs.

I guess the modern day follow-up would be, not. That's the way kids put things nowadays when they tell you a story that isn't true. They'll tell you one thing and then they follow it with the word, not, meaning that they reversed it all with the double negative.

And that's what this government is all about. Double negatives, cancel everything. They say one thing today and they don't mean it tomorrow.

The 1993 throne speech:

There is no more important dimension to the future than the creation of jobs, and no more important location for those jobs than Saskatchewan's smaller communities.

Of the hundreds of new, expanding and potential business projects in the province, more than half are outside Regina and Saskatoon. Those outside our two larger cities have the potential to create or maintain almost 8,000 jobs.

Well wouldn't it be nice if we could see even half of those having actually happened? But here we are in 1994, and I ask you, show me where those jobs are. Point them out to me. I'd be glad to slap you on the back and brag you up all over; but it hasn't happened. And it will never happen with a socialist government because they have no plan.

The 1993 budget went on. Jobs are our first priority — page 3. Whose jobs? Their ministerial assistants who get double wages while the rest get fired? Is that what we call job creation in this province now?

Now we get to the 1994 throne speech:

The economic development strategy which my government introduced in 1992 — *Partnership for Renewal*, has three key goals: to create a positive climate for economic renewal, to build on existing strengths, and to seek full employment.

The partnership is working. We continue to have the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

Page 2. I wonder if the unemployed people of Saskatchewan are making themselves feel good by listening to those figures? I wonder if those on welfare are feeling great because we have a government that tells them that they're living in a province where things are better than the rest of the provinces. Because you're not as bad as the worst, you should feel better even though you're unemployed or on welfare.

The '94 budget goes on. This budget shows that jobs are also our number one priority, on page 3. And still I say to you, Mr. Speaker, where are the jobs? Where is the proof of any success?

I look forward to the day when I can stand in my place and eat crow, and say: I take it all back, you guys did good. But I'm waiting. And I'll wait for ever with a socialist government because they're devoid of any kind of plan or creation that could ever create a new job any place ever.

Living off the backs of others and the ideas of others — and we saw an example today, Mr. Speaker. The Piper Aircraft — \$600,000 thrown in the wind, blowing all over Saskatchewan I presume, to do a study, a great study to find out how good a program would be that is now making millions of dollars and providing all kinds of jobs in California, not in Saskatchewan. Is that what your study told you? Ship it away?

The commitment, Mr. Speaker, of this government to provide jobs, is without question, to put it mildly, a complete farce. They never had any intentions of providing any jobs because they have no programs that will create jobs.

Let me just make my point with the news release I picked up earlier today — Department of Highways. The Minister of Highways is bragging about his programs. With all due respect to the minister, if I were he I would hang my head in shame.

This program says here that he's got a new SHIP (strategic highway improvement program) program.

(It's) a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement between the province and the federal government.

“While this is a reduction from last year’s budgeted level, (he goes on) this doesn’t mean the amount spent on highways and bridges in the province this year will be reduced.” . . .

Now I kind of come from the old school where, if you reduce the budget and you don’t spend as much money, you’re not going to get as much service. And how are you going to create jobs if you’re spending less money? I mean if this is some kind of new magic, I really would like to see it. Between this document, Mr. Speaker, and the budget, I kind of got to wonder if Houdini didn’t come back to life — seems to be the magical old rabbit trick.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that the magician pulls the rabbit out of the hat and then he sets the hat back down after he shows you the inside of it and he puts the rabbit in the hat and then he picks the hat up and the rabbit’s gone, he disappears. Well, Mr. Speaker, that’s the kind of budget we’ve got here — the Harry Houdini budget. The truth of the matter is that the people won’t be fooled any more because they know very well that that rabbit didn’t disappear, he went into a cage underneath the table.

The people of this province are not fooled by the deception of this budget that says it creates jobs and won’t charge higher taxes. The people know better. The sleight of hand doesn’t work any more. They know very well that when their utility bills come in and they’re higher than they were last year and higher than they were last month that they’re being taxed through the utilities.

They know very well that a government slips in silent taxes throughout the year, that they’re paying more. They’re not that tired and they’re not that old and they’re not that confused and they know, and they are going to put their finger on you in the next election.

Remember, Mr. Speaker, when I said how the kids say, not, after they say something wrong. I want to refer to this next line:

“A number of road projects are expected to be included in the Canada-Saskatchewan Infrastructure . . . Program which will increase capital projects and employment opportunities in Saskatchewan.”

And a smart kid would add, not. And why would they do that, Mr. Speaker? Simply because it’s a sleight-of-hand trick, because it goes right on to tell us how they would take the money from a reduced budget for Highways — a reduced budget — and they would create more work because they’d use an infrastructure program.

And all they’re doing is switching the money from one pile to the other that the federal government gave them, in all honesty, to be matched in matching programs with new money, not a shuffling of old money from one department to the other or from one pile to the other with even the same ministerial

portfolio, the Department of Highways.

The crying disaster of our province is our highway system, and the easiest of old, old ways to create work and to put people back on to a program of prosperity. The old ways can work and they will work. And the first way of the old ways is to start to do the work that needs to be done and I point to our highways.

In the old days when we needed work to be done we started building roads. In these days we’ve got roads that need work and we don’t do it. And we leave our contractors sitting unemployed with their machines shut down. We leave our young people in the summertime, who are out of school, sit around doing nothing, twiddling their thumbs, playing computer games while the machines sit idle and no work gets done.

And when the federal government comes with a good program of matching dollars, they don’t match it. They take dollars out of the budget, reduce the budget for the Department of Highways, and match the federal government’s share with that and build roads some place else in a very minimal amount rather than the kind of work that needs to be done and should be done to create the work that we need to do in order to provide the jobs that we have to have for our young people.

According to Statistics Canada there were fewer people working in Saskatchewan in January than any month since March of 1984. Here’s a fact, Mr. Speaker — there are now 12,000 fewer jobs in Saskatchewan than in January, 1991.

I have another fact. In December of 1991 there were 57,199 people on welfare. The number of individuals on welfare as of November 1993 totalled 76,799.

Another fact according to Statistics Canada, Saskatchewan’s population has fallen to a new 10-year low. And we have a government that promises us growth and prosperity. According to the Premier of Saskatchewan, the population is at an all-time high. The population of what? Canadian geese?

Last summer I heard that the Canadian geese population was higher than it’s ever been in a long time. Maybe that’s what he meant. He surely couldn’t have been talking about the people because I haven’t seen them.

The Premier made this claim in his address at the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce in January. Must have been an off day for him because his speech claims, and I’ll quote: We have 3,000 more people approximately working this year than last year and the unemployment rate is the lowest in Canada. End of quote.

Unfortunately, StatsCanada statistics revealed that the average number of people employed in 1993 was exactly the same as the number employed in 1992 — straight from StatsCanada. Even more unfortunate for

the Premier is that compared to 1991, there is actually 9,000 fewer people working in Saskatchewan today. Imagine the embarrassment, bragging about job creation, when in reality there's almost 10,000 fewer people working.

(1530)

I suspect some poor speech writer has probably gotten promoted to becoming a ministerial aide with a wage increase to get him away from writing speeches. I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that that's an error that won't happen again, at least I hope not. A man of integrity should not have to have people writing his speeches that are so outright wrong.

And now let's talk a little bit about some of the plans that the budget has put forward, Mr. Speaker — the labour legislation, for example. It has become important to me as it is to the Minister of Labour, who I'm glad to have here to talk about this with, because it's important to our province.

This session may have great impact, Mr. Speaker, on the jobs in Saskatchewan, being that the government will make changes to the Saskatchewan labour legislation, specifically The Trade Union Act, then The Labour Standards Act, as has been indicated by the members opposite.

I can't comment specifically of course on what these Bills will contain because no one is really sure. And that's obvious to the folks, I think, that the minister probably has done some work on it but he won't reveal his work to us until he tables the legislation.

But I can say, Mr. Speaker, that there is an awful lot of concern and worry in our community about the loss of jobs that will result if we change our labour legislation in the direction that has been suggested.

Once again, what I'll say to the minister is this: there's nothing wrong with treating people fair and right. But at the same time, if you get out of synchronization with your neighbours — namely Alberta, Manitoba, Montana, and North Dakota, whether that be with a 9 per cent tax or whether it be with labour legislation — if you're out of sync with your neighbours and you get out very far, people are going to leave you and go to the other place.

And even though what you plan to do might be arguable to be right and even fair, if it's not synchronized with our neighbours around us, it will destroy the very fabric of the job creation base in our province that you espouse in your budget to want to have happen. And it can't happen when you get out of sync with the rest of the world.

And you may say, well I want to blaze new trails. I'm going to be a champion of labour revolutions, and fairness, and equality for people, and all those great and wonderful things. But the reality, my friend, is this. If you achieve that distinction of having become the person who leads the way, you will also become the person who destroys the province of

Saskatchewan's job base. It cannot work both ways.

Businesses simply will pull the pin and leave. And others that are reconsidering their options in the world around us who might be considering coming to Saskatchewan will rethink their position and they'll probably decide to stay where they are or go elsewhere.

You've got IPSCO, one of the biggest manufacturing plants of metal, reboiling down old iron into new iron. And where are they relocating, Mr. Minister? Are they relocating in Saskatchewan? You know very well that the answer is that they are not.

Where is the Bird construction company? They're not in Saskatchewan. We know that very well. And what did they do when they left this province and went to Alberta? They took the job base of Saskatchewan with them.

I ask you, Minister, in this new approach of yours to redesign the labour legislation.

Will we see a ban on replacement workers? How will we get our grain to market if we have a massive strike in the grain handling industry without replacement workers to do the job? I put it to you squarely. Put it to you squarely. If the police forces of Regina and Saskatoon go on strike, who will protect the people if you don't have replacement people that'll keep control and law and order.

Suppose we have certification of a workplace made easier. What effect, Mr. Minister, will that have? You're a man of the world and you've seen a lot of things and you've had a lot of experience, and you know very well what the answer is. You will force a lot of people into the unionized structure where you really need to have them and really want to have them, because this is time to pay a debt to union leaders and to nobody else.

It's time to build a financial base for the NDP, because every union member pays his dues directly to the NDP in a small amount. Everybody that is a union member automatically kicks into the coffers of the NDP. It's in the structure. That's the way it works.

So we don't build a job base in this province, Mr. Speaker. We build an NDP war chest for the next election by giving power to the union leaders so that they can force all of the workers to pay dues straight to the NDP. Talk about a neat little trick.

And suppose, Mr. Speaker, we have decertification of a workplace made harder. That would suit the union leaders just fine. They'd love that because that's what they should ask for. You can't fault people for asking for the moon if they think they can get it.

But the reality is that you've got people like the Woolco workers in Moose Jaw who end up without a job when you do those kind of things. And you hurt our province and you hurt our people. And even if it isn't for a vested interest — perhaps it's for some other

mythical reason — the result is still the same. People will be hurt.

And what if we give full benefits for part-time workers. How is that going to affect our society? Have you considered all of those options, Mr. Minister? Suppose we include farm workers under The Labour Standards Act helping them to get their wages on time. Good idea. It would be hard to argue against that. Helping them to get minimum wage these days — that would be hard to argue against. Who could live in our society on minimum wage any more? No one.

But unfortunately what we see coming here, Mr. Speaker, is another one of these sleight of hand conspiracies of our NDP friends who are simply using this as an opportunity to open the door, to have compulsory unionized workers in the farm sector so that they too can contribute to the NDP coffers for the next election.

Perhaps we might ask the minister if we can hope to see some positive changes — like making secret ballots mandatory, allowing a vote on whether or not people want to be unionized or not unionized. How about if we allow the people of this province to truly experience the mood of the democratic process and have the right to vote on what they get? And how about if we talk about some positive things like prorated benefits for part-time workers which might actually help somebody.

But we haven't heard any of those kind of stories from the business community that worries so much about what's happening. And perhaps it's time that this government set a mood, Mr. Speaker, of some confidence so that business people who provide the jobs in this province will feel comfortable about continuing to expand and to grow and to develop, to make some jobs, and to develop a job base in our province.

It's hard to be optimistic after the changes made to our occupational health and safety and the workers' compensation legislation. And that's what people are going by. They saw the results of what happened last year and they're saying they just don't trust this government to be able to open up the legislation on The Labour Standards Act and do anything that's going to be helpful.

We saw last year, for example, headlines like, "Chamber fights changes to legislation"; and quotes like:

The chamber quotes a government report that says costs to the board will increase 12 per cent . . .

Remember those figures, Mr. Minister. Workers' compensation was only going to cost 12 per cent. Then we had:

. . . Peat Marwick estimate costs will increase up to 200 per cent, creating an unfunded compensation board deficit of about 300

million.

And we talked to you about that direct contradiction that was made last year. And the reality, Minister, is that you got up and said, they don't know what they're talking about, it'll only be 12 per cent.

But the reality is that we've lived another year. And now we look back and we talk to some of these people, and lo and behold, they tell me they did have 2 and 300 per cent increases. Fact of life. And now you tell those same people: trust me. It sounds like the old used car salesman: trust me, this old car will run until it breaks down. Trust me.

So you've got everybody worried. And when everybody in the business community is worried, there can be no new job creation and your so-called plan from this budget has to fail.

We had people saying things like, in fact the powers of the occupational health and safety officers exceed those of peace officers, for search and seizure without warrants. And you said: oh no, we'd never do anything like that. But read the fine print in the legislation and there it is. And then you wonder why people don't trust you any more? Why nobody believes that you're going to create a job base?

Mr. Speaker, there are many areas touched in this budget address. And one of the things that I had hoped we could talk more about in this Assembly is education. Education is very important not only to this province but to me as an individual. I'm a firm believer that education is very important, if simply for the fact that it gives our children an opportunity to be able to compete against those that they have to get jobs from when they leave this province. And they do pretty well.

But what I see happening here, Mr. Speaker, is a downloading of educational costs that has got nothing but disaster written at the end of the trail. Our educational system cannot continue to function at the level that we need for our children if we continually cut the programs and cut the finances from the provincial government and allow our school boards to fend for themselves in an ever desperate economy, especially in the rural areas.

But it's not just in the rural areas that people are having financial problems. The problem is getting just as big in the cities because it's spreading. Like an uncontrolled cancer, this depression continues to grow. And we have a government that tries to cover it up with rabbit tricks and Houdini waves of the hands.

And the reality is that here we have our young people facing the possibility that they will no longer have an educational system that will be strong enough to put them up against the competitiveness of the people in other provinces and in other countries.

The biggest export we've got and the best one we've got is our own kids. And I challenge you to do something to bring them home. Bring the children of

Saskatchewan home. That should have been the theme of your budget — bring the children home. Provide them with a job with dignity and security. Give them a chance — a chance to survive with their families.

But we see downloading, Mr. Speaker, in an unprecedented manner through the sleight of hand trick of writing it into last year's budget and leaving it out of this one, so you can claim it didn't happen while it slaps them square across the face.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — And do you really believe, as you sit there in your seats, that the people of Saskatchewan won't catch on, that they won't see what you're doing? Destroying health care, and sneaking in a 2 per cent tax on every municipality that never had it before through an old piece of legislation that should have been buried long ago. The sleight of hand artists of all society tricking people with connivance and the Houdini approach.

We go from one disaster to another. We've no sooner destroyed health care in this province and now we're going to destroy education. Every big item ticket that this province has been touted as having guaranteed within the structures that we lived in over these past years is being undermined and destroyed.

(1545)

And we have people standing in their places saying that we've got the deficit almost under control, and here we see that the provincial debt is higher than it ever was before. That's probably going to be the biggest Houdini trick of all to try and pull that one off, because you never allow one dime to be spent out of the budget to pay off the principal of your debt.

And yet you go out to the people and you tell them, we're going to pay off this debt. We've got to have some more money out of you to go towards that fund. But not one dime mentioned in the budget to go towards paying off the principal of your debt. How long do you think you'd own your home if you never, ever pay any of the principal on the debt?

We've got downloading, Mr. Speaker, like I've never seen before, on municipalities, rural and urban. SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) convention . . . SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) coming up. I'll guarantee you that the message will be the same out of that convention as came out of the SUMA convention, and that is that the pain of the downloading is real and costly and destructive. I guess about the only thing that we still agree on in Saskatchewan is that we're all still on the same time, and for awhile I didn't think that was even going to happen either.

Mr. Speaker, we have in this Assembly a group of people who wrote a budget. And as they talk about that budget they tell us that they're not really socialists any more. I'm not sure what they claim to be but

they're not really socialists any more; they're better than that now. At least I suspect that they're saying that they're better than that, otherwise why would they try to disclaim what they really are?

With one exception of course — the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg who stands proudly in his place and tells the world that he's a socialist and he's proud of it. And I applaud him for his honesty even though I don't agree with his philosophy. But I wonder what he thinks when the rest of you tell him that we're really not socialists any more; we're just right-wing gone astray or left-wing gone backwards.

So we see the flip-flops, Mr. Speaker. A while ago they were against nuclear energy and co-energy was going to be in. Now co-energy's out. And I'll bet you the next plan will be a nuclear plant that they'll never build, but they'll certainly spend a few million dollars researching it. I can guarantee you that because that is the legacy of this government. We study and we study, and we appoint boards and commissions and more boards and commissions, and more studies and more studies.

It's the NDP disease, Mr. Speaker, the NDP disease of Saskatchewan. We study and we study and we study, and we never have any action. We don't build, we don't create, we don't make jobs, we don't expand, we don't bring our children home.

We study it, and we'll appoint some of our buddies out to be on our commission to figure it out. And they'll figure it out all right. They'll figure out how to increase their wages while they take everybody else's and put them on freeze or destroy the jobs altogether.

A budget that says very little is usually not very controversial. That's a good political plan, but it's also a plan to disaster for the province and a plan for disaster for our people. It is a disgrace to our province that we don't have a budget with a genuine plan to do exactly the things that the government says that it wants to try to do and doesn't really do at all — the superficial approach.

And we say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this cannot be allowed to continue. We have got to have job bases created and we are going to expect that of this government. As they write budgets in the next two years, we expect better from you and we put you to that challenge. We expect you to do much better than you have in the past.

We expect to see changes to our laws that allow people to build and create and do not deceive the taxpayers and the voters of this province with Houdini-like actions and sleight of hand tricks; manipulating one pile of money from one Crown corporation to the other or throwing it in the air and watching it disappear on more studies and more commissions.

I had thought, Mr. Speaker, that I would go into this in more depth at a later date but I think that there's more that needs to be said. I just noticed on my desk, Mr.

Speaker, the firearms laws. Now the members are going to tell me that that's not a provincial issue, but lo and behold, some more sleight of hand.

The reality is that it is a provincial issue and these members would try to deny the fact that they are in control of what happens in Saskatchewan. You've got all kinds of subterfuge going on. The trickery and the manipulation of our people has become the order of the day.

They tell us that our gun control laws in Saskatchewan have to be interpreted to mean that we are going to have to spend 3 or \$400 to get a firearms acquisition certificate. And the reality, Mr. Speaker, is that these are provincial decisions, not federal decisions. The federal law may have opened the door for this abuse, but it's the interpretation of the provincial government that counts.

I challenge them, Mr. Speaker, to set these kind of things straight for the people of Saskatchewan. It is harmful to treat our people as though they are criminals when in fact they have a track record that proves exactly the opposite.

Mr. Speaker, it is all important that as we talk about budgetary processes and the programs that we are going to work under, that we convince the government that the job base needs to be expanded. Without that, the tax base can't be expanded. The poor souls that are still left in this province are taxed to death. They can't afford any more. They're flat broke and they need some more jobs.

So there's only one solution, and that's to broaden the tax base. And I'll lay it squarely on the Minister of Highways, because he's the man who could start this. Go back to some of the old ideas of creating work where you know you can do it. Repair the roads, double-lane No. 1 Highway. Do some real work and put some real money behind it, and stop blaming the federal government for all of your problems.

Your problem lies at home. The federal government is in Ottawa and they don't care if you have a road or not. But we care, and we want that job base, and there's a place to start. Not all negative; I give you a solution.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise in the House today and speak in support of the budget. I want to enthusiastically support the priorities and principles expressed in the budget. And in deference to my good friend from Maple Creek, I now understand why the RM of Happyland asked me to come and be their guest speaker in his constituency this year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — I want to thank my colleagues — the

Premier, the MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly), and cabinet ministers alike — in having the courage to make difficult decisions when they were necessary. I also want to thank the wonderful people of Saskatchewan who have supported us in our deficit reduction plan. And the success of our deficit reduction plan lies with the people of Saskatchewan who understood the need to make the difficult choices we had to make.

Mr. Speaker, you will remember — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see — you will remember that when we took office in November of 1991, we inherited a projected deficit of \$265 million, which we quickly discovered was actually 1.3 billion. It was that kind of deliberate miscalculation that led to the kind of public mistrust that we are aware of as a government.

We are right on target. We have delivered on our promise. We have clearly shown the people of Saskatchewan where we are headed and we have been right on target with every budget — first, when the Deputy Premier was the Finance minister, and now with our present Finance minister.

I'm a practical person and so are most of my constituents. We make clear our principles and plans, and then we stick to them. People don't like surprises or uncertainty. The federal Liberal budget yesterday gave us a message of uncertainty. It is uncertain whether the Moose Jaw air base remains, is downsized, or privatized. Every program is going to be studied, and I've never heard of so many studies in my whole, entire life. UI (unemployment insurance) benefits were reduced so we will have more people on social assistance, an offload to the province.

Now could you just imagine, Mr. Speaker, the tremendous job creation plans in this budget. They are going to reduce unemployment from 11.1 per cent to 10.8 per cent in 1995 — a .3 per cent decrease; .3 per cent decrease in unemployment. And these were the people that during their election campaign ran on jobs. If this is an example of how Liberals plan to create jobs, I can tell you that I'm not impressed. Mr. Speaker, maybe the member from Greystone should send Mr. Paul Martin an idea a week on job creation.

And what about agriculture — agriculture, the very backbone of Saskatchewan. Was agriculture mentioned in the budget? Tell me. We heard from the member from Shaunavon time and time again, when he sat on that side of the House, on how he wanted the Crow benefit protected. Was the Crow benefit protected in this budget?

Yes, our Liberal colleagues have harsh criticisms of our government's expenditures. Well what about Mr. Martin's budget. In 1993-94 the Tory government spent \$160 billion. In 1994-95, the Liberals say they are going to spend \$163.9 billion, an increase of \$3.9 billion; this, in the face of massive debt accumulation. And these are their own figures.

There was no tax fairness in this budget. And what did the member from Greystone do? She complimented

Mr. Paul Martin because he did not criticize the former Tories. Well to tell you the truth, it would be like the pot calling the kettle black. We've got long memories. We remember Mr. Trudeau and his budgets. In fact the past Liberals were the basis of all of our economic problems now. My oil folks in Cut Knife-Lloydminster will tell you they remember the national energy program very, very distinctly.

Now the hon. member from Kindersley said he was surprised that our members mention Tommy Douglas, one of our former leaders. In fact I think he said he didn't know him and he didn't care. Well we do mention Tommy Douglas and we mention Woodrow Lloyd and Allan Blakeney and we mention the present Premier, the member from Riversdale. That's because we're proud of our leaders.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — Our leaders and members live by a philosophy of compassion, caring, cooperation, community, social and economic justice. I know that 50 years of consistency is difficult for populations . . . for politicians of opportunism to understand, but the people of Saskatchewan understand the stability and the consistency. I want to repeat that again because it's so important to me. I know 50 years of consistency is hard for politicians of opportunism to understand, but the people of Saskatchewan understand.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1600)

Ms. Stanger: — The government is right on target with the four-year budget plan. It was courageous and somewhat risky for us to publish a four-year financial plan. After all, unforeseen circumstances could put things off course. But this government wanted the public to have a yardstick to measure our progress, so they took the political risky but principled approach.

Last year the four-year plan was presented to the public as a sign of commitment that the hard choices would one day be worthwhile. With this budget this government has proven its commitment to restore honesty, trustworthiness, and responsible government to Saskatchewan.

My constituency of Cut Knife-Lloyd borders on the province of Alberta. Comparisons are difficult because circumstances are different everywhere, but let's look at some bold, brave facts.

We have a deficit reduction plan and we are following it, an open consultation with every affected group in the province. Every department has consulted with numerous stakeholders; they have all contributed to the plan.

Alberta too has a deficit reduction plan, a plan hatched in the dark behind closed doors with no consultation, because here's some of what it involves: a social services cut of 18 per cent; a reduction in child care subsidies by 20 per cent; a cut in grants to

municipalities by 30 per cent. But some large assistant grants for urban areas will be immediately eliminated. As the Finance minister said the other day, soon Lloydminster will receive zero from Alberta.

Perhaps the member from Morse should ask that council how it compares the two approaches to deficit reduction. Health budget cuts by over 17 per cent, with some hospitals in Edmonton and Calgary cut by 30 per cent. No modification or reform of the health system, no wellness model, just cuts.

There are more cuts in services but there is no increase in cooperation. Changes are made at the top. School boards have had control of education taken away, and local property taxes now go straight to the province and cabinet will decide how it is to be spent. Call that democratic reform? It's reducing democracy.

Just how free are things in wonderful, free-enterprise Alberta? Who cares, says the member from Morse. They have no sales tax. Also they may not have any sales tax but the government has no heart either.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the members of Cut Knife-Lloydminster constituency. They have encouraged me, supported me, and communicated their concerns to me. A member can only reflect the views of his constituents if there is two-way communication. Thank you for your supports, ideas, and your advice.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I am proud to support the budget and I will be voting in favour of it. In closing, I want to underline the philosophy of our NDP governments from which our policy and programs are drawn from.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — To do this I use two quotes. One from Tommy Douglas, a former leader that I am very proud of:

The philosophy of this government is "Humanity First." We believe that the measure of any community is the amount of social and economic security which it provides for even its humblest citizens.

Written by Tommy Douglas in 1954.

The other quote is from the present Premier of this province, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

I am a New Democrat because I believe in economic and social justice — in a society which seeks fairness, compassion and equity in all its affairs.

Roy Romanow, 1993.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — It always makes me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, smile when people say we have no plan. We

have a philosophy; we draw our policies from this philosophy, and from the philosophy we draw the programs. That is consistency, that is a plan, and that's how it has always been. That's why we have governed 34 years out of the last 50 in this province.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for this time and I appreciate the debate in this House because I believe in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to respond to the NDP government's speech for the budget that they're calling *Delivering the Promise*.

Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago, one of the Mr. Premier, I-want-to-know questions from the pastor from Kindersley asked: why are politicians able to make promises that they don't keep?

That question came as a result of such promises as the Premier stating the PST was gone as of midnight, October 21, 1991; as a result of the NDP promising no new taxes while in opposition, Mr. Speaker. And then they turned around and raised every tax, every utility fee possible — every one of them, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Pastor Enns's question comes as a result of the NDP promising to spend more money on education and health care, and then turning around and doing the exact opposite. Pastor Enns's question could be posed again to the government's budget, entitled *Delivering the Promise*. It is hard to believe that the members opposite can claim their budget's title is accurate because there are no program cuts. That's what they said. There's no program cuts. That's what their claim is — none.

Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the example in the budget dealing with education, with our province's K to 12 system. Mr. Speaker, that budget is being cut by 4 per cent — 4 per cent, Mr. Speaker, is what the Minister of Education is giving to educators across this province. Now that's the claim — 4 per cent.

But when you look, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the actual cuts that the divisions are receiving, you find a whole bunch of different numbers. I have here the projected preliminary estimates for 1994 K to 12 operating grants. And just deal with a few percentages.

The Radville School Division, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on here is projected to receive a 35 per cent cut. Now I'm told that some of these figures are not accurate because not all of the parts of the formula were taken into consideration when these figures were announced by the government. But still, even it's half of that, if it's only 17 per cent, the minister is saying it's to be 4 per cent.

The Weyburn Central School Division on this list, Mr. Deputy Speaker, receives a cut of 91 per cent. I'm told that their cuts are actually going to be higher than that

and that once you work out the formula they turn around and owe the government money. Now I think it's highly unlikely that the government is going to get any money back from a school division, but the way the formula works, Mr. Speaker, they're in a position of receiving no money — a 100 per cent cut.

And that's only two divisions. My own school divisions — Arcola, projected to receive almost a 6 per cent cut, and Oxbow, 17 per cent. In discussions with the director of education for Arcola School Division, he says their cut is actually going to be a lot closer to 30 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, than 4.

And this, the government is claiming you'll arrive at a point where there are no program cuts. Mr. Speaker, I think that's going to be a big falsehood.

First, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are claiming that it's a 4 per cent cut, but in most cases it adds up to a lot more than that. And I'll go into that a little bit later, Mr. Speaker. Well perhaps I can even talk about it now.

The SSTA (Saskatchewan School Trustees Association) in their trustee magazine of February has a graph here that breaks down how much the cuts are by division. What percentage of divisions are receiving what cut? — 13.7 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, receive zero to a more than 8 per cent increase. Yes, there are some divisions out there that are receiving increases. Those increases are mainly in place because of increased enrolments in those divisions. But 13.7 per cent received an increase.

How many received a zero to 4 per cent decrease, a real cut? — 19.4 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Nineteen per cent of the school divisions received what the minister is claiming to be providing — a 4 per cent cut.

The other 67 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, receive a decrease in funding of greater than 4 per cent — up to 100 per cent. And that's the actual facts, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's not 4 per cent; it's a lot more than that for everyone.

Another graph that the SSTA has in their magazine is quite interesting. It shows the amount of grants and the percentages of change from the '89-90 budget. In the 1989-90 budget, there was a 3.9 per cent increase in spending on education, of grants to the boards of education. 1991 was an increase of 3 per cent; '91-92, an increase of 3.7; '91-92, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was the year that the governments changed. Then we go to '92-93, a 2 per cent cut; '93-94 a 2 per cent cut; and '94-95, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a 4 per cent cut. Cuts, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since this government has taken power.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the total of \$14.3 million in operating grants has been taken out of the K to 12 educational system this year alone — this year alone. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of those cuts for many divisions will be even greater than that because when those initial figures were figured out, they did not include the changes in transportation of students in

the rural areas. As you lose students in the rural area, you lose a bigger portion of your transportation grants. So that's one of the areas where there's going to be a major impact in rural school divisions.

And it gets worse. In addition to this loss of operating grants, boards will face additional costs of \$3 million in teachers' salaries, new benefits for teachers estimated to cost an additional \$250,000 — a quarter of a million dollars. Salary increases for non-teaching school staff is estimated at some two and a half million dollars.

Natural gas increases which came into effect at a nine and a half per cent increase on January 1 will mean an additional \$390,000. UIC (Unemployment Insurance Commission) and CPP (Canada Pension Plan) increases will exceed \$1.5 million. And workers' compensation will mean an increased cost of 125,000. And the list goes on.

But there is one small bright spot at least that appeared on the horizon this week when the federal government dropped the UIC rates down to 3 per cent — a small, little bit of saving for the school divisions. But it is some assistance when the government opposite continues to cut and hack and slash at their budgets, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the SSTA says that you cannot remove more than \$20 million from an education system in a province the size of Saskatchewan, which is less than a million people, and expect that there will be no consequences. They say that children in classrooms are going to feel the effects of funding cut-backs. That's what the SSTA says. School boards cannot take a hit like this and deliver the same services and opportunities to students as they have in the past.

Further, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this year's budget is jeopardizing the ability of communities to provide high quality education. These are not our words, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These are quotes from the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association. They say that program cuts are inevitable. They say that education is in jeopardy. They say that most school boards will have no choice except to make significant increases in their mill rates, and that means that local property taxes are going to go up. This is what the members opposite call no program cuts and this is what the NDP government is calling delivering the promise.

Maybe the members opposite have forgotten the kind of promises that they made regarding education when they were sitting on this side of the House. The Premier said in the *Yorkton This Week* newspaper on October 16 of 1990, and I quote: Increased education spending is a priority for the NDP. All I can say is that we simply must find the money.

That's what the current Premier said in 1990. After a 3 per cent increase in operating grants to universities, the Premier said in this legislature that the government was, quote:

... cutting back on their own responsibilities for education and loading it up on the local property taxpayer and that's wrong.

That is what the Premier, the member from Riversdale, said on April 19, 1990 in this Chamber.

So when the NDP talk about delivering the promise, how about this one? The Premier promised that the NDP were going to give education the top priority — the top priority. What happened to those promises? What happened to the Premier asking the Education minister:

... how could you allow education funding to deteriorate to this state of affairs such that your government's underfunding at the university has left people like Dr. Ivany in the position where he had to say that there is nothing ... sacred, nothing ... can be protected.

And that's what was said on May 7, 1990 in this legislature. Why is it that Dr. Ivany can have nothing sacred at the University of Regina?

(1615)

Mr. Speaker, again this was after increases in operating grants that the NDP said was not enough. They said they would do better. But that wasn't enough, Mr. Speaker, the Premier said even more. He also said:

Don't let any government tell you (that) they don't have enough funds for education. The money is there.

I'll repeat that again:

Don't let any government tell you (that) they don't have enough funds for education. The money is there.

And that's what our current Premier said on February 19, 1988, and it's quoted out of the *Moose Jaw Times Herald*.

Well, Mr. Premier, what of your promise now? What is happening to Education's operating grants today under your government?

Last year's budget cuts cut operating grants for universities, regional and federated colleges, and SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) by 2 per cent. And this year's budget, the budget of supposedly no program cuts and no tax increases, slashed operating grants, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by another 4 per cent — 4 per cent cuts — and that actually works out to a lot more than that when it comes down to the divisional level. Promises were made by the members opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and those promises have been broken. And this budget is no exception.

The present Minister of Education was no different while in opposition, Mr. Speaker. She also had plenty

to say. Addressing the increase in operating grants she said:

. . . how on earth can you say to the public of this province that education is a priority of your government when we see massive school closures in rural Saskatchewan, massive teacher lay-off in rural Saskatchewan . . .

That's what the current Minister of Education said on April 25, 1991, in this House.

Well let's take a look, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the jobs. Jobs was very important in this budget speech. Well let's take a look at the jobs in education, particularly the jobs for teachers. And I would think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this would be very important to a good number of members in this House because they, themselves, have teaching as their profession.

The Minister of Education herself is a teacher; the member from Bengough-Milestone, the member from Cumberland, the member from Moose Jaw Palliser, the member for Regina Wascana Plains, the member for Saltcoats, the member for Prince Albert Carlton, the member for Saskatoon Westmount, the Minister of Finance, the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, the member for Swift Current, the member for Saskatoon Nutana, and the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster. Those last three, Mr. Speaker, are retired teachers so they, too, have an interest in what is happening in this education budget. And the member for Regina Dewdney.

We've had cuts, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of almost 200 teachers because of the 1992-93 budget — 200 teaching positions on that budget alone eliminated. The 1993-94 budget reduced it by 250, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's already 450 teaching jobs across this province eliminated by the government opposite.

Now that was on a 2 per cent cut in 1992-93 and a 2 per cent cut in '93-94. This year we have a 4 per cent cut. So how many more teaching positions are going to be eliminated? Significant number, I would suspect.

I would think that the members opposite that hold the teaching profession should have some concern about that. Because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, come time for the next election, there may be a good number of those members who are seeking to re-enter their profession as a teacher. And I would suggest that they are going to have a great deal of difficulty finding new positions because of all the jobs that they eliminated.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's not just teachers that are having a problem with the job cuts. I have a newspaper clipping from the *Star-Phoenix* of February 8 of '94, and the headline reads: "Education budget cuts worry P.A. locals". I'd like to quote:

With contract talks looming, union workers at area schools are concerned over cuts to education budgets, (said) Brian Brotzel, representative of the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

Cuts to union jobs began a few years ago, Brotzel said. Last year the union lost . . . 10 full-time equivalents out of 205 members.

That's a 5 per cent reduction in the P.A. (Prince Albert) area alone, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and this is non-teaching staff. That's one area. And there's a significant cut across the board, Mr. Deputy Speaker, around this province.

And these people have a right to be concerned about their jobs because last year they lost 10 out of 200 on a 2 per cent cut. How many are they going to lose this year on a 4 per cent cut and how many are they going to lose next year?

I'd like to again quote the Minister of Education while she was in opposition: when you take all of the rhetoric out of the budget speech, we learn that the operating grants to universities, technical schools, and school systems have only increased by 2.9 per cent at a time when inflation is running at 4.8 per cent. I would like you to explain to the young people of this province how you can justify your government's decision to cut educational funding. From *Hansard* of April 2, 1990.

The minister of today was complaining because the previous administration only provided a 2.9 per cent increase — an increase, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not a cut. An increase. And she was complaining about it. Well it's interesting to take a look at this year.

Inflation is running at about 4.8 per cent and the minister herself is claiming that the cuts are 4 per cent. However they're much higher to divisions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, much higher. I would have to say what hypocrisy from the Minister of Education, that she would stand up and cry because the government previously had only provided a 2.9 per cent increase and she is providing a 4 per cent cut.

Now that same member is the minister responsible for Education and she is handing out the cuts — 2 per cent, 2 per cent, and 4 per cent this year. Mr. Mr. Speaker, that means that there will be quotas, that means schools will close, and that means more teachers will be laid off, programs will be cut. And, Mr. Speaker, the minister knows this.

Already, Mr. Speaker, we have seen headlines in the newspapers that read: trustees still scrambling; fees up, job cuts at the U of R (University of Regina); schools face reductions; quality of education threatened by cuts; school cuts will be felt; U of R prepares to make major cuts; school officials fret about previous cuts, and many more, Mr. Speaker, many more.

The Finance minister and the Minister of Education both claim that our current fiscal situation is a result of waste by the previous administration. That's what their claim is, Mr. Speaker, whenever any questions are asked of them.

I ask was this waste in the Department of Education? Was that where the waste was that they are always claiming? If it was, why was the current minister always asking that more money be spent on that department? Two point nine per cent, she said, was not enough. Why were they always so critical and always demanding more? The minister was claiming that the government was abandoning Saskatchewan students and our future.

No, Mr. Speaker, the minister's venom had nothing to do with education and its delivery; it had everything to do with partisan politics. In this year's budget, the partisan politics is when the minister says that because these cuts were announced last year, to take effect in 1994, that they don't count. That's pure partisan venom and nothing less, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Dorothy Fortier of the SSTA says, and I quote:

. . . the fact that school boards were warned about the cut doesn't make it any easier.

She says that:

Boards can't keep providing services they are now without an increase in education funding.

From the *Star-Phoenix* of February 18, 1994.

Further, Mr. Speaker, a Saskatoon trustee said in Friday's *Star-Phoenix* that:

. . . there's no way the board can escape cutting programs after sustaining a four-per-cent cut this year.

Again on February 18, from the *Star-Phoenix*.

No way the board can escape from cutting programs. He said that in the city of Saskatoon, and I quote:

Previous cuts in funding resulted in two school closures, trimming 13 staff . . . and a cut in student transportation last year. Material and equipment budgets have already been cut this year and the board won't be contributing as much to the capital budget.

It's a quote from a school trustee in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, again on February 18, 1994.

Mr. Speaker, how can the members opposite claim this budget means no program cuts when you've looked at cuts of 2 per cent in 1992, 2 per cent in 1993, and 4 per cent, or a grand total of 8 per cent in real actual cuts, Mr. Speaker.

The budget in 1991-92 allowed for \$916 million for education; in '92-93, it allowed \$920 million. This is what the budget is. If you look back through the budget documents, this is what you'll see.

In '92-93, \$920 million; in '93-94 budget you end up with \$871 million. But when you actually look at the

book for '94-95, which we just received, the allocation in '93-94 turns out to be \$870 million.

In '94-95, the current budget which we're debating, the figure for education is \$888.654 million. Now that's actually an increase over last year, of approximately \$17 million. But you have to take a look at where that increase is, Mr. Speaker. Just what was increased in that budget?

Well let's take a look. Administration costs went up by \$50,000. Funding for SCN (Saskatchewan Communications Network Corporation) increased by 3 million. And that's one, Mr. Speaker, that I was glad to see that the government retained in this budget, because I believe that the SCN system is important to Saskatchewan; it is very important to Saskatchewan education. Because it provides opportunities for people outside of Regina and Saskatoon, outside of the major centres which have regional colleges and SIAST, to receive education.

Students who do not wish to have to travel into the two major centres to receive university courses can receive some first- and second-year classes within their home communities. And that's very beneficial for the student because they don't have to uproot themselves immediately from home. It saves them money, it saves their parents money, and it provides those young people within our communities the opportunity for some employment at home.

Now there's an additional \$3 million though provided for SCN. And it's going to be interesting, Mr. Speaker, to find out just what that increase was for.

(1630)

We also have an increase of \$4 million for student services. Again, a worthy increase. Because when times are hard and everything is being cut, Mr. Speaker, students . . . people of the province generally look at their options. And one of their major options is to improve their education, to provide themselves with opportunities for better employment.

Because of that great number of people trying to enter university and because of the hard times, they need the assistance from the government through student loans. It seemed to be difficult to come by in the previous two budgets, Mr. Speaker, but at least even then when we questioned the Minister of Education, she said that she would do what she could to provide for the students.

And there's one last item that has a major, major increase, Mr. Speaker, in the budget, and that's \$25 million for teachers' pensions — \$25 million increase for teachers' pensions. Now the teachers deserve their pensions, Mr. Speaker, but I find it somewhat ironic that the major increase in the Department of Education should be for teachers who are no longer teaching.

What of the people that are teaching? What of the people that are trying to be educated? Surely they

should have some response from the government. Because when you look at what has been cut, essential services are being cut by \$145,000, Mr. Speaker. K to 12 system is being cut by \$8 million. And that's our young. That's starting at age 5 up to age 18, and they are the ones that are being cut, Mr. Speaker. They're cut by \$8 million while retired teachers are receiving an increase to the pension plan of \$25 million.

University and SIAST, a cut of six and a half million dollars — again to the people that the Minister of Education, while she was in opposition, would have stated are the future of our province. But now that she has her hands on the levers of power, we receive cuts of \$8 million to K to 12, and six and a half million dollars to university and SIAST. And I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is a good record to have.

I believe the minister should indeed, as she was suggesting to the previous minister of Education while she sat on this side of the House, that perhaps she should be talking to the Premier and the Minister of Finance as to why these major cuts are happening to education.

Mr. Speaker, the government is claiming that this is a good news budget and that there won't be any adverse effects. Well, Mr. Speaker, every family in Saskatchewan is going to feel this budget, every family in this province.

Just wait a couple of months, when schools and universities start announcing how many classes they're going to have to cut. How many teaching positions are going to be lost? How much of an increase are students going to face when they attempt to go to university or to SIAST? What are the tuition increases going to be?

Because when this six and a half million dollars for universities and SIAST are cut, they're going to look some place to find a replacement. Universities and SIAST can't turn around as the school divisions can and tax the local property tax base. They only have one client that they can come to and that's to the students. And those students, Mr. Speaker, are going to be asked to penny-up what the government has cut. Either that or we're going to have a lot less programs in our universities.

There's two options: the students pay more or the universities and SIAST provide less. And there'll likely be a combination of both. We will have less provided in education in this province and it's going to cost the people more to get it — more for less.

Mr. Speaker, it's just like health care. Let's just wait a couple more months and see when the axe falls on health care throughout rural Saskatchewan and more rural hospitals are eliminated.

And it's jobs, Mr. Speaker. It's estimated that another 250 nurses will lose their jobs. And that's the promise that's being talked about. Teachers losing their jobs; nurses losing their jobs. We only have to wait a few

more months when the one-time money that the Minister of Finance says will come from the Crown Investments Corporation comes straight out of the increases in everybody's utility bill.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that's where those will come from. They'll come from the increases to the utility bills. And those utility bills, Mr. Speaker, have a great impact on the education system also. They have a great impact on the remaining health care system within rural Saskatchewan.

We've seen it all happen over the last couple of years, Mr. Speaker, and 1994 won't be any different. If it's not true, why would the Minister of Finance not commit to freeze utility rates? If it's not true that's where the funding is going to come from, why wouldn't she stand up in here and say that there will be no further increases to utility rates?

Mr. Speaker, they won't even support a Bill by the official opposition to establish an all-party committee — an all-party committee to examine utility rate increases before they actually take place. Rather than discussing it a year and a half or two years later in Crown Corporations Committee, discuss it before it actually happens; before the people have actually had their pockets picked by the Crown corporations.

And this suggestion wouldn't cost the government any money because the committee would be made up of MLAs, although that's one of the excuses that the government has given, is that it's going to cost too much. We can't afford that.

All we have to do is wait, Mr. Speaker, wait until this budget takes effect and everyone will see that delivering the promise is increasing taxes. That's the promise. That is going to be the cause of program cuts.

Just wait until we receive our property tax bills. I met with the superintendent of our local school division. And they're looking at between 2 and 4 per cent based on last year's budget, for cuts. That's going to mean a significant amount more money.

And in some areas, Mr. Speaker, the school divisions, the property tax base in the area, it can stand to pay more. But in most areas, Mr. Speaker, they cannot afford to pay more. The higher you raise the mill rate to pick up that extra amount of money, the more you lose on the bottom end by people not being able to afford to pay their taxes. And it's a major issue.

In fact I saw in the paper the other day that the school boards wished to approach the RMs to discuss some manners in which they can receive that portion of funding which is being withheld by the taxpayers because people can no longer afford to pay those taxes. And this budget, Mr. Speaker, is going to drive up the property tax rate. The SSTA is estimating it's going to be between 3 and 4 mills across this province.

That's a significant increase, Mr. Speaker, that cannot be paid by the people of Saskatchewan, when the

NDP have yet to come through with their promise to ease the property tax burden by finding alternative methods to funding education and health care.

That's what the government is claiming, Mr. Speaker. That's why they have to retain one of the hospital Acts in place that can tax the property tax base at 2 per cent this year. And there's nothing to say that it's not going to increase in the future. The government is saying they have to look for alternate methods. Well we haven't seen any of those methods yet and we need them for education and for health care.

Instead of that, the members across the way continue to offload onto health care and onto the backs of local municipalities who will have no choice but to increase their property tax base.

This government's tax increases over the past two years, before the effects of the 1994 budget, before our property taxes will be climbing this year, before the budget, our property taxes are already going up. And this will mean that every family of four is paying an additional \$2,300 more of taxes and utility rates across the board, Mr. Speaker — \$2,300 more before this year's increase to property taxes takes place, before utility rates increase further, and before the increases to labour legislation has been realized. Because it's going to cost businesses more.

And who knows what that figure will be next year at this time. But there is one thing we know for sure, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly going to be more than \$2,300.

The Minister of Education in her speech yesterday made a number of comments that I found kind of interesting. And one of those comments was, there has been some pain, but now we have the opportunity to gain.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that that pain continues in education. A 4 per cent cut doesn't look like a gain of opportunity to most people in the education system. If you talk to the people in the rural school divisions or any school division that is receiving the cuts of up to a hundred per cent in their operating grant, they don't see a lot of opportunities there — at least not positive opportunities, Mr. Speaker. They see a lot of pain and hardship for themselves and their students.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education was comparing Saskatchewan to Alberta, and she said, and I quote:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think our neighbouring province of Alberta is a case in point.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there are some cases to point at in comparisons between Saskatchewan and Alberta. The government just released a report dealing with the K to 12 schooling and how we're doing, by the Saskatchewan indicators. And one of the numbers that is tossed around quite often, Mr. Speaker, is the number of people that leave our school system, that enter the school system but don't make it through to the end to graduate. In most of these indicators, Mr.

Speaker, if not all, Saskatchewan ranks behind Alberta — not ahead, but behind Alberta.

And yet the minister would seem to try to indicate that Alberta was doing something terrible, that they were doing worse than we are. Well, Mr. Speaker, they're still ahead of us in the government's own studies.

The drop-out rate in British Columbia was 16 per cent, and the minister compares Saskatchewan with 16 per cent. She says we're right tied with them, right on. And indeed the government's own study says that Saskatchewan is 16 per cent.

But Alberta, Mr. Speaker, is at 14 per cent drop-out rate. And this study was done in 1991-92. So these indicators are measuring before the government started cutting, before the government started cutting. This is before the 2 per cent cut in '92-93; this was before the 2 per cent cut in '93-94; and this was before the 4 per cent cut in '94-95.

The minister talked yesterday of school amalgamations. And she said:

We have announced a limited number of voluntary school division amalgamation pilot projects for those ready school boards that choose to amalgamate.

Clear criteria for these voluntary amalgamations . . .

And she goes on. Well I'm glad that she set up criteria for the voluntary amalgamations, but I hope that doesn't mean that she has criteria for those who may have involuntary amalgamations.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be terribly wrong and terribly destructive for rural Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan as a whole, but particularly rural Saskatchewan, if the government was to attempt to amalgamate school divisions without the agreement of those school divisions.

School divisions in this province should be allowed to voluntarily amalgamate if that's their desire. And I believe that a number of them are looking at doing so, and it's a worthwhile exercise to look at those amalgamations and see if there are benefits for those divisions.

But there may well be divisions in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, who do not wish to amalgamate. Or if they do wish to amalgamate, they may wish to amalgamate with a particular division and not another. And I believe it would be terribly wrong if the Minister of Education and the government was to try and force amalgamations.

I'd like to again quote from the Minister of Education.

These criteria would include such things as full community and staff involvement in the process, local control and decision making, and the need to integrate interdepartmental

services to better serve our children and their families. We have to find more out about whether or not amalgamations will affect the quality of education, especially the quality of education in rural Saskatchewan.

(1645)

Very good. I agree with the minister on this issue that that is exactly how it should be done. But isn't it a shame, Mr. Speaker — isn't it a shame — that that very criteria was not applied to health in this province when the government was changing health structure in this province? Wouldn't it have been just excellent if that very criteria had been applied by the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, education is very important in this province and it's too important to play politics with it. The best possible education must be given to our students. And one of those items in providing that service must be greater parental input into school systems. And as I've talked before, amalgamations must be done on a voluntary basis and not driven from above.

Mr. Speaker, I don't see this budget providing that for education and for the province of Saskatchewan. And as my colleague said, that this Harry Houdini budget hides the pain by bringing it in last year and saying it's not important any more because we told you last year we were going to increase your taxes this year and cut your programs.

Mr. Speaker, because of that I cannot support this budget and I will be voting against it. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great degree of pleasure that I enter this budget debate today.

I've been fortunate enough to represent the people of Prince Albert since 1986 and I want to say that the change that I have seen since 1991 when this government was sworn into power has been a very positive and a very dramatic change, and this budget certainly reflects the work that has been done by this administration since October of 1991. And I think the people of Saskatchewan appreciate the efforts of this government and I think that will be reflected and has been reflected in their reaction to this budget.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks I just want to say a few words in welcoming the new member, the member from Regina North West, to the legislature. She was elected in the by-election, as you will know, just recently and I welcome her to the House, and I'm sure that she'll have a positive influence on the proceedings in the Saskatchewan legislature during the time that she will spend with us here.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this budget is going a

long way to restoring the fiscal integrity of the province and I want to say as well that I'm proud to have been part of putting it together along with my colleagues on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the speeches that have gone on in the past few days and I've been watching very closely one member in particular, the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member from Greystone, and her comments and her support and her reaction to the federal budget and her reaction to the provincial budget. And I think, Mr. Speaker, it clearly identified where this member sits.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has brought forth a Liberal budget, which is what Liberals do. We have brought forth a people's budget. I say that this is a budget that supports the people of Saskatchewan, not only this fiscal year but into the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a few moments to share my thoughts with respect to the differences between the provincial budget and our Saskatchewan budget. And it's unfortunate that the Leader of the Liberal Party isn't here because I would really like to . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Unfortunately the member is also out of order and I think he knows full well he's not to refer to members either being present or absent from the House and I wish he'd refrain from doing so.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, let me apologize for that. I do know that that is not the rules and I apologize to the House for that.

So let me continue, Mr. Speaker, by saying that what we see at a federal level . . . and the differences we see. This is a government that supports small business. Her federal cousins in Ottawa gave no tax relief for small business. They've eliminated the capital gains exemption and medium-sized businesses are seeing a higher tax rate.

And what's happened in the provincial budget here that the member from Greystone won't support? We've cut the small-business tax by 20 per cent. When we were elected, we eliminated the provincial sales tax on meals and food, which put sixty-five and a half million dollars back into the economy.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've been able to partner with the hospitality industry in putting together the video lottery terminal program that I think is going to do a lot for rural Saskatchewan, a lot for small business. We'll be putting about \$15.7 million directly into the hands of the hospitality industry. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that's positive; I think that's good news.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — And I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that there really are some inconsistencies

with respect to the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member from Greystone's position. She supports a federal budget, Mr. Speaker, a federal budget that froze the salaries of senators, that froze the salaries of members of parliament, and that's what she supports.

Mr. Speaker, this cabinet has taken a 5 per cent decrease in pay. But the member from Greystone, only after taking her 37 per cent increase, asks — 37 per cent, Mr. Speaker, the only member of this legislature to have an increase in salary — after she takes her increase of 37 per cent, she then says, would you freeze my salary.

Mr. Speaker, I say shame on her and I say shame on the inconsistencies that she displays on a regular basis in here.

Mr. Speaker, on June 1 of 1993 in *Hansard*, she is chastising this government for not introducing the video lottery terminal program and foregoing some 50 to \$60 million in revenue. And now, a few months later, on a daily basis she stands in here saying, oh, you shouldn't do that. Now I say, Mr. Speaker, she can't be on both sides of this issue. She can't be supporting a federal Liberal budget and the way Liberals do their budgets, and opposing this budget which is going to generate some \$75 million of revenue that will go back into health, and education, and highways, and all of the programs that government delivers. I say, Mr. Speaker, you have here the actions of an inconsistent person.

Mr. Speaker, every day this budget displays fiscal integrity. We know — through our polling and through the figures that are shown to us — that people are leaving this province on a weekly and on a daily basis to spend entertainment dollars on gambling in other parts of the country, in Alberta and Manitoba, and in the States. And one only has to look, Mr. Speaker, at headlines in today's *Leader-Post*: cheap Vegas flights all booked.

Well I say, Mr. Speaker, this government stands behind the hospitality industry. It stands behind the working men and women of this province. And we're going to attempt to work with the aboriginal people to stem the outflow of those dollars from the Saskatchewan economy.

Mr. Speaker, short months ago the member from Greystone says: introduce this video lottery terminal program; you're losing millions of dollars of revenue. Short weeks later she stands in here and says, don't partner with aboriginal people, don't partner with the hospitality industry, let this money flow out of the province but somehow still balance your budget. Mr. Speaker, these are the actions of a Liberal, of a true Liberal politician that she refuses to admit she is.

Mr. Speaker, I've got to give credit . . . at least credit to the members, the official opposition, who admit to being political and admit to being politicians. But not the member from Greystone, Mr. Speaker, not the member who can sit on two sides of every issue. A big wage increase — 37 per cent — oh, and then freeze

my salary.

Mr. Speaker, if this is the new politics, I say that the people of Saskatchewan will have nothing of it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, as we put this program together, this video lottery terminal together — which will generate some \$75 million in next year's budget — we were well aware that it's an issue that people sit on both sides of. Some people support it, some oppose it, but there's very few that oppose and support it as the member from Greystone does.

Mr. Speaker, this budget makes sense for the people of Saskatchewan because it delivers some hope for the future. And I say that we have consulted widely in putting this together. We've talked with people from all over this province and we've gathered their ideas.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, we were hoping that the Leader of the Liberal Party would come forth with some new ideas. She's been elected for, I guess 100 and how many weeks now? — 102, 103. She indicated that she was going to offer an idea a week in terms of how we get this economy together. Well I say, Mr. Speaker, she hasn't shared with us one thought. And there might be a reason for that, Mr. Speaker, the fact that she doesn't have any ideas.

Mr. Speaker, how can she support . . . or how can she oppose a budget that, when in these economic times, delivers \$4 million for northern economic development? Mr. Speaker, how can she oppose a budget that delivers \$6 million for Saskatchewan Opportunities, the new corporation? How can she oppose a million four being put into the beef industry to fund agri-food equity?

An Hon. Member: — She didn't read it?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, my colleague asks if perhaps she didn't read the budget, and I think that might be the case. But there may be another reason, Mr. Speaker. She's opposing this budget for straight political reasons.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Liberal Party is displaying what some would say is a hypocritical approach. Now, Mr. Speaker, you can't have it both ways. You can't ask the people of Saskatchewan to tighten their belt buckles when you're not willing to tighten your own. And I say, Mr. Speaker, the people see through this.

Mr. Speaker, she opposes today the introduction of the video lottery terminal program. One of her own candidates, a hotelier in this city, is quoted as saying that it will stop the outflow of gaming dollars from our province. Mr. Speaker, even her own candidates are seeing through the position that's taken by the member from Greystone as being only one of politics.

I say, Mr. Speaker, she hasn't even got control of her own caucus. She says she supports balancing the

budgets in this province, but yet you've got the member from Shaunavon asking the Government of Saskatchewan to write down \$167 million debt in the crop insurance program. Well I say if you're going to write down this debt of 167 million and if you're going to forgo \$75 million in VLT revenue, where do you get the money?

Mr. Speaker, are they proponents of increases to the E&H (education and health) tax? One percentage point in the E&H tax generates about \$70 million. Are they proponents of increasing that tax?

And I ask the member from Shaunavon who chirps from his chair, where would we get the \$167 million to write down this debt? Where would it come from? That member sat here and voted with us in last year's budget; he voted clause by clause. He supported every initiative that this government took to putting our financial house in order, but ah, all of a sudden he stands in the opposition and says we should find \$167 million.

Mr. Speaker, they can't have it both ways. They can't have it both ways because you can't spend and still balance a budget at the same time. And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to be pointing out these inconsistencies of the Liberal members of this legislature. Because the people of the province . . .

The Speaker: — Order. It now being 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 7 o'clock this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.