

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure and honour today on behalf of my colleague, the member for Regina Churchill Downs, to introduce to you 28 grade 10 students seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. These 28 students are from Thom Collegiate. The teachers accompanying them are Ms. Paulette Hubbs, Mr. Bill Heavisides, and Mr. Dale Wilde, whom I will be saying a few words about later in a different segment of this.

I look forward to a photo opportunity with them following question period and a visit right after the photo. I ask all hon. members to join me in welcoming the grade 10 students from Thom Collegiate.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery are members of six organizations that are visiting the legislature today, and I would like to introduce them to you and to other members of the legislature.

With the indulgence of the House, I'll mention their name and their organization. Becky Adams, the coordinator of the Provincial Partnership Committee on Family Violence; Erica Cancino, director of Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan; Mary Jane Ellis, the chair of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Women's Committee; Alma Kytwayhat, representing the Saskatchewan Treaty Women's Council; Deanna Elias-Henry, director of the Regina Transition House; and three representatives of the Aboriginal Women's Council — Marlene Gilmor, Jennifer Cyr, and Lona Hegma.

They were here, Mr. Speaker, to attend a press conference this morning in connection with a Bill that I will be introducing later this afternoon, and I would like members of the legislature to welcome them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition I too would like to extend our greetings to the individuals who are here this afternoon, individuals who have taken the time to speak out on issues that are very pertinent to them. And I'm sure that as we . . . the minister presents his Bill and we get into the discussion, it will be something that we will all be supportive of. And so we welcome you to the House today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member from Moosomin and

the Minister of Justice as well. One of the members up there is from my constituency. Alma, I would like to welcome you very much. We get very few visitors from as far north as Loon Lake. Alma's from the constituency of Makwa Sahgaiehan, and welcome very much to the legislature, Alma. I hope you have a nice time here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bradley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also wanted to take a moment to welcome the school group from Thom Collegiate, and in particular a teacher that is from my home town, Paulette Hubbs. She was a classmate or a schoolmate of mine in Milestone and her family is very active in my constituency. I often call them kind of my senate. So anyways, a warm welcome to Paulette and the group from Thom.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, three people in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, in the third row, on your side. My brother, Dave, and his wife, Margaret, and Tilly Klippenstein, a friend of theirs.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I too would like to welcome the aboriginal women, and I'll do it in our own language, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I of course want to join all members in observing International Women's Day. Since that day in 1927 when women were officially recognized as persons by the Supreme Court of Canada we've made quite a bit of progress. Progress towards what should be a common matter of fact, that is, total gender equality both in our Canadian society and in the international one.

I congratulate all the strong, purposeful, and focused women's advocacy groups for nudging us towards that goal. Feminists have accomplished many positive changes for our sisters. We are making progress towards power, politically and economically.

But it is not my nature, Mr. Speaker, to be complacent, nor I think should it be the prerogative of society to congratulate itself too effusively for a task not yet completed. We still have much to do and this day of commemoration should focus us on those tasks. For instance, we must get at the root of the issue that still affects far too many women — poverty. The feminization of poverty is, I maintain, the biggest blight in our society today. Women, especially

women who are the sole support of children, have for too long been our underclass. The fact that racial discrimination often comes into play here is doubly cause for concern. Child care and closing the wage gap must be moved to the top of our agenda.

The Speaker: — Order, order, the member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the members of Athabasca, Cumberland House, and Battlefords, and myself, I would like all members of this Assembly to join with me today in congratulating the Meadow Lake Tribal Council who successfully hosted the 1994 Saskatchewan Indian Winter Games.

The four-day event attracted over 2,000 athletes, coaches, and volunteers to the communities of Meadow Lake and Beauval. The games were an opportunity for first nations from all over Saskatchewan to showcase their talented and determined youth.

This year the games made a successful attempt to incorporate the theme of youth wellness in sports, culture and recreation into the events. This theme was not only present at the sporting events but also at various wellness workshops. This was helped by the presence of the many role models of these young people, including cast members from the television program *North of 60*, Mr. Speaker.

Other highlights of the 1994 Saskatchewan Indian Winter Games included a visit by the well-known artist Allen Sapp, many of whose pictures appear here in the legislature. Also high on the list of popularity was Grand Chief Ovide Mercredi singing a solo rendition of "Happy Birthday" to Vice-Chief Oneill Gladue. Fun was had by all and fond memories of this event will surely last for a long time.

Again I would like to praise the Meadow Lake Tribal Council and the many others whose cooperation and dedication resulted in such a smooth-running and successful event. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Teichrob: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with my colleague from Saskatoon Wildwood in asking the members of the legislature to join me in observing International Women's Day. This important day focuses on the struggles and achievements of women throughout the world. Although in Canada we have changed many of the injustices toward women, we still toil for equality in the workplace and in society.

Today I would like us to remind ourselves of a few of the many important breakthroughs that Canadian women have achieved within the last few years.

In 1992 Roberta Bondar became the first Canadian

woman to explore space. Also in that year Madam Justice Catherine Ann Fraser became the first woman to be appointed as Chief Justice of a province. 1991 brought us the nomination of Canada's first aboriginal woman judge, Terry Vyse. Finally in 1989 Audrey McLaughlin became the first woman in the history of Canada to lead a federal political party, the New Democratic Party.

These are just a handful of examples of the impressive accomplishments of the women of Canada, and I have to say they are a start. However, these achievements would not have been possible if it were not for the struggle of women throughout the years.

I think, for instance, of the early struggles of Nellie McClung and Agnes Macphail, and in Saskatchewan of Marjorie Cooper and Beatrice Trew. That is why we commemorate the long, hard journey they have travelled. It is through their courage and determination that women today can find strength and inspiration. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the member from Saskatoon for those kind words about my grandmother and many other women.

On this International Women's Day, Mr. Speaker, it's fitting to recognize some young women, the Thom Trojans basketball team and their coach, Dale Wilde, who's seated in the Speaker's gallery.

The Regina junior girls basketball championship medal went to the Thom Trojans on Friday at the University of Regina physical education gym, in an exciting game featuring the talents of the Leboldus Golden Suns and the Thom Trojans. Both teams, Mr. Speaker, have great talent, and displayed grit and determination. Players, coaches and parents have good reason to be justifiably proud. Of course, I may be a little bit biased. You see, Mr. Speaker, my daughter, Ginelle, helped cruise the courts for the winning Thom Trojans.

This junior girls' Regina championship, along with the junior girls' curling championship and the provincial football championship, have made it a great year for the Thom Trojans. Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, my son, Jay, was part of that Trojan football team as well.

So it is with more than a little pride that I stand today to recognize the latest in Trojan titles. Congratulations, Thom Trojans, and especially the junior girls' Regina championship basketball team.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cline: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is Education Week, and one of my very pleasant memories of my lifelong education — which is continuing, the opposition will be pleased to hear, I think — is going to the public library in Saskatoon where the excellent staff are very helpful and friendly.

And that is a memory I have and a practice that I share with many other people.

It was announced last week that Saskatoon ranked first among 343 cities in North America in library use. Saskatoon is the reading capital of North America. Regina, by the way, ranked fourth out of 343, which also is not bad. And I think that this announcement is a remarkable commentary on the people of our province because I think this type of reading goes on right across Saskatchewan. It suggests, I believe, what we in this Assembly all know, and that is the people we represent are intelligent and questioning, that they are not satisfied with what they know and they want to know more. They insist on informing themselves rather than simply being informed.

That makes it tough for us but it's good for our province. And I want to congratulate the people of Saskatoon and Regina and the libraries which serve them so well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like the members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing Social Work Week, March 7 to 11. Social work is an important profession with a long history of commitment to improving the well-being of people in society, particularly the disadvantaged.

Today's social workers are involved with individuals, groups, and communities or on their behalf through research, social policy, planning, and teaching. Social workers have a huge responsibility to the communities in which they work because they see directly the concerns and desires of each community and they must act and advocate accordingly to benefit them. I think they will be an important voice in the federal-provincial income security review that's taking place.

Women have also played an important role in social work both officially and more often unofficially and are an essential part of its future. These women are often the neglected professionals who need to be listened to.

So we wish all social workers every success in the celebration of Social Work Week and more recognition in the future. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Livestock Program Proposal

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, last week we discovered that some NDP (New Democratic Party) MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) were threatening their local papers and businesses in order to get their support for their kind of health care reform. And yesterday we saw the Minister of Finance launch what amounted to a personal and bitter attack against the Saskatchewan taxpayers

association because they disagreed with the government taxation policy.

Mr. Speaker, it seems that this autocratic form of government is the style that is rampant within the NDP. And unfortunately I must bring another example of this to the legislature this afternoon.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, on Friday you confirmed that it is your intention to roll the horned check-off fund and the cattle deduction fund into one and change the make-up of the industry's board such that you will be appointing two of your own members, one member from the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and one member from the National Farmers Union. And contrary to your statements in this House, neither the Saskatchewan Livestock Association nor the stock growers want anything to do with this arrangement.

Mr. Minister, what kind of presentation did you give to those groups when they met with you, at your request I might add? What did you indicate you would do if they failed to support your initiative?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite of course has these facts wrong again. I did not confirm on Friday that that was the . . . that we were going to continue with that course. That was a course we set out based on recommendations made to me by LPAC, which is Livestock Policy Advisory Committee, of which the stock growers are a member. We were moving in that direction.

And since then we've had discussions with these groups and I am not going to get involved in disputes between different farm organizations as to who sits on a check-off board. And we will move if we have to, if it's their desire, to do elections which will be the ultimate way of putting it to a test as to who represents producers. We're prepared to move in that direction. If producers agree on who can sit on the board, then we obviously have a solution; if not, probably the ultimate solution is elections and producers can decide in this province who and who does not sit on the check-off board to decide how to spend check-off money.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I will agree that they agreed to make some changes but never, ever did they agree to the changes that you're forcing upon them. You full well know, Mr. Minister, the livestock check-off is a producer-initiated, voluntary fund and it's administered by the industry and 97 per cent of that money is going into market research and development.

Mr. Minister, the Wheat Pool is a marketer of cattle; it's not a producer. And the NFU (National Farmers Union) is simply a national political lobby organization which has repeatedly, I might add,

opposed any kind of check-off. So why on earth would you want to take this fund over? What possible motive would you have, Mr. Minister, to pass legislation forcing the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and the National Farmers Union and two of your own appointees onto that board?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely correct. This is a voluntary check-off; it is producer funds.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that there are producers in my riding who belong to the stock growers — not very many in my riding, but a few. There are people in my riding who belong to pure-bred association and hence are associated with the Saskatchewan Livestock Association. There are also members in my riding who raise cattle who are NFU members. And there are members in my riding who raise cattle who sit on Wheat Pool committees and they believe that they speak for those . . . that the Wheat Pool speaks for them.

I also have many producers in my riding who do not belong to any organization. And it is of no particular interest to me who represents those producers on the board as long as we get reasonable people on there that can make reasonable decisions. And if the organizations themselves cannot agree on who should be on the board, then I think the rational alternative is to have elections and let producers decide.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, do I have to remind you that the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool is a multinational marketing conglomerate. That's what it is. It's not a producer. And that's wherein lies this problem. As an organization it is not a producer.

And they are telling me now, these producers, that your intentions are not honourable in this, nor are your actions in the way in which you're trying to get your way.

Mr. Speaker, let me show you what kind of consultative approach the government opposite takes when someone disagrees with their policies. The Saskatchewan Livestock Association met with the Minister of Agriculture on February 10 to express their opposition to what clearly amounts to a power grab.

I have a letter from the livestock association which sums up what happened at that meeting. And I must say, Mr. Minister, I concur with their extreme displeasure with that meeting.

Mr. Minister, will you confirm that, as is outlined in that letter, that you threatened to take away \$1.8 million of producer funds which is left in the beef stabilization if the association did not cave into your wishes, Mr. Minister? Did you threaten the livestock

association with that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, the Livestock Policy Advisory Committee, and in fact the stock growers themselves, and other organizations have been meeting with me over the past couple of years asking for increases in the check-off, asking for the \$1.8 million which is left over in the beef stabilization fund, which we agreed to pay into the check-off fund last year.

The legislation as it's now structured does not allow us to pay that money into the fund and therefore we need to make legislative changes. And that was one of the reasons for bringing this Bill into the House, is to make those changes to allow the \$1.8 million to be paid into the fund.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you are not answering the question. The Saskatchewan Livestock Association says you perpetrated political blackmail. That's their terminology, Mr. Minister.

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order. Order. I think the member knows full well that unparliamentary language, whether he uses it himself or read from an article, is simply not acceptable. And I'd ask him to refrain from that.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, that is how strong they feel. That is how strong they feel, Mr. Minister. And I believe the association.

The minister of Community Services threatened SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) over The Hospital Revenue Act. The Minister of Health threatened unilateral legislation if the SMA (Saskatchewan Medical Association) refused to go along with her contract demands. Last week we discovered the NDP MLAs will even threaten small-town bank managers and newspapers.

Mr. Minister, this letter, this letter says that the members of the association were, and I quote: appalled by the profanity you saw fit to use, unquote. Mr. Minister, they list some of the things that you said, in this letter. I'm not going to repeat them.

Mr. Minister, is this the reception that interest groups get when they meet with you to discuss issues? Is this the same Minister of Agriculture and the provincial government that promised to be more open and more consultative? Is this the same person?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, this is the Minister of Agriculture and the government that found \$1.3 million for a beef development fund which will be matched by the federal government to help the

beef industry. This is the Minister of Agriculture and the provincial government that's got \$1.8 million that we want to give to the beef industry. This is the Minister of Agriculture and the government that is reacting on recommendation from the Livestock Policy Advisory Committee that says that these two bodies should be coordinated into one group; that the horned check-off should be increased and that the check-off should be increased, and that we should try to move towards a national check-off, which we have also done.

And if the livestock groups are quarrelling about who should be on a board, then we will have to work that out within the industry and get a board that represents all the producers. And if that requires elections, then we'll move in that direction.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, apparently you don't get the message. They're not quarrelling amongst themselves; they're quarrelling with you. They don't want you involved in their organization and these other non-producer organizations. They don't want that. But you seem to get your kicks by throwing your weight around. And that's what they find so appalling, Mr. Minister.

And I must agree with the Saskatchewan Livestock Association when they say in the letter, and I quote: This type of policy development is totally unacceptable and we feel it smacks of politics of the worse kind. Unquote.

I have a letter from the stock growers as well that expresses the same kind of sentiment. And the people are finding out what your government does to everybody when it doesn't get its way initially, and that is, my way or highway.

Mr. Minister, the minister from The Battlefords last week says to the media and to the major energy businesses, if you don't like the way that we do things, ship off to Alberta.

Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, I now ask you to apologize to the Saskatchewan Livestock Association for your unacceptable behaviour and your political threats, and that you commit today that you pull your ill-designed plans of the check-off before people take up your suggestion and indeed move off to Alberta.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, the politics involved here are when the member opposite gets up and denigrates a reputable company like the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, a livestock group who many livestock producers in this province feel represents them, and getting involved in the politics of farm groups which I am trying to stay above and to let the industry sort out for themselves their problems.

Grey Cup Bid

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier today. Mr. Premier, as you know on last Friday the official opposition joined with the government and all other Saskatchewan residents in congratulating you and the rest of the Grey Cup bid committee for bringing the 1995 Grey Cup to Regina.

We also at that time, Mr. Premier, took the opportunity to ask the Minister of Economic Development a few questions. We asked relating to funds and the Grey Cup bid, and his answer was that there were no funds at all involved in that. According to reports published today, Mr. Premier, it said that the Saskatchewan government threw in \$500,000 at the last moment in order to secure that bid.

And we're just wondering today if all of the money is coming from the province or is it a shared concern? And why did the Minister of Economic Development on Friday tell us that no provincial tax dollars were in the Grey Cup bid?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to share the enthusiasm and see the Leader of the Opposition's enthusiastic support about the Grey Cup. This is going to be a major event for the people of Saskatchewan. And I dare say it's going to be an experience of Canadians who partake in it will for quite some time remember and cherish.

Now specifically speaking to the member's question, tomorrow afternoon the bid committee of the Saskatchewan Roughriders will be holding a press conference — I think it's at 4:30 or 3:30; I don't know exactly the time in the afternoon — where the details of the bid will be made public and known. And they've asked me, and I've agreed to this suggestion, that the questions be directed and answered at that particular time and subsequently in question period.

I'm interpreting the remarks of the House Leader with respect to the question of financing in the context of no upfront funding, and that is in fact the case. But the details will be delivered tomorrow and we can discuss them.

Now if the members opposite have any further comments or suggestions in this regard, I think perhaps it would be best awaited until tomorrow's answers by the Roughriders and by the government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I don't think anyone in Saskatchewan doesn't agree that it is a wonderful day that we host this Grey Cup here, because it is a provincial effort. It's not a Regina effort but a provincial effort, and we recognize that as have governments over the years in dealing with the Rider football team.

But I guess, Mr. Premier, what I'm asking about is the due diligence process here. Because I've heard on a number of occasions from you and your ministers that

you also consider that to be fundamental to public accountability, the due diligence. And recently we've seen where you took a year and a half of due diligence to make sure that we didn't get co-generation, and you did a long time on due diligence to make sure, and spent a lot of money, that we didn't get Piper.

Now I'm hoping that there was some due diligence when Larry Ryckman leaned over the table and said, we need a little more dough, Roy — excuse me, Mr. Speaker — we need a little more money, Mr. Premier, to secure this bid. That there was, in fact, some due diligence done that does show that the province as a whole would benefit from this type of expenditure.

And it's that question, Mr. Premier, that I pose, not one that in any way denigrates the process that you were so successful in achieving.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

First of all, I can assure you that it was not a conversation, as you portray it, over the table. I have met Mr. Ryckman just very briefly in the course of the submission made in Sacramento. And I must say that he was very much a key questioner of the various submissions which were made.

But the heart of your question is what is the due diligence, namely what is the economic spin-off from getting the Grey Cup into Regina. And the point that I want to say is that tomorrow we'll be providing the facts and figures and subsequently to the House, to the people of Saskatchewan. This is going to be a multimillion dollar spin-off by virtue of getting the Grey Cup and 45,000 people attracted to the city of Regina, and the national and international publicity associated with this venture.

The Grey Cups that have been conducted in the West the last several years have not lost money, they've made money.

And the other fact of the matter is that we were in a competition; we were in a competition with Winnipeg. We either had to be competitive to get the bid or withdraw and not get the bid. And as the Leader of the Opposition himself says, he would not want us to withdraw, he would want us to be competitive, which we were. And I think everything else being equal, Regina obtained the site location for a whole number of good, solid reasons.

I think the details of that again can be relayed tomorrow, will be relayed tomorrow, and I think that the member will be assured that this in fact is a very wise investment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — A very, very quick question, Mr. Premier. Was your House Leader right or wrong on

Friday? Would you just straighten that out for us?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker, I have not had an opportunity, I'm sorry, to talk to the House Leader who is away on government business, and I have not had a chance to read the **Hansard**. But when I do that and I have a chance to discuss it with him, you can ask me tomorrow or the day after tomorrow once the announcements are made.

I think, quite frankly, one has to understand that when you're in a competition against the city of Winnipeg and the government of the province of Manitoba for the location of the Grey Cup, with the multimillion dollar benefits for Manitoba and for their people, decisions have to be made to keep our bid competitive. I was in Sacramento; the House Leader was not in Sacramento. His information and his statements were made based on the knowledge which we had prior to the actual competition which took place in Sacramento.

But I want to assure the member opposite, and I'm glad to see that he still supports us in this regard, this is going to be a great event for Saskatchewan — it is going to be a great event for Canada — all of Saskatchewan.

And you know, this province needs a boost like this. We've had some tough years. I think the people are looking forward to it very optimistically. And I know that the member's questions are motivated from good intention and good spirit and I ask him and encourage him to continue along on that positive track.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Costs

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the minister in charge of Municipal Government.

We understand it is the intention of your government to introduce amendments to The Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Act during the present sitting of the legislature. Current legislation requires municipalities to pay 13 per cent of the cost of the assessment agency. Madam Minister, if the SAMA (Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency) legislation is passed, it would increase the 1994 municipal share to 35 per cent and up to 77 per cent more through 1996.

Madam Minister, isn't that provincial offloading, and can you give assurance to these local governments that you will not proceed with this offloading and not proceed with the amendments?

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Mr. Speaker, thank you for that question. We will be introducing amendments to The Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Act within the next couple weeks and we'll debate the recommendations at that time.

In our budget this year, if you will look in the *Estimates* book, you'll see that there has been some change in funding in our allocation to SAMA from last year. This year we are paying 44 per cent of the cost of SAMA; last year we paid somewhere around 80 per cent of the cost of SAMA. So there has been a decrease and there will be a decrease.

I want to, though, put this in the light of what's happening in other western provinces, because I think it's important to understand where we stand relative to Manitoba and Alberta and B.C. (British Columbia). B.C. for many years has recovered 75 per cent of the cost of doing assessment from municipalities. They provided the assessment but they have recovered 75 per cent of the cost. Alberta, this year, is moving to recover 100 per cent of the cost of doing assessments or the assessment costs for municipalities. And in B.C. they have always recovered 100 per cent of the cost by virtue of a levy on the property.

So Saskatchewan, in historical terms, has paid a larger percentage of assessment costs than the neighbouring provinces, and by virtue of the fact that we have to balance our budget and we have to reduce our expenditures, we have to do it in a fair and reasonable way. And what we have done this year with SAMA, I believe, is fair and reasonable.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you've admitted, you've had dramatic cut-backs to these funds to local government. And my questions are not to other provinces but to you, Madam Minister. You're the minister in charge of the RMs (rural municipalities) and local governments in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the rural municipality of Saskatchewan Landing tells us that for 1994 the proposed extra assessment would increase its bill by 167 per cent from 1993. The RM of Arlington would face an increase of 163 per cent. The RM of Benson, an increase of 165 per cent. The village of Marshall, an increase of 258 per cent.

Madam Minister, I have dozens of letters here, and I'm sure that you have the same ones, from local governments who are fearful of what will happen once this legislation is passed. Has your government undertaken an impact study on how these horrific increases will affect rural Saskatchewan?

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Yes, and thank you for that question. We have done some analysis of what these costs will relate to in terms of a municipal budget. I can tell you that the average share of the provincial transfer to the total rural budget is about 7.6 per cent. That means the money that we allocate to any one individual rural municipality is about 7.6 per cent of their total budget.

And when we take into account the decreases that we have instituted this year, the 8 per cent from the revenue sharing and the extra 2.3 per cent that comes

by virtue of the change in funding to SAMA, that relates to about 1.4 per cent of their general operating revenues. So again, relative to their total budget and the impact on their total budget, it comes down to about 1.4 per cent. In some cases it may come to about a little over 1 per cent of a mill rate increase.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to raise one point, Mr. Speaker. As we speak during question period, the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention is dealing with an emergency resolution on this matter. And I hope you have better answers for them than you do for us, Madam Minister.

Mr. Speaker, a number of officials say that if communities have to absorb these increased costs, they are going to demand the option of opting out of SAMA services. Madam Minister, have you determined how many communities you could lose before SAMA could no longer deliver these services?

Hon. Ms. Carson: — First of all I want to make it clear that no one can opt out of SAMA. The Assessment Agency of Saskatchewan is comprehensive and it applies to all Saskatchewan. What you're talking about are the field services. And when SAMA became an agency in 1986, Saskatoon and Regina and Prince Albert and Moose Jaw had the opportunity to engage their own employees to do field services.

What we are talking about at this point in time is whether there should be an option for other municipalities to engage their own field service workers. In other words, there are two separate functions of SAMA: one is a core function that controls the integrity of the assessment system and develops the manuals and the procedures; and the other is the field workers who do the inspection at the local level and develop the assessment rules.

In the four largest cities, those workers have always been employees of the municipal government. What we're talking now to the municipalities about is whether that should be an option provided to them as well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Madam Minister. If communities drop out — and from what I hear you say, whether they utilize the services or not is the same as opting out as I read in their letters to me and to you, Madam Minister — if all these communities drop out of SAMA, or not use the services, someone will have to shoulder the cost of the agency. Madam Minister, who will be responsible for picking up the cost, and will it be the taxpayers of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Ms. Carson: — Well first of all, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan have been for a long time responsible for a major cost of the agency. What we're trying to do is find a reasonable and practical approach to allow

municipalities to have more authority and more control over their own assessment services. Assessment services primarily benefit municipal governments. And there is I think a logical reason and a rationale behind the approach that we have taken.

It does mean that there will be to some extent, increased costs, and that cannot be avoided in the fact that we're trying to come to a balanced budget. And there are going to be times when municipalities will have to look and scrutinize their own budgets and develop their own budget plans; and it's simply part of living in Saskatchewan when you have \$843 million interest payment to pay.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Appointments to the Saskatchewan Women's Advisory Council

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, today is International Women's Day. In commemorating this day, I am pleased to rise to inform the Assembly that I have recently appointed new members to the Saskatchewan Women's Advisory Council.

The Saskatchewan Women's Advisory Council examines issues of concern to women and presents their findings and recommendations to government. It is appropriate that the Women's Advisory Council be appointed on International Women's Day as the council symbolizes all the rights women have fought for over the years. Rights that ensure women's voices are heard and that their perspective is considered as governments develop policy that affects the lives of women.

Also the appointment recognizes that there are still barriers that prevent or impede women's progress in attaining equality. The council symbolizes our commitment to continue to work toward the ultimate right of women — full equality in the home, in the workplace, in the community, and in society as a whole.

The Government of Saskatchewan has a long history of working to advance the status of women. Three decades ago a women's bureau in the Department of Labour was established. Today, the Women's Secretariat ensures women's interests and concerns are represented in provincial government policy, programs, and services. In addition, the Women's Secretariat develops and delivers public information and education on issues of concern to women.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Women's Advisory Council will provide another valuable resource in gathering information and bringing ideas and suggestions to the attention of government.

I am pleased to recognize the following people who have been recently appointed to the council: Janet McMurtry, chairperson, from Regina; Laura Boyer, Meadow Lake; Lillian Sanderson, La Ronge; Marilyn

Johannsen from Saskatoon; Svetla Dolaptchiev from Regina; Pat Trask from Harris; Teresa Joki, Maidstone; Valerie Schmidt, Saskatoon; Isabelle George, Arcola.

This government recognizes that women have worked for many changes over the years. They have raised their voices in favour of better working conditions, minimum wages, paid maternity leave, adequate child care, improved health care, employment equity, sufficient incomes, pay equity, and an end to child poverty.

(1415)

Today we see signs of change all around us. Changes in family structure, more women in the workforce, increased lone-parent families in poverty, an ageing population, and more households that require child care services. All the changes that have occurred or are now occurring affect women, affect children, and indeed affect all of society.

I look forward to working with the newly appointed advisory council and to examining their findings and recommendations regarding policy, programs, and services that will serve the women of this province.

I know all members will join me in wishing the council well in this and future undertakings as they work to promote justice and equality for women. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is very appropriate that the advisory board be appointed on International Women's Day. We on this side of the House support that concept. We also realize that this appointment recognizes that there are still barriers out there impeding women to be able to participate equally on the business front.

Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House will be having words to say later on this day about this so I would just say to you that we on this side certainly agree with what the minister has done and we will support it later this day.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Liberal Party and the Liberal caucus as well wishes the newly appointed Women's Advisory Council well in its deliberations. The joint talent, energy, and commitment of the members who are appointed today should contribute significantly to raising issues and bringing them forward that affect society in general and women in particular.

We look forward to what the government does in fact with the recommendations that come forward.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 30 — An Act respecting Victims of Domestic Violence

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill respecting Victims of Domestic Violence 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.

PRIVILEGE

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege under rule 17 of the *Rules and Procedures* handbook in regard to what is a clear violation of the rules and orders of a committee of this Assembly by a member of this Assembly.

It involves a matter which has recently come to my attention and deals specifically with section 50(3)(f) of The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Board of Internal Economy under directive no. 4 allows each member to receive reimbursement or payment by the Government of Saskatchewan for amounts incurred by the member in respect of duties as a member for postal advertising and other communication expenses.

The committee has further determined and directed that while postage and letterhead are acceptable items for reimbursement, material of a blatantly partisan nature and material which solicits donations to a political party or attendance at political functions are not acceptable items.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a concealed order. This directive is contained in the members' handbook which is distributed to all members. The handbook states very clearly that it is essential that the above items, acceptable items, not be blatantly partisan in nature. Members must be aware that allowances available to them are public funds and they receive these funds to enable them to fulfil their role as representatives of all constituents and not as members of political parties.

Mr. Speaker, on February 15, 1993, the member from Yorkton sent a letter using Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly letterhead and presumably legislative postage, not to all members of his constituency but exclusively to members of the New Democratic Party. The letter itself is rife with inflamed political rhetoric and partisan references.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Yorkton also distributed in the same envelope a document which is entitled *Constituency News*, which is generated by the Yorkton NDP president and secretary in what is a clear and rather flagrant admission of violation of the Board of Internal Economy's directive. The document starts with this sentence:

Here we are again, stuffed in with your M.L.A.'s letter, saving money and getting some constituency information to you!

Mr. Speaker, this statement brags about the fact that this entire partisan mail-out was paid for by taxpayers through the communication allowance and saved money for the New Democratic Party.

And what is constituency information for that member? There are five items detailed, each referring to either a fund-raising event for the NDP or a meeting of the NDP political executive. For instance, there is an item entitled HELP: which requests assistance in selling tickets for a raffle to pay off the debt for the 1991 election campaign. It says:

... tickets are moving slowly ... To help us, we have enclosed a blank ticket and a self addressed envelope. Simply fill in the ticket, along with a cheque for \$20.00 ... and send it to us.

Another item advertises the NDP curling bonspiel; another makes reference to an NDP spring or summer barbecue; another advertises the NDP executive meeting. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that the item that advertises the NDP executive meeting says:

Our executive will meet next ... Monday, March 15th, at 7:30 p.m. at the M.L.A. office to conduct our regular meeting and make our 400 Club ticket draw. (Please plan on joining us.)

The last item is a pitch to support the 1993 NDP membership and donation drive. The document is over the names of the Yorkton NDP president and the party secretary names and phone numbers.

Mr. Speaker, I say again that this is a blatant violation of a directive from a legislative committee by the member from Yorkton. There can be no doubt. As such, Mr. Speaker, the question of privilege arises from the disobedience to rules or order of the House or a committee and contempt for this Assembly.

In the 1982 edition of *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* by Joseph Maingot, the affirmation of this claim is very clear. He states:

Disobedience of rules or orders represents an affront to the dignity of the House and accordingly the House could take action, not simply for satisfaction, but to ensure that the House of Commons is held in the respect necessary for its authority to be vindicated. Without proper respect, the House of Commons could not function. Thus disobedience may well be considered contempt ...

Disobedience of rules or orders is an obvious contempt ...

Mr. Speaker, being in violation of the rules of a committee of this Assembly and that violation being in contempt of this Assembly, we believe a prima facie case of privilege has been established.

Upon your favourable ruling, Mr. Speaker, I will be

moving the following motion. Moved by the member from Moosomin, seconded by the member from Souris-Cannington:

That there be an immediate public convening of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, and that the committee consider, but not limit itself to determining, the following:

- (1) The amount of money expended on postage, letterhead, and sundry expenses involving the February 15, 1993 letter to New Democrats from the member from Yorkton;
- (2) Immediate restitution of the above expenses from the member personally or the NDP constituency association; and
- (3) Immediate and unequivocal apology from the member to the public of Saskatchewan and the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I want to thank the member for delivering his privilege, question of privilege, to my office this morning at 11:28 which was pursuant to rule 6. I would at this time, however, like to hear the views of other members on this question of privilege. And if there are views, I will hear them at this particular time.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how one could be expected to comment with absolutely no advance warning. I have not seen the document, and it is extremely difficult to comment. Perhaps you may want to reserve your ruling to give some of us a chance to review the matter. It doesn't strike me offhand as a violation of privilege, but it's a hard comment to make without seeing the document.

The Speaker: — I have reviewed the matter that has been presented by the member from Moosomin, and without knowing any further evidence, I have some difficulty in coming to the conclusive conclusion that the member does in his first paragraph, where he indicates that: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege in regard to what is a clear violation of the rules and orders of the committee of this Assembly, by a member of the Assembly.

In reading through, and the member himself states on page 2: presumably using legislative postage. That has not been established. And if it has not been legislative postage, then of course we must look at this in another light. It may not be contempt or privilege at all. I don't know that.

I do want to also remind members that in the *Rules and Procedures* manual, under rule 27:

if anything shall come in question touching the conduct or election of any member or his right to hold a seat, he may make a statement . . .

And then it goes on that he shall withdraw as we discuss it. The member is in the House at the present time, and I really, without any further clarification, I

think it is very difficult for the Speaker to rule at this particular time whether or not there has been established a *prima facie* case of privilege or contempt of this legislature.

And it puts the Speaker in a very, very difficult situation. And I think what I will do at this time is to reserve my judgement and ask the member for Yorkton, who has been accused at this particular time, either to make a statement in the House in the very near future or to provide evidence to the Speaker in his office on which the Speaker can make a decision. If that is not forthcoming then in the very near future, possibly tomorrow, I will rule on your case of a *prima facie* case of privilege. I thank the member for bringing it to my attention.

PRIVATE BILLS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No 01 — An Act Respecting The Saskatoon Foundation

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you. At the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will be moving second reading of Bill 01, An Act Respecting the Saskatoon Foundation. And I hope in my remarks I can do something to lower the tension level in this House.

I want to talk very briefly about the Saskatoon Foundation which was established in 1970 by an Act of this legislature. Many people across Saskatchewan are very familiar with charitable giving through their local United Way. Saskatoon, as befits a very unique community in this prairie province, also has a unique foundation which operates in tandem doing similar philanthropic work to the United Way. I refer of course to the Saskatoon Foundation.

The Saskatoon Foundation benefits the people of Saskatoon and area now and for future generations by attracting, managing, and distributing contributions which shape the well-being of the community of Saskatoon. The foundation provides a flexible vehicle for donors with very philanthropic interests and effectively responds to changing community needs through support to registered charitable organizations.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the foundation was originally created through an Act of the legislature in 1970. The board of directors wants to replace the existing Act with a more modern piece of legislation.

(1430)

The new Act, Bill 01, keeps the spirit and intent of the old Act but effects changes which are more appropriate for 1994. For example, at present the board's size is limited to eight members. This does not in the hurry-up, rush-a-day modern work world provide sufficient flexibility for the board to be able to meet it's workload.

Currently they have engaged the services of five

volunteers they are calling consultants who are attending board of directors' meetings. And if Bill 01 is passed, those people will then be able to take their place as full-fledged board of directors for the Saskatoon Foundation. One other thing that will happen with Bill 01, Mr. Speaker, is that the language of the Act will be simplified.

I think it is appropriate, Mr. Speaker, on International Women's Day, to draw your attention to some of the good works done by the Saskatoon Foundation, and I'm going to very briefly tell you about some of those things that focus specifically on the needs and concerns of women, and women and children in the Saskatoon community.

For instance in 1992, the latest year for which I have their annual statement, they provided a grant for the upgrading of emergency lighting and smoke detectors to the Saskatoon Society for the Protection of Children. They assisted children with special needs at the parents' day cooperative. And for the Luther child care association, a child's care in the riding of Saskatoon Wildwood, they provided equipment for a new infant care room, a very modern, very caring and sensitive facility — a definite addition to the city of Saskatoon.

With respect to family and community ventures, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon Foundation has provided a grant to the YWCA of Saskatoon for counselling services for the residents. For the Saskatoon Interval House, a shelter for women who are victims of domestic violence, they have given money to help for renovations to the new home to make it more accessible for the disabled.

Also, they have assisted the Saskatoon Habitat for Humanity, a very unique venture whereby parents of older children who face mental disabilities can still have semi-sheltered living. They have assisted them with their building program.

Drawing to a close on this, with respect to arts and culture, they assist the Saskatoon Music Festival in annual sponsorships, and they have assisted the Saskatoon Native Theatre.

And finally with respect to specifically women's issues, they have provided a scholarship. The Margaret Rouse bursary, College of Nursing bursary is provided annually.

In total, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon Foundation provides well in excess of \$125,000 to various charitable organizations in Saskatoon to allow them to continue to ensure that Saskatoon is the vibrant and wonderful community that it is.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, move that Bill 01, An Act respecting the Saskatoon Foundation be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate Full Gospel Bible Institute

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following my remarks I'll be moving an amendment to the Full Gospel Bible Institute Bill. And I just have a few remarks on the Bill prior to that.

Mr. Speaker, the Full Gospel Bible Institute is located in Eston, Saskatchewan, the community that I'm from myself, Mr. Speaker. It's an important Bible-teaching college located at Eston. Later this year, Mr. Speaker, the Full Gospel Bible Institute of Eston, Saskatchewan, will be holding their 50th anniversary. And I think it's testimony to the length of time that they've been in the province of Saskatchewan and the very good work that they do on behalf of the Christian movement in Saskatchewan.

People from all over Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, Canada, and indeed the world, attend that college at Eston and receive an education based on Christian teachings, Mr. Speaker.

It's my understanding that the Bill will allow for an expansion of their facilities to accommodate more students, Mr. Speaker. Speaking with the people in charge out there at the Bible college, it's my understanding that over a course of the next few years the expansion will be something in the magnitude of \$1 million expansion to this facility, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Eston and surrounding area are extremely proud of this facility and extremely proud of the record that they have of teaching from that Bible college. They have the very, very full support of the community of Eston. The town of Eston passed a resolution outlining that very distinctly, Mr. Speaker. And I believe that the people of Saskatchewan should be supportive of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, and I anticipate that support.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move An Act to amend An Act to incorporate Full Gospel Bible Institute be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills. So moved.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Resolution No. 27 — International Women's Day

Ms. Stanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving this motion that on this International Women's Day, this Assembly commit itself to furthering the equality and well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

I am honoured in moving this private members'

motion on this International Women's Day, March 8. This is a day for us to reflect on women's struggles for equality and to celebrate their many achievements. It is also a day for us to recognize that there are many barriers that still prevent or impede women's progress in obtaining what is rightfully ours — full equality.

Mr. Speaker, today I want to reflect on the government's progress to date, and then to also relate some ways in which we can move to eventually reach our goal of full equality.

Our first priority has been to maintain current levels of crisis counselling, support services, and treatment programs relating to family violence and violence against women. Mr. Speaker, we also recognize that there is much work to be done in the justice system to make it more responsive to the needs of women and children who have experienced violence.

There is no longer a limit on the period for bringing civic action for damages resulting from sexual assault. As a result of changes in legislation, victims of sexual assault are no longer faced with a strict time frame for making application to the victims' fund. And in addition, as we saw today, the Minister of Justice introduced The Victims of Domestic Violence Act today in this legislature and we are proud of that accomplishment.

I have to tell you that in my constituency of Cut Knife-Lloydminster we have people voluntarily working very hard in this area. The Interval Home in Lloydminster is chaired by a woman called Val Shockey who is working extensively hard. They have just done some renovations to their facility. And all this was done by volunteer funds and volunteer work.

But also the government is supporting a number of initiatives designed to prevent violence. And here's the theme of prevention again. Just as I mentioned yesterday when I spoke about the child's advocate, our objective is to prevent some of the things that are going on.

Here is some of our services. Victims' services in the Department of Justice and the Department of Education, Training and Employment are planning to set up peer counselling groups in high schools across the province to deal with dating violence. This is a very important initiative because patterns in relationships between men and women are formed very early in life. And I think that if this kind of counselling occurs, we can prevent some of the things that make our life unbearable as women.

The Saskatchewan Association of Broadcasters in consultation with government and community agencies is developing a series of public service announcements.

School-age children need the opportunity to discuss issues related to violence in the home. The Department of Education has developed optional units for the provincial health curriculum for grades 7 to 9 which deal with family violence. Being a former

teacher, I know how important awareness and education is early in life.

Saskatchewan's action plan for children outlines a process that will include government, non-government agencies, communities, families, and individuals in ensuring that our children will grow up in environments that support their well-being and enable them to reach their potential.

Mr. Speaker, this government continues to work towards policies which will foster economic independence and provide a strong foundation for equal participation of women in the economic life of the province. The new Occupational Health and Safety Act which was passed in the last session is one of its kind to deal with harassment and violence in the workplace.

Operating grants to child care centres were increased for the first time since 1986. The number of licensed child care spaces was increased by 700 since 1991. There are 10 teen-infant centres providing a total of 114 child care spaces.

There are mandatory employment equity plans in all government departments. In September of 1993 employment equity programs were extended to all provincial Crown corporations and government agencies.

Our NDP caucus office boasts a clause in their collective agreement that covers sexual, racial, and personal harassment — the only such clause written into a contract in Saskatchewan.

Minimum wage has been increased to 5.35 an hour. Labour Standards Act is under review and specific consultations have been with members of the women's community. This Act is especially important to women since they are trapped in the pink collar ghetto, the jobs which are included in service, clerical, and sales jobs.

A number of enhancements to the social assistance plan and the Family Income Plan have been introduced.

New Careers Corporation provides social assistance recipients with opportunities to upgrade their education through the Saskatchewan skills development program.

Northern food allowance has been increased for all recipients living north of the 54th parallel.

Mr. Speaker, changes to The Family Maintenance Act ensures that the government cannot refuse social assistance to disabled adults on the basis that their parents are able to support them.

We are committed to improving the health of Saskatchewan women. A minister's advisory committee on family planning has been exploring approaches to reduce unwanted pregnancies among teens. A toll free line on reproductive health is being

established. Committees will be established in 1994 to review whether and how midwifery should be registered and regulated.

Women's specific needs are being reflected in needs assessments made to district health boards. Greater funding has been provided to the breast cancer screening program to expand accessibility.

And the Human Rights Code now protects people from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, family status, and receipt of public assistance.

But even though much has been done, the struggle continues. And while much has changed for women since the turn of the century, women today continue to work for fair wages and working conditions, as well as for a better quality of life.

(1445)

To give you an example. In Saskatchewan in 1992, women working full time for a full year earned an average of 71 cents for every dollar earned by a man. Women's jobs are clustered in the pink collar ghetto — sales, service, and clerical work. Women continue to suffer sexual harassment in the workplace. Most part-time workers are women. The majority of minimum-wage earners are women.

Many parents, especially women, are forced to balance the competing demands of work and family responsibilities. I don't think there's a woman in this Assembly that can't identify with that. I know my years of being a teacher for 23 years and balancing the act of raising a family and being mother, being a teacher, and being a community worker was stressful to say the least.

Many NGOs (non-governmental organizations) in my constituency are also concerned with women's issues as they apply to their clients. The Libbie Young Centre under direction of Margo Hines, CEO (chief executive officer), deals with persons with mental illness. I raise the concern that often persons with mental illness, and these are women, need part-time work. Funding today is only available to full-time workers. I think we can see why we would want funding for part-time work as these folks struggle to become part of our workforce.

Currently the Libbie Young Centre has a residential and an apartment living program. In the future we need a semi-independent living program to round out the facilities available. We hope we can move to this future step soon.

Also, Mr. Speaker, salaries and staff for this facility are low, and of course most of the staff are women. I'm told by Margo Hines, but also by folks at the Twin Rivers Health District, that there still remains a stigma on mental illness and especially as it relates to women.

More needs to be done in education and awareness to encourage people in the need of help, to get it, and to

make people aware of the fact that people with mental illness need respect and support.

So, Mr. Speaker, our goal is to build a province of strong and supportive communities which value women's work, which respect women's choices, and celebrate women's diversity. A province in which there is economic and social justice for all.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I move this motion:

That on this International Women's Day, this Assembly commit itself to furthering the equality and well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

Seconded by the member from Regina Wascana Plains. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Hamilton: — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to rise and second the motion before us, that on this International Women's Day, we commit ourselves to furthering the equality and the well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

I begin my comments with a quote that was used on the title page of the task force on women's issues. It was a task force that I chaired when I began my work as a member of Regina City Council. A quote from Gustav Geiger: "The position of women in a society provides an exact measure of the development of that society."

Since the 1970 Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women and the 1975 declaration of the international year of the woman, there has been an increasing emphasis on women's issues throughout the country. These issues have remained the same over the last number of years and we continue to further our work on those issues.

It's widely recognized that these issues are not only women's issues but family issues and community issues, as the quote suggests. It also brings a new light and meaning to the phrase from J.S. Woodsworth: "What we desire for ourselves we wish for all."

Today we move beyond this statement to commit ourselves to work for changes that can make this a reality. Over the years the issues have remained the same. They remain constant in our lives to work for a betterment of the quality of life and basic living standards for all women in our province.

When many of us take for granted housing, the provision of water and sewer services, we remember others who were in search of shelter or who have to haul their water to and from their homes to provide the daily living chores of their work life and their workplace. Over the past few years we've begun to dedicate our work to those issues and have spent about \$80 million in the provision of social housing and housing to address the needs of shelter for women. And we've looked to the North to try and

provide about \$6.2 million for water and sewer services.

When many of us live in safe and loving environments, we remember our sisters who live in violent situations or who in escaping those violent situations must also leave their homes, their belongings, and sometimes their children. We can only but try to understand the fear and the emotional upheaval that these women and children live with on a daily basis.

We put first priority on maintaining current levels of crisis counselling, support services, and treatment programs; recognize that there is much work to be done to make the justice system more responsive to their needs, and put our full support behind a number of initiatives designed to break the cycle of violence and develop long-term preventative strategies that will improve the lives of our citizens.

In an era when many women are free to follow an educational and career path of their choice, we acknowledge the feminine face of economic marginalization and of poverty.

So, Mr. Speaker, not just today, but every day we recommit our lives to service that will work toward policies which foster economic independence and provide a strong foundation for equal participation of women in the economic life of our province.

Legislation dealing with harassment and violence in the workplace, increasing operating grants to child care centres, adding to the number of licensed child care spaces available to parents, mandatory employment equity plans in government departments and Crowns are a few steps to further us along the path to economic equality and justice.

In our health lives when we enjoy access to quality health care and preventative health care initiatives, we think of those that are working hard in our health care reforms to provide quality access to health care services.

We must now move further down the road of health care reform, down the road of Labour Standards and Trade Union Act reform and continue our struggle to lobby for pay equity. The best preventative and curative health care, the ability to make the best life choices for our circumstances, the improvement of quality of life and attainment of economic justice for all women is our goal.

The first step is to focus on this for today and pledge our work every day to achieve this goal. The strong support of the motion before us is the beginning. I am pleased and proud to stand with my colleague, the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster, and second the motion before this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure also for me also to stand in my place and

speak on this motion, asking that the Assembly commit itself to further the equality and the well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

International Women's Day has been so designated as an opportunity for people to reflect on the struggles that women have endured and the goals that women have achieved throughout the world. Saskatchewan is home to many successful women, Mr. Speaker, including I would say, the Lieutenant Governor and physicist, Sylvia Fedoruk; two Canadian . . . two-time Canadian curling champions, the Sandra Peterson team; former Governor General, Jeanne Sauv  ; author, Maggie Siggins; and singer, Joni Mitchell.

Mr. Speaker, these are all Saskatchewanians but . . . well not a Saskatchewanian, we also saw the first woman prime minister in the history of Canada in Kim Campbell, which indicates, Mr. Speaker, the long, hard road that the women have fought does seem to be bearing fruit.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is but a small example of the highly accomplished women who came from Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I do not stand here and claim to be an expert on equality issues. In fact at times the efforts of equal rights groups actually confound me at times, Mr. Speaker. It seems that everyone is in search of equality. Keep in mind that I fully endorse the concept of equality. What I am not so sure of is the game of catch-up that various groups are in search of. And while I agree that many have been oppressed for all too many years, I do not think that we should restrict some in the favour of others.

And let me be more specific, Mr. Speaker. In the past, women were shut out of many careers and professions. Some women could not get ahead in their chosen career because of sexist attitudes and discrimination, and we men have to accept our full responsibility for some of that blame, Mr. Speaker. Those who did succeed managed to do so through hard, hard work. It was a struggle and no one denies this.

However today, Mr. Speaker, women are given priority for some jobs because of employment equity programs, and the question I would say, is this right? Is this what the women want and is this what women call equality? Well I'm not so sure that it is. I think that women want to compete for those jobs equally. They want equal time and recognition for their accomplishments. And, Mr. Speaker, we must allow them to have that. We must allow equality in their pursuit of equal opportunity for the positions that are there.

The other question I would ask: are quotas what women want? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker. Women have come too far to be given a job just based on their sex. They want the job because they deserve it. And they want it because they are a candidate with the proper qualifications to ask for that job. And I agree with that concept.

Mr. Speaker, we must be careful that we, in the quest of equality, do not engage in reverse discrimination. Mr. Speaker, I believe in equality and have always had an equal relationship with my wife and my three daughters.

As a government back-bencher, I was particularly proud of one particular program that was designed with women in mind — all women, and not just career women. I'm referring, Mr. Speaker, to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, a plan that the NDP essentially destroyed. The majority of people enrolled in the program were women who had no other retirement option. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that out of the women enrolled, the majority were home-makers, residing on the farm, or wives of small-business men.

The NDP defence of eliminating this program was that it was too expensive. Well, Mr. Speaker, pension experts have since stated that the NDP government could have easily cut the cost of this Saskatchewan Pension Plan with just some administrative changes. Essentially the minister of Finance could have eliminated the expense but he could have saved the plan.

And I find it strange that this same government is now bringing a motion forward on furthering the equality and well-being of women in Saskatchewan — the same government that set the women of the province back when they destroyed the pension plan. Mr. Speaker, maybe now is the time to reinstate the Saskatchewan Pension Plan using the windfall dollars that the province will enjoy due to the federal cancellation of the \$600 cash credit for seniors.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to recognize the efforts and achievements of women across Canada and indeed the world. Our caucus, Mr. Speaker, joins with the government and the women across the world in celebrating this day. And I thank you, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1500)

Ms. Crofford: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to step out on a limb here. I think International Women's Day is a good day to send a message to our brothers in the legislature.

Even when women achieve this level that we have by being elected to this legislature, we are not always taken seriously. Our perspectives are different, and therefore they are not always valued.

To loosely quote Einstein, we can't solve problems at the same level we created them. So I urge my fellow legislators to rededicate ourselves to creating justice for 52 per cent of our population.

And I ask you to remember that when women are oppressed, sexually harassed, beaten, raped, and left in poverty, that these are your mothers, your sisters,

your children, your neighbours, and your partners.

We all need to rededicate ourselves in order to create a more caring and equal community, and the place to start is here today. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to members of the Assembly. There are occasions on which to rise and speak about issues of importance in our society, and while all are important, some are more personally significant than others. Today being International Women's Day is a time of considerable significance for us all, both male and female, in this place of democracy. And it is a pleasure for me to speak in favour of this motion.

There are times in this Assembly when I was engaging in dialogues such as I was last evening with the Minister of Education, or when I met with the Minister of Health recently, or exchanged debate with the Minister of Finance, times when the cogency of women in leadership roles is illuminated. And it is at those moments when the progress of women, and women in politics, comes alive. And the character that has come to our democracy as a result of women being in the midst, becomes more clear and more distinct than usual.

What is important to me is not simply the statistical evidence that women are more involved in the political process. Certainly it is significant that 18 per cent of politicians in Ottawa are women, the highest percentage of any G-7 country. It is important that those numbers are twice what they were five years ago, and it is critical that we continue to strive — in fact very, very critical that we continue to strive to achieve a greater balance in representation.

In Saskatchewan, women comprise 19 per cent of our legislature. But statistics are equally valuable for what they do not say. We must work to ensure that all parties reflect women's importance to the process, to facilitate easier entry for women into the political arena. And we must examine the workings of our Legislative Assembly so articulately addressed by the member before me, to ensure that the structure itself is not prohibitive to having women involved.

Greater predictability in the sessional calendar for example, Mr. Speaker. Sitting hours more sensitive to women with family obligations. Such things are critical to being able to have women, particularly those with small children, participate. The measure of commitment to having women involved will be reflected by the reform that takes place to facilitate that involvement.

Women have struggled before us to pave the way for our participation at the level we now engage in in Saskatchewan politics, but the political arena is perhaps the last frontier on which the struggle is taking place.

What all of us must recognize today are the struggles

taking place around the world by our sisters — struggles for equality, struggles for safety, for dignity, and for opportunity. And when we in Canada think of women's issues, we correctly focus on issues of child care, violence against women, pay equity, and equal opportunity for employment. What we tend to forget is the distance we have put between ourselves and women in other parts of the world, women whose daily struggles still involve the search for food and a safe shelter for their families.

Today we must join together, all of us, men and women, as one to salute the courage being shown by women who stand in ration lines in Russia, who pick up the pieces of their war-torn lives in Bosnia and Somalia and the Middle East. It is women who have traditionally tended the sick and provided the emotional strength upon which families have rallied and relied for their survival, and these are the strengths we must salute and revere in our global society.

In Canada we have the opportunity as women to take our places in the roles of leadership which can have an impact on the policies of our communities, our provinces, our nation, and indeed the global society. And every step forward, Mr. Speaker, is not just a step taken here at home; it is a step into the future, a footstep in which our sons and daughters will follow to shape the world as a place of equal opportunity for all.

As we progress, we must experience an evolution in assessing our own value. Women have always attached a different set of values to their work than men have and that has been part of our problem. Too much of what we have done as makers of homes and nurturers of children have been simply considered duty by many, for which there has been no recognition and no monetary support. All of what men have done in the name of providing resources to those homes from the outside has been considered worthy of monetary reward. This is what we must continue to work to change.

According to United Nations, women make up more than 50 per cent of the world's population, but we put in more than two-thirds of the working hours. Women grow half of the food but receive one-tenth of the wages and own just 1 per cent of the world's property. One study has estimated the value of work done worldwide by women but for which they received no money, and this was valued at some \$4 trillion.

In Canada, estimates show that working women put in between 25 and 35 hours per week on caring for their families, doing housework, child care, running errands, and volunteer work. Those are hours which prevent many women from committing more time to jobs and careers and have, to some extent, kept them on the lower rungs of corporate structures, away from increased educational opportunities.

And in Saskatchewan, women play a very significant role in our agricultural economy for which they do not receive sufficient credit. In fact the latest breakdown in the 1991 census wipes out some long-held myths

about Saskatchewan agriculture. While farming has been regarded as a male-dominated industry, the figure tells a very different story. One in five Saskatchewan farms is operated by a woman. On a national basis, women make up 26 per cent of all farm operations, numbering 100,000 of the country's 390,000 farmers.

Today is a time to celebrate the enormous contribution farm women have made to saving so many farm families and family farms through their hard work on and off farm, their ingenuity in starting so many of the diversification projects that supported operations during tough times, and for being such dedicated advocates for rural Saskatchewan when its institutions have come under siege.

It is important to acknowledge the significance of the contribution of women as well to the world of small business. Our future economic success as a province and a nation will be tremendously enhanced by the increasing level of involvement by women as entrepreneurs. What often goes unnoticed is the partnership efforts by so many women who contribute long hours for little pay to their family business which is owned and operated by the male head of the family, particularly where many Canadian immigrants are involved.

There have been many victories claimed by women's movements over the past few years, and each of those victories is shared by our whole community because of the impact it has on how we view one another as human beings, how we value the potential of the individual regardless of sex or race or other factors which were once considered cause of prejudice.

The members of women's movements throughout the world have strived to offer all people — not just women — safer, more productive, and more fulfilling roles in society. The spin-offs of their crusades have provided increased protection for children, for the elderly, for disabled, and for other minorities whose voices needed to be heard.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have only begun the battles. One in six Canadian women live below the poverty line; about a quarter of single mothers who work full time live in poverty; and the poverty rate climbs to 75 per cent for single moms who work part time. We must work together to form policies which encompass long-term vision to address these inequities, which provide access to increased education and quality jobs for those women raising children on their own. And men of course are raising children on their own as well, but today we're paying tribute to women.

Forty to sixty per cent of women worldwide experience violence in the home, and we must move to take action that will eradicate this threat to women wherever they may be. And I commend this government for taking initiative to address many of the problems which went unattended for far too long in Saskatchewan. And I hope that this, our legislature, can leave its mark on history as one that moved to add to the security of women through legislation which

will curb and ultimately end violence in their lives.

Fellow members, Canada and Saskatchewan have the capacity to set world standards for the way in which women are treated in our society. It is not simply a question of resources but an issue of commitment to change, to reform, and to evolution. It is not simply enough to be better at recognizing, better at developing and promoting the potential of women in our society; what is important is that when we leave this Assembly at the end of each day and ultimately at the end of our terms in office, that we know that we have done everything within our power to promote the safe, peaceful, and fulfilled existence of every individual in our society.

Today as we acknowledge International Women's Day, let us renew our pledge each to one another, to the people of Saskatchewan, and in particular to the women of today and the children of tomorrow, to advance, promote, and protect the rights of all women throughout the world.

Mrs. Teichrob: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege, Mr. Speaker, to support this motion moved and seconded by my colleagues from Cut Knife-Lloydminster and Regina Wascana Plains. Since our attitudes towards other members of our society are shaped by our own experiences, on this International Women's Day I'd like to ask the indulgence of the members of the Assembly as I reflect on the background which has contributed to the viewpoints that I bring to this debate.

More than 100 years ago, when my grandparents and great-grandparents came to this province and up until the beginning of the Second World War, they worked as families — farming, trapping, working in the forest, saw mills, commercial fishing in northern Saskatchewan. And these were all family enterprises where the men, women and children worked together.

Then at the end of the '30s and during the war my father was serving in the militia and was in Europe for six years. So my mother retrained herself and made sure that she made plans to be self-sufficient in the event that he didn't return. And this was not really a socially acceptable thing for women to do in those days, particularly when he did, fortunately, return, that she didn't return to the kitchen immediately.

So I grew up in my formative years with that as part of my background. Then we farmed and it was again a family endeavour. And we worked by the adage that many hands make light work and everyone pitched in according to their ability and availability without respect to age or gender. There wasn't a gender bias in the workload; whoever was there, on hand and able, did what needed to be done.

(1515)

And in terms of the development of the organized women's movement, it seems that it's more a matter of timing that I was always rowing upstream. In the '50s

and '60s, I worked out of the home and then — when it wasn't particularly acceptable to do that — and then post Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer, when women were engaged all over North America in particular burning various articles of their clothing in bonfires, I was staying at home with a young family and baking bread.

When my children were more mature and I became more active in community work and public life, I had the benefit of support and wise counsel from many mentors, men and women included. But I do recall in 1975, it was then the United Nations Year of the Woman, if you recall, and there was a saying around, why not a woman. That was my first nomination to public office, which took place at a public meeting, and I was nominated and somebody . . . It was the first time a woman had been nominated to the position and somebody of course from the back row sung out, why not.

So that was the beginning of my public career. I'd like to just tell you another contribution that a man made to my political career. And the reason that I'm standing here today is in 1976 we had an annual meeting of an organization that I was the chairman of for the province scheduled, and in the morning of the meeting I woke up for . . . this is a story for another day — but I was unable to see. People were coming from all over the province for this meeting and I didn't want to let people down so I asked the secretary of the meeting to identify any speakers throughout the day because I wouldn't be able to see who they were and we'd get through it somehow.

At the end of the meeting one of the participants of the meeting, an older farmer, came up to me and said: you have trouble with your eyes, don't you? And I thought I had covered it up and pulled it off so well. I said, well I do have a little problem, and he said, I've got some advice for you. I said yes, what's that? He said: well blind in one eye, can't see out of the other, you should go into politics. So here I am.

First there were a number of years in farm politics and in municipal politics in roles where there are increasingly more women but have traditionally been posts that were held by men.

But there are those who say that we as women have not made enough advances since 1927 in Canada, when women were officially recognized as persons. Those people would say that while the achievements of the women whom I named in my earlier statement are noteworthy, that is not enough.

Enough is a relative term, Mr. Speaker. Personally I'm not a supporter of percentages or quotas or tokens. What I do believe in is a kinder and gentler society and workplace, one which provides support and flexibility for young women and men as they educate and train themselves and take their places in the world of work. A society where time for quality family life and child nurturing is compatible with other goals, because I do believe that the quality of our society can only be as high as the quality of our homes.

So what is enough progress? In the Canadian context we need to continue to work towards equal pay for work of equal value; access to quality child care; and freedom from poverty and violence. Much has been accomplished but we need to do more. But it does behove us to remember that what we commemorate today is International Women's Day. We need to look beyond our own perspective and think of the women of Bosnia and Somalia, fearing for the safety of their families amid the violence of war. We need to think of the millions of women in underdeveloped countries where over a third of families are headed by women, who will spend every waking hour of this day carrying water, foraging for fuel for heat and cooking, if indeed they have anything to cook; spending their day, Mr. Speaker, on surviving.

Mr. Speaker, I have five grandchildren, four of whom are girls. When I reflect on where I've been, this is what I wish for them: freedom from violence and the threat of violence in a peaceful world; tolerance, compassion, understanding in personal and community relationships; the opportunity for them to develop their God-given talents through access to lifelong learning; an opportunity for their contributions to private or public life to be accepted with respect and without discrimination.

These are the hopes I have for my own family, Mr. Speaker. I would wish no less for all the women of the world, all the daughters of the universe on this International Women's Day. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Stanger: — I'd like to introduce some guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Stanger: — I'd like to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly, two very important people in my life. On this special day I welcome Dawn Stanger, my daughter, and Sonya Stanger, my granddaughter. And they have come to listen to the speeches made in the legislature. And I'd like all of you to welcome them as they . . . And there's Sonya waving.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Resolution No. 27 — International Women's Day (continued)

Ms. Murray: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege for me to say a few words to honour women and their achievements on this International Women's Day.

This is a day to celebrate all women and their accomplishments. Women who, as my aboriginal friends say, do hold up half the sky.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to briefly acknowledge the contributions of just a few women in Canada and Saskatchewan; women who I think are excellent role models for Canada's youth. Some of these women are famous, their names known to us all. But the qualities that made them so well known to us are those we recognize and admire in all people, women and men.

I'd like to begin on a personal note by recognizing my women colleagues in this Assembly. Their particular contribution to the quality of debate, their commitment to consensus making, and their fulfilment of their responsibilities to their constituents and the people of Saskatchewan is admirable.

There are four women I'd like to make special mention of, one an athlete, one an intellectual, one an environmentalist, and one a care giver. As others have done before me in this House, I too must pay my tribute to Sandra Peterson and her rink for their marvellous achievement in winning for a second time, the Canadian women's curling championship. What I admire particularly in Ms. Peterson is her ability to perform supremely well under great pressure. She brings credit to Regina and Saskatchewan, and we wish her and her team every success in the world championships in Germany next month.

Speaking of Canadian women on the world scene, among readers there can be no better-known talent than Margaret Atwood. Highly intelligent, quite independent, witty and articulate, this author of many best-selling novels is renowned for her humour and her ability to describe the world as it really is.

Preserving that world, preserving our environment, is the life commitment of another impressive woman, Elizabeth May. Working inside and outside of government in Ottawa, she has fought tenaciously for the protection of our environment and continues to do so with consistency and courage.

Mr. Speaker, here in Saskatchewan, here in Fort Qu'Appelle is another remarkable woman I greatly admire, Jean Goodwill. Jean is a woman of tremendous energy and integrity and her work in the area of health care, particularly with aboriginal women, is widely admired as her many awards will attest.

Mr. Speaker, this day has been chosen to commemorate women, and I have very briefly mentioned a few. Think of what we could say about such women as Mother Teresa, Indira Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, Gro Brundtlund, or Roberta Bondar.

As I said, this day has been chosen to celebrate women, but women do not restrict their achievements or their struggles to one day a year any more than men

do. But rather, women follow their goals and dreams day and night through all the seasons.

The qualities I celebrate in the women I've mentioned — courage, integrity, energy, intelligence, commitment, humour, and compassion — are also evident in women who are not as well known: the woman who teaches your children, the woman who pioneers her place in a non-traditional work role, the woman who provides your health care, or the woman who is your partner.

We celebrate and recognize all such women today by supporting the motion before us. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am 47 years old and I have seen tremendous changes with respect to the advancement of women in our society. And I want to start out my remarks today by remembering a slogan from my 20's and 30's, perhaps an old slogan but an important slogan, and that is: the personal is political.

We tend, I think, as we have advanced or as we think we have advanced with respect to women's issues, we tend to forget that very important thing. And I want to start out my remarks by first of all making a few personal comments.

The first comment I want to make is that I do wish that the rules of this Assembly allowed one to be able to use the actual names of the representatives when one is referring to those representatives in speeches. Since I can't, but since I do strongly believe that the personal is political, I want to start out by reading into the record the names of the constituencies of the 13 very strong, very fine women from two political parties who represent women in this legislature.

We have, Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Broadway; Regina North West; the member from Bengough-Milestone; Melfort; Regina Lake Centre; Regina Wascana Plains; Saskatoon Greystone, the Leader of the Third Party; Saskatoon Wildwood, Saskatoon Westmount, Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, Regina Hillsdale, Cut Knife-Lloydminster, and Saskatoon River Heights.

Thirteen women, Mr. Speaker, the most women this legislature has ever seen. We have, I think, definitely changed the tone of the business suit and tie attire in this House and it is my hope that we will change the tone with respect to the advancement of women, and women and their children in this province during our tenure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — The second bit of, personal is political, statement that I wish to make, Mr. Speaker, is to acknowledge the very major contributions by my mother. My mother right now is in Moose Jaw dying of Alzheimer's disease. During her life, though, she was a strong person. She raised six children on her own

having to rely on the public dole, having to rely on welfare, because she was a widow. But nevertheless she was able to bring up six children with a sense of pride and dignity, and to convince them that they had a right to stand tall and proud in this society. And to convince them that they had a duty to carry on the values and concerns that she shared with us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1530)

Ms. Lorje: — As I said, Mr. Speaker, the personal is political. We are slowly but surely gaining power in this country, in this world, politically and economically. I think we have to take a look, though, at the whole situation as indeed my sisters who have spoken before me have said very eloquently. We need to look at the whole international situation. We need to look at the national situation and the provincial situation.

We have been fortunate, through a series of social democratic governments in this province, to be able to introduce some fairly strong, fairly progressive measures that have advanced the cause of women's rights. In that venture, the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) and the NDP have been aided mightily by very strong, very active women's advocacy groups. And I wish to thank them now, Mr. Speaker, for the work that they have done in terms of keeping governments of this country on track and focused and concerned about women's issues.

Although we have managed over the years to introduce some legislative and program changes to improve the situation for women, in fact, unfortunately, right now the situation for all too many women is getting worse, not getting better.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that is because we're seeing an incredible amount of economic restructuring all across the world, over which we have little or no control. We are seeing the forces of globalization and continentalism continuing to chip away at our base in this country. We have to acknowledge that economic restructuring, though, and not simply engage in hand-wringing. And we have to decide what we can do about it because despite the financial difficulties in this province and in this country, despite the growing concentration of economic power in the hands of fewer and fewer people, we have to — we must — do something.

The issue for most women today, Mr. Speaker, is very clear and very simple — it's the lack of power that is directly associated with the economic realities of this world. And that lack of power, those economic realities, lead to poverty in this world and most particularly in this country, since I wish to focus my remarks on the Canadian scene today.

As the member from Saskatoon River Heights pointed out, it is 67 years since the original person's case that said: yes indeed, women are persons before the law. It is 50 years since the first CCF-NDP government was

elected on this continent.

During that time, we've seen many changes, we've been able to have many advances. We've seen, for instance, the creation of a great deal of strong, universal social programs. We have also seen the creation of the solid, state-supported means of funding them. But now we are seeing that those advances are being eroded, and we realize that we have to move beyond universality; we have to start honing in on our programs, targeting them, and making sure that the people who have the real needs can be the beneficiaries of those programs. We can no longer afford the luxury of universal social programs that merely maintain the status quo of poverty for too many women and children in this province.

As I have said earlier, Mr. Speaker, with respect to dealing with the real issue, the feminization of poverty in many ways, while we've implemented some changes, all we've done is kissed the wounds. We have not really dealt with the basic issue. Forty-one per cent of the case-load of our social assistance in this province is people in single-parent families — that's women and children. In this country one in six children grow up poor. We have to find some way of dealing with that.

I do not ascribe to the view that the only good social program is and must necessarily be a universal one. In many ways, universality was a useful thing and a necessary thing. Certainly when the people of our province were much poorer, when the middle class of our province was much poorer, we needed those broad, universal programs.

But now, as a way of maintaining the support for our programs, as a way of co-opting people into the universal programs, it's a very expensive notion. In Canada right now — and I find this a shameful statistic, and I hope that all members of this House on all sides will take account of it and will even listen to the fact that I'm quoting from a very right-wing institute, the Fraser Institute; even the Fraser Institute recognizes and acknowledges this reality, and so must we — in Canada well over \$22 billion of transfer payments from the federal government to individuals last year, from the federal government to Canadian families, over 22 billion went to Canadian families whose incomes are above the national average. That's one of the problems and the dark side of universality, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously we need certain basic universal programs. Public education, access to hospital services, medicare, certain recreation services, policing services, and so forth — these things need to be universal. We need to have them to be universal in order to sustain public support for them. We need them to be universal as part of the contract that we as legislators have, our social contract with the people of this province to provide good governance, and also as recognition of basic human needs. Regardless of income, we know that certain basic universal programs must not and cannot be compromised by fate or whimsy.

But having said that, Mr. Speaker, as I look at the statistics for too many women and children in this province today, I have to say that the time has come that all programs, all social programs, do not need to be nor should they be universal. We need to consider the very special needs of limited groups of people in this province.

I think it is time for us to get back, in this party, to our basic socialist roots — not our social democratic roots but our socialist roots — and remind ourselves that one of our basic mottos is: from each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her need. And we have women and children in this province who have a great need to be able to be given the means to get out of the poverty trap, to be able to hold their heads up high with respect and dignity in this province.

As our affluence has grown in this province, it seems to me unfortunately our neighbourliness has shrunk. The personal acts of kindness, the cooperatives, the early government ventures that meant so much to this province — these things have been changing, most particularly in the '80s and early '90s. We no longer see at a personal level or at a political level such a great desire by Saskatchewan people to help each other through adversity. And we need to figure out a way to get back to that kinder and gentler time.

I grew up in a Saskatchewan where the legend was that the towns were established at exactly the distance you could drive a team of horses, the notion being that the light would always shine through and guide you in a blizzard. I grew up in a Saskatchewan where people took great pride in being neighbours, in helping the poor widow lady down the block, and so forth. That Saskatchewan has changed.

We see now unfortunately it picked up steam in the '80s when we saw the forces of Reaganism and Thatcherism, and to my great shame Thatcher was a woman but still that did not prevent her from endorsing a philosophy that caused a great deal of damage to women in this country and her own country.

We see unfortunately a tendency for too many people to give personal attribution to their success, to focus only on their own greed, to have the attitude that, I'm all right, Jack, now shove off the boat for the rest of them. We need to reverse that. We need to start to deal with the basic women's issues that are surely, I would suggest, the most important issues if we are to have a strong future in this province.

You know, in Canada we spend an incredible amount on our income transfer programs. Six million people, one-quarter of the population, depends on cheques from the government to live. As I said, unfortunately far too much of that is going perhaps to people whose family incomes are already above average. We see far too many workers in the poverty industry. We have, for instance, over 85,000 people working on government transfer programs at all different levels.

That's more people than we have defending this country, Mr. Speaker.

Every two workers in Canada are supporting another potential worker with some kind of income support. We have to change that. And we're only going to do that if we start to focus on the real issues and start to focus on properly stopping poverty.

My suggestions for that, Mr. Speaker, on International Women's Day, are relatively straightforward and simple, though perhaps not everyone would agree with them. I think, for instance, that we need to be moving into a universal child care program in this country. One in six children in Canada grow up poor. Single mothers are unable to work if they do not have adequate and appropriate child care.

For the majority of single mothers, they do not have a strong family support system where they can take their children. That means that they are going to have to rely either on private day care spaces or state-sponsored child care spaces. Obviously my option would be that we would have a strong, state-sponsored, universal child care program.

I would like to remind some of the members opposite that in 10 years, while they were in power, they put in absolutely no new money into day care. And you can't argue that women should get out and work and support themselves and get off welfare, and at the same time not provide the means to have adequate and appropriate care for their children while they are working in the paid labour force.

I think another thing we need to do, Mr. Speaker, is move towards greater equality in the job market. Sixty per cent of the poor in this country are women. Two-thirds of Canadian women work but they face a tremendous wage gap, and we have to come to grips with that and we have to resolve that. We need to make our fight against unemployment a top priority. We need to have a fairer tax system.

You know, I noted that in the last federal budget there were some measures that did limit some tax loopholes, but I still find it passingly curious that a business lunch is considered an appropriate expenditure, but funding child care is not.

We need, Mr. Speaker, to have real and adequate social program reforms. In this sense, I would like to point out to all members of the House, with a sense of pride, that this government in this past budget was unique and alone amongst Canadian governments. With the budget, we brought in a 9.3 per cent increase in the Social Services budget. We were the only government in all of Canada to bring in an increase in Social Services. We didn't do that just so that we could encourage more people to be on welfare. We did that so that we could have strong and solid measures to fight poverty.

The Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Education have announced the children's action plan and those measures will go a long way towards

providing decent supports for children and ending the feminization of poverty.

Seems to me another thing we need to do, Mr. Speaker, is give some incentive to the women who are now on welfare. In this sense, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that as we're having our discussions with the federal minister, Minister Axworthy, regarding the reform of the social safety net, that one of the things we need to strongly consider is the whole question of a guaranteed annual income; a guaranteed annual income for women that will encourage their effort and initiative and allow them to be able to get out and find the kinds of jobs that we all hope that they will be able to get that will provide them with dignity.

(1545)

I think another thing we need to do is focus on the training and education of young women. We have to do something to change young women's early socialization. I would like at this point also, with respect to training and education, to comment on something that one of our Crown corporations has done that is a solid and practical thing in terms of assisting women.

You know, in 1989, at Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal many young women engineering students were massacred in what has now been called the Montreal massacre. Marc Lepine took a gun and shot them down simply because he disagreed with women who he thought were nothing but feminists trying to take away his jobs.

Well in response, engineers all across this country started to focus on the kinds of things they could do to make the engineering profession a bit more attractive to women and a bit more humane. I would like to at this time note that it is in this country, National Engineering Week. And one of our Crown corporations, SaskPower, over the past number of years has been developing numerous programs to empower young women, in particular in the math and science programs, through school partnerships, scholarship programs, and indeed through their hiring policies.

I'd like to congratulate them because in 1993 they were the recipient of the Canadian Engineering Memorial Foundation Corporate Award. This is a very prestigious award, Mr. Speaker, and recognizes corporations across Canada which make significant contribution to promoting and advancing women in engineering positions. And I congratulate SaskPower for their initiatives and their leadership in that.

Mr. Speaker, I've sort of given a fairly wide-ranging point of view with respect to International Women's Day. I want to close off by simply saying, the thing we need to do is to focus on where we're going to be, not today but 20 years from now. We need to take a look at the disenfranchised women in our province, the aboriginal women, women with disabilities, refugee women who come to this country with skills, with talents, but with no opportunities to use them. We

need to figure out how we can develop innovative and dynamic plans to use the potential of all those disenfranchised women.

On this day of affirmation of International Women's Day, Mr. Speaker, I hope we can vow not to be too pleased with ourselves, to recognize that we have made some progress. We've done some progressive steps, but we need, Mr. Speaker, to renew our commitment to carrying on with the journey towards true and meaningful gender equality. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Bradley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to support the motion by my colleague and my friend, Ms. Stanger — I mean the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster — that on this International Women's Day this Assembly commit itself to furthering the equality and well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, when confronted with the question, what are women's issues, I recall the song, "Bread and Roses", which has become associated with International Women's Day — bread symbolizing economic justice and roses representing quality of life.

Women's issues are people and societal issues whereby women's efforts over the years have been able to attain justice, equality, and quality of life for themselves and their families.

It has sometimes frustrated me that we need to speak of women's issues separate and apart from people's issues. But even though as women we've come a long way, we still have a lot to achieve, a long way to go.

In reflecting personally, I want to pay tribute to the many women who have come before me who have made significant contributions of benefit to the women of Saskatchewan, our country, and internationally. These women I will not name individually, but these women each of us can identify in our own lives. They may have been our mother, our grandmother, our friend, our neighbour, a colleague. But they were women who believed in their value and their convictions to be part of a fair, equitable, and just society.

Mr. Speaker, the evidence of progress for women is in this House today with 13 elected women MLAs — the most in Saskatchewan's history. Is it enough? No, probably not, but we are making progress.

I can remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not so long ago, not being allowed to take part in a political process in this province. I refer to youth parliament. At the time I graduated from high school in 1970, girls were still not allowed to take part in what they called then older boys' parliament.

As girls, we were allowed to go to mini-parliaments across the province but not older boys' parliament, which was held right here in the legislature over

Christmas holidays. Our views and our resolutions would have to be sent with boys in order to be debated.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to say that girls are now able to attend youth parliament. And maybe it was the result of being excluded before that partially influenced me to seek political office.

And for a brief moment I want to pay tribute to my own family. I had a grandmother who was an activist way ahead of her time. When I spoke to her just before she died about deciding whether or not I would seek political office, she quickly said to me, why not; you're not afraid of hard work, are you? A grandfather who recognized girls need to have spunk to get ahead in life; and my parents who raised three daughters who were never limited in opportunity to seek and achieve our own goals; and to my own husband and children who have encouraged and been there for me in whatever decisions I have made.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recognize not all women have had the good fortune of the support systems I have had. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, women should not have to overcome barriers of sexism, inequity, in order to achieve their goals. The value of women and the family unit is essential for a society that we all want to be part of.

Women have a valuable role to play in decision making. Every issue area that we can name affects women. Women do know the issues and we do bring our own set of perspectives and priorities to the issues. We want to be involved because we know that all issues affect us or our families. We want to be active participants in decision making. We do not want to stand idly by while others make decisions for us or on our behalf. We want the opportunity to make decisions for ourselves.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, more women than ever are involved in top level decision making within our government. The appointments that our government has made to boards, commissions, and agencies have included close to 40 per cent women. While this may not be perfect, it is certainly a significant improvement. Many more women are in key decision-making positions due to the direct action of our government. There is no doubt in my mind that these women are already making important and needed contributions to our province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of my messages to the women in this province is to stay involved, stay active. And I encourage women to take leadership roles in all aspects of our communities. Women have always been involved doing the work for our community organizations. They often provide the glue that holds families and communities together.

Often women have taken on the roles that do not put them in the limelight, but that does not make our work any less important. Lack of recognition for the value of women's contributions to society has resulted in considerable unfairness in many areas.

When we ask, why is it that so many women are living in poverty? Women are four times more likely to be poor than men. We find that of course women earn much less money than men. This is true right from a young woman's summer job during university while she is working, and right into her old age collecting a pension.

The work that women typically do consists of caring for other people and children, cleaning, working, serving, typing letters, attending to the details to make sure offices, organizations, and homes keep running smoothly. We will all say that this is important work and our society would come to a screeching halt if women stopped doing these things, but the reality is that in most cases the monetary compensation for that work is low and keeps women poor.

For many reasons, many women are often the sole breadwinner in their families. When talking about the value placed on women's work, or rather the lack of it, I know that farm women have faced many challenges. It has been a long, hard battle for women to be acknowledged as farmers even when they are the ones who are driving the tractors or the trucks or getting up in the middle of the night in calving season.

A man can have hired help and the value of the farm work is acknowledged by Statistics Canada, but as soon as that same farm work is performed by the man's wife, then it becomes insignificant and not worth recording. Or ask any women that farms with her husband whether or not she can get a bank loan based on her contribution to the farming operation.

Many of these antiquated ideas are changing, but slowly. Given the situation with agriculture today, it is critical that women be acknowledged by our institutions as the partner that they are in farming operations. Farm women make significant contributions to the running of farms, and I'm proud that our government has recognized women's organizations in our ag vision 2000, as well as on various agriculture policy committees.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have made progress in several key areas that affect Saskatchewan women. With initiatives, many mentioned already here today, such as the Saskatchewan action plan for children, ensuring that our children will grow up in environments that support their well-being and enable them to reach their potential.

The minimum wage has been increased; increased money for child care centres; the child advocate protecting the rights of children; expansion of breast cancer screening program that now serves the entire province; promoting economic independence with more infant care services for teen parents attending high school; combining resources with communities to support victims of family violence.

And an example of the process that has happened in my area of the province in the Weyburn-Estevan area, in consultation with the communities, is in that area on domestic violence.

And we've responded to their needs and listened to their concerns. And I'm pleased that we've been able to hire two family violence counsellors, one in Weyburn and area, one in Estevan and area, plus a sexual assault worker to work within those communities.

The unified family court has now been expanded right across our province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, these initiatives are significant.

But we must not stop there. There are many challenges ahead which still need to be addressed. As a government, as individual citizens, we must strive for employment and education equity; a fair valuing of women's work; affordable and accessible child care; support for single-parent women; more well-paying, full-time jobs; and freedom from violence and abuse.

As we move towards the year 2000 it is my hope members of government and citizens of this province will be able to say, remember when there was a wage gap for women? Remember when women's jobs were undervalued and the greatest percentage were part time? Remember when workplaces did not practice family friendly policies, such as flex-time and job sharing and care support programs?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, International Women's Day is a time for all of us to renew our efforts to work towards economic, social, and political equality for all women. I am honoured to support the motion before us today as we celebrate and promote the equality and well-being of women.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to enter into this debate to support this motion to celebrate International Women's Day and to recognize the gains that have been made through the years that I have had the opportunity to be present on this universe.

And I think with respect to the changes that have come in my lifetime as it relates to the role between men and between women and as it relates to the role of women. It's really quite fantastic. And actually as I sat here and listened to other members expound, I thought how fortunate I am to be living at this time when through the changes, we are actually adding 50 per cent more brains to the endeavours of the human race — 50 per cent more brainpower, Mr. Speaker, when we get men and women involved on committees. In any social aspect, 50 per cent more brainpower.

(1600)

Now is there any other endeavour where the human race has changed that has resulted in such a tremendous efficiency, so easily. And I think, Mr. Speaker, of my own family and my daughters — my wife and I have two daughters — and how things would have been different for them if these changes

hadn't occurred.

And I speak from very practical, very sort of at home kind of an experience. When my sister and I were growing up, I had the . . . the role that I was programed into was that I was to become a professional, I was to get off the farm. But my sister was programed that she had to be a secretary or a nurse or a teacher in order to get off the farm.

How much different it is now. And think of the opportunities that our daughters had compared to what my sister and I had as a basis of comparison. The opportunities have not come easily; the changes have not come easily. There are many people who have had to sacrifice and have had to stick their necks out on this. And there are people who continue to do that. And I feel privileged to congratulate those who have done so. And it's been done very eloquently by the members who spoke before me.

But I'm particularly delighted to be able to point out to my children and those people who I used to teach in school that it is in our lifetime, indeed in the last decade that we had our first female leader of a major political party here in Canada, Audrey McLaughlin. That we had in this last decade our first female prime minister, Kim Campbell. That we had in Saskatchewan our first female Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Sylvia Fedoruk. That in Great Britain, it was within the last 15 years Great Britain experienced its first female prime minister, Maggie Thatcher. And in Canada our first two female premiers, Premier Johnson and Premier Callbeck.

These really are quite fantastic, fantastic changes. And when I speak about increasing our brainpower by 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker, it's not only because of the women who have added a new dimension, but it's also because it has changed and is changing the thinking of men.

You know, there's a large portion of our brain that has not been used for years and centuries and aeons that is being awakened, and there are opportunities now that men have that never even . . . that my father or grandfather never even dreamed of, that they might have.

And I want to talk about that very briefly. Take for example, Mr. Speaker, the role traditionally played by women in rearing children. Men were always, as a general rule in the society that I came from and my cultural background, were generally removed from that. Quite often they had the authoritarian role or were called in to do something real tough. But they were not . . . they really didn't have the opportunity because they weren't programed to involve themselves in parenting.

Think of the new opportunities for men now, who will be able to say that if it wasn't for my father, I would never have been able to do A or B or C, just in the same way as I am able to say, as I recognize now my mother who was very influential in my life — and I think there are other men that could identify with that — who was

the person that had the time and spent the time in discussion while the father was doing the breadwinning. So the opportunity here is not just for women, it's also for men to get out of the trap of being in the position of only having to do the breadwinning and the disciplining.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address one other issue related to this, and that is the threat that I think almost every man has to deal with in this generation, and that is the threat posed by the word feminism. Because at some stage you get the feeling that perhaps you are losing something, or somebody is blaming you. And the man has, in reaction to that threat, quite often will feel he is a victim. And you know what happens when we feel that we're victims? Well we either start to say, oh, poor me, or we try to lay the blame on somebody else, for what we feel that we are victimized over.

It takes a while, Mr. Speaker, to overcome this feeling of being a victim of feminism. And I'm sure almost every man of my generation has had to face it. But there's a real release when you can turn that word victim to victory and realize that by turning that word victim to victory, you are gaining 50 per cent more brainpower. And we can do things 50 per cent better again.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that we've come a long way. And I want to, at this time, recognize some of the groups in my own home town, Prince Albert, who have been instrumental in the cause of expanding the role and changing the role of women. And there are some organizations that are very, very, active now.

The YWCA, of which my wife is now a director, has done generations of work in this field, and currently they are operating a women's shelter in Prince Albert. And they also have sponsored an event through the years called, the Women of Distinction, a very successful event which they use as a fund-raiser and which they also use to mark and recognize those women who have done a lot in the community.

I think also the Prince Albert cooperative health centre which, although it is run partly by men in teamwork with women, the work was done there largely by women who have done a tremendous amount to influence our health system and work in the direction of wellness, from which we've all benefited.

And I think also of the organization called Iskwew, the unique organization which originated around the friendship centre in Prince Albert. Iskwew — it's a Cree word meaning women helping women. Again, a network which has been very influential and helpful to women who have been victims of violence.

Mr. Speaker, all of those things . . . some of these things that have been done, and my colleagues have identified a lot of them, I do believe that there still are quite a few things that we should be doing. And I just want to itemize a couple of them because I think they are rather of significance and this would be a good time to bring this out.

Number one, I think we have to rededicate ourselves to the concept of zero tolerance to sexual harassment and violence against women. Zero tolerance, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps if we can do so, we will be able to at some day avoid those tragic cases which keep coming up to the courts and before the courts now.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, we must continue to do those things we can as legislators which will improve the quality of life for our daughters, our sisters, our wives, women across the nation. We must do those things that we can to work towards eliminating poverty. Most of the people who suffer from poverty are young women with children and we have to do something.

I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, that the government and the members on both sides of the House are working towards the concept of doing something for part-time workers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Those people are mostly women, mostly young women. They are the people who go to work every day or want to go to work every day, who aren't able to collect the full benefits of full-time work. They're the ones that have to sit beside the telephone and wait for it to call because if they're not there, they won't be able to have enough to support themselves or their families. They're the ones that have very little hope of increasing their wage levels or to progress into the regular workforce. I think we have to continue to work to support them.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by saying that if we continue to do that, continue to support that, we will not only be helping the women, our wives, our daughters, our sisters here in Saskatchewan or Canada, but we will also be helping those across other nations and across the world plus across the globe.

Anybody who's done any travelling, Mr. Speaker, will recognize what I say when I bring to mind two examples that I've experienced personally. In West Africa the custom still is — was in the '80s and still is — that the roles of men and women are very defined. There are parts of West Africa where women are, I could use the word bought. I don't think that that's exactly the phrase that they would use, but the objective of a young man is to go out and get a little bit of cash so that he can pay a dowry to buy a wife. And later on, as soon as possible, he wants to work more so that he can buy a second or a third wife.

Now that custom is disappearing, but it's still there. The whole idea of this is that after he can get two or three or four wives, then he will be able to produce the sons or daughters so that the man can sit under the . . .

An Hon. Member: — The banyan tree.

Mr. Kowalsky: — The banyan tree I believe is what it's called — my colleague helps me out — under the banyan tree and discuss the issues of the day.

Now that may seem like great fun from one point of

view, but really they are missing something. And the women in that area, and a lot of the men, are looking to nations of the West, looking to North America, looking to Europe, to see how things are done so that they can change their customs to create more equality.

And another place where I saw a very similar change that was coming about but still . . . and really reminded me of my roots, as when I was in Ukraine a few years ago and I noticed when I went to meetings there that it was the rare meeting of government officials or of committees that women were involved. And it reminded me a little bit of our own RMs in days past, and perhaps in some cases still, where the women sort of sit off to the side and do the work and the men discuss the issues.

Mr. Speaker, I close by saying that if those kind of things are continued, we're only working on 50 per cent. And we should be doing the other thing — we should be increasing our productivity, our relationships, our ability to communicate by 50 per cent by working together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1615)

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, it's an honour for me to enter into this important debate. I want to reassure the members that not on every occasion am I of the view that quantity and quality are immeasurably intertwined in that I don't intend to be long in my remarks. I think a lot of good — hold the applause there — I think a lot of very important points have been made in the debate so far.

But I would like to just offer on the record some of my own views about this very important resolution that on this International Women's Day this Assembly commit itself to furthering — the equality and well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

And I want to reiterate the message that was just stated a few moments ago by my good friend and colleague, the member for Prince Albert, who pointed out, Mr. Speaker, that in this session, within a few weeks if not within a few days, there will be an opportunity for every member of this Assembly to demonstrate whether or not we truly believe this statement; whether when we make this statement it's a statement only of intention or if we are committed to doing something to, as a matter of fact, further the equality and well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, as my colleague pointed out so accurately, in the province of Saskatchewan the substantial majority of people who are the lowest paid and the least secure in employment in our province, are as a matter of fact women.

And we will all have an opportunity to put our feet to the fire and to determine whether we stand behind our convictions or not, or whether we have chosen to

express flowery words and let it stand at that, when the Minister of Labour brings to this House amendments to The Labour Standards Act which will improve the protections and the securities of working people, predominantly those who are working in part-time and in the lowest rewarded employment positions in Saskatchewan, predominantly for women.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that I am committed to this resolution not only today, but I will be committed to this resolution and I will be standing to vote in favour of improvements to the labour standards in the province of Saskatchewan as well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And I expect and I hope that all members of the Assembly from all sides of the Assembly will express their determination to carry out that commitment that we've expressed here in the Assembly today, at that time too.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize as well that there is a task that faces Saskatchewan — and it has been referred to by some of my colleagues earlier — to simply say on the record, as I've said before, that there is the issue of pay equity that faces Saskatchewan, to be dealt with in a meaningful way.

And I'm not sure that that will be dealt with in as meaningful a way as we would like to see as early as we would like to see, but I simply want to say, on this important day with this important resolution, Mr. Speaker, that that is a principle to which I also stand committed.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge in my remarks here today the role of women that have been played in my political life. The fact of the matter is the first person to encourage me to seek public office was a woman, my mother, who was of the view, and I recall as a young lad, who was of the view that the mark of a good life is that when you come to the end of it you can look back and you can determine that your presence here has helped to make a difference for the people with whom you've come in contact.

I want to say as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I want to acknowledge the important role of my grandmother who, in her younger days, in fact, babysat Woodrow Lloyd; who in fact, Mr. Speaker, was never a CCF or NDP supporter but who was one of my strongest encouragers and who I referred to in my very first speech I made in this Legislative Assembly some seven years ago; and who when faced with difficult political decisions, Mr. Speaker, her commitment to principle and the belief that she had until her dying day, a year and a half ago, that to serve in this Assembly, to serve in the public interest for the people of Saskatchewan — she was a Saskatchewan girl in her heart until her dying day, although she didn't live her entire life in Saskatchewan — her belief that to serve in this Assembly is a noble calling. Mr. Speaker, that is something that I found motivational and inspirational.

And I wanted to get down to the nitty-gritty, Mr. Speaker. I've sought public office to serve in this Assembly three times. Once I got thumped and twice I was successful. Mr. Speaker, I want to note on this day, the once I got thumped my campaign manager was a man. The two times I got elected, my campaign manager was a woman. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, if I'm running again in the next election, there is no question in my mind what gender I'm looking for to manage my campaign.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge as well the importance of role models. Role models in our society, as we undertake change, role models are important. To have been a pioneer is significant, not just because you broke new ground but because you made the path a little easier for others to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge today that there are some important role models in Saskatchewan today and many of them are in this room, Mr. Speaker, who are important role models for my two daughters. I want to acknowledge the importance in the life of Saskatchewan today of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, Sylvia Fedoruk, the first woman to serve as Lieutenant Governor, as my colleague earlier pointed out.

She has, in my view, Mr. Speaker, served that office with distinction and has brought a new sensitivity to matching the blend between the fears and the aspirations of the young people in Saskatchewan with political life in a way that no one has ever done before as they've served in that office, and we've had some fine people.

I think people like Sylvia Fedoruk, Mr. Speaker, have served as important — and will continue to serve — as important role models for many women in our province.

I want to acknowledge as well . . . I think it's kind of significant that when I talk to my daughters and they think about their career choices, to choose the same career choice that I have chosen and that the people of Moose Jaw Palliser have allowed me to choose for the last couple of times — although they didn't the first time when I had that man for a campaign manager, Mr. Speaker — the fact of the matter is that it is without any special consideration that they are open to thinking that they could come and serve in this Legislative Assembly, and there's no big deal about that, Mr. Speaker. Because they know that this day — not only could they, they have — they have talked to the Minister of Education and they have met the Minister of Health and they have met the minister responsible for Municipal Government and they have met and talked to the Minister of Finance. And, Mr. Speaker, when they did that, every time they met a woman.

One of them has also met the leader of a political party in our province and talked to a woman. And they've talked in our home and here in Saskatchewan and in other places around the province to colleagues of mine — 13 in this Assembly — when they've talked to

people who have come to serve the people of Saskatchewan, they've talked to a woman. The largest number ever, and what a thing that we should celebrate and be proud of today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not so caught up in the enthusiasm of the moment of this motion that I want to say that I look forward in the next sitting of the Assembly to see all 13 return. But I'll tell you, there's 11 in my heart, Mr. Speaker, that I am confident will be returned to serve the people of Saskatchewan in this Assembly after the next election again.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude by sharing with the Assembly something . . . I guess we all choose our own ways. Sometimes they're big things, and sometimes they're things we stand in public and we fight for because that's how it feels, and sometimes there's subtle little things that we can do to reinforce the importance of this resolution.

One of the most enjoyable parts about this job is meeting with young people when they come to visit. And they come, and they're introduced to the Assembly — for many young people, it's a memorable experience — and will meet with their member of the Legislative Assembly and take their picture and all of that kind of good stuff that helps to reinforce the importance of this place and the role it plays in people's lives.

And one of the things that I've tried to do, Mr. Speaker, ever since it's been my privilege to serve as chair of the government caucus, when school groups come, I always ask that our visit will take place in the government caucus meeting room. And I take along my gavel, Mr. Speaker, and there's two things that I do. I want them to sit and feel what it feels like to sit in an MLA's chair where decisions about the future of Saskatchewan and government are actually made. And whoever happens to sit in the chairman's chair, I hand the gavel and ask them to bang the table and call the meeting to order. And that's kind of an exciting sort of thing.

But there's something else, Mr. Speaker, that I do as well. I always try to make a point, when the young people are coming in and they're deciding where to sit, to make sure that the chair occupied just to the right of the chairman's chair is occupied by one of the young woman. Because, after pointing it out that if this was a real government caucus meeting and we'd be making decisions about what's going to happen in the Legislative Assembly today, I point out that if this was a real caucus meeting that the person sitting in this chair would be the Premier. And I do that, Mr. Speaker, because I'm convinced in my heart that in my time that chair over there — the Premier's chair — will come to be occupied by a woman in the province of Saskatchewan. Not because she's a woman, but because she happens to be the best person for the job.

Mr. Speaker, it is with that kind of sentiment and support for this resolution that I am proud to say that I will vote that on this International Women's Day this Assembly commit itself to furthering the equality and

the well-being of women in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

Resolution No. 28 — Accountability of Crown Corporations

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to speak to this very important government reform issue and at the end of my remarks, I'll be moving that motion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the issue of public accountability is one that is of great concern to the Liberal Party. Accountability is a fundamental principle of democratic societies. We believe that through full public disclosure of the spending plans and activities that take place within our Crown corporations, our accountability to the people of the province is strengthened and reinforced.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Assembly is currently engaged in the exercise of examining, in great detail, the expenditures for government departments. Yet our Crown corporations spend more than all of those government departments combined with none of the public examination of the detail of those expenditures.

In hindsight we can only speculate, but I cannot help but wonder, if SaskPower expenditures had been subjected to the scrutiny of a process such as the Committee of Finance, would we today be burdened with the financial boondoggles such as the Rafferty-Alameda dam? I would like to think that we would not; that we as fiscally responsible legislators would have determined very early on that this project was a non-starter, a drain on us all, instead of the basin it was supposed to be.

My colleagues and I realize that there may be some Crowns where this arrangement would compromise their competitive edge. I think that when their case is presented and warrants this exemption, there would be room for such an allowance. But on the whole, we believe this reform would be a great improvement over the present system.

Having sat on the Crown Corporations Committee, I know how valuable this process has become compared to what it was only a decade or so ago when these meetings took place behind closed doors. And even in that secret environment, answers were seldom given to the questions asked.

However this process is still lacking in some respects. Firstly, only the annual reports of some — and I repeat some — Crown corporations are referred to the legislature's Standing Committee on Crown Corporations. Secondly, the timeliness of this information is often so out of date that this exercise has little relevance.

In December of last year, for example, the committee

reviewed expenditures of some Crown corporations for the calendar year of 1992, expenditures which were planned in 1991 and begun in early 1992. By the time the Crown Corporations Committee had the opportunity to do its review of these expenditures, almost two full years had elapsed since the actual expenditures had started.

(1630)

The third flaw in the current system of reviewing these Crown expenditures after the fact is that the only documentation that members have to rely on is the annual report for the corporation under review.

As has been pointed out by the Gass Commission, these annual reports have become promotional pieces and reveal very little information about the manner in which these entities are achieving their mandate or about the risks and opportunities that they face. I believe that if we were to correct these inefficiencies and the way that information is brought to and examined by the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations, we would still be off the mark in attaining a fully accountable and responsive system to expenditure review and control; our goal of accountability would still not be fully achieved. To achieve that accountability, I believe we need a system such as that I have proposed in my motion.

Mr. Speaker, I want to leave plenty of time before the end of the day for government members to speak on this resolution since this was one of the democratic reforms proposed on page 7 of the NDP *Democratic Reform for the 1990's* published in January of 1991, and I want to allow their members to address this important issue.

I hereby move the motion as follows:

That this Assembly urges the government to improve the accountability of Crown corporations by allowing a detailed investigation of their spending plans in advance.

I so move, seconded by the member from Greystone.

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I didn't stand up right when the member from Shaunavon completed his remarks because I was waiting to see if the seconder of his motion, the member from Saskatoon Greystone, perhaps wanted to speak first. Since it appears that she does not, I would like to, as chair of the Crown Corporations, address a few remarks to the Assembly.

I'd like to start out at the point where the member from Shaunavon ended, referring to the democratic reform paper of the NDP. And I want to state that this government and this party are very strongly committed to democratic reform. There is no doubt about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Having said that, I also want to acknowledge that sometimes tactics change over time, as you look at

certain things and as you're able to implement certain practical solutions for certain problems.

And with respect to the question of Crown corporations, I want say that we have implemented a great many reforms to ensure greater public accountability and transparency in the Crown corporations. So I am pleased with the measures that we have taken; I am pleased with our plans for further measures. And so consequently I will not be supporting the resolution from the members from Shaunavon and Saskatoon Greystone. Instead I will be, when I take my seat, Mr. Deputy Speaker, moving an amendment:

That we delete everything after the word "government" and substitute the following words therefor:

to continue to improve the accountability of Crown corporations, as has occurred through such initiatives as the passage of The Crown Corporations Act; more timely and extensive disclosure in the tabling of Crown corporations annual reports; and timely meetings of the Crown Corporations Committee.

I will be moving that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I believe that we have made major changes with respect to both the functioning of the Crown corporations and the Crown Corporations Committee. And because we've made those changes, I believe that the motion that the member from Shaunavon wants to put is no longer the kind of relevant or necessary motion that he may think it is.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I'm a member of the New Democratic Party, and we're supposed to be goofy socialists who don't understand anything about how to operate business. But I can tell you that even this goofy socialist knows that you don't run around and tell your competitor all your business plans in advance because you then lose your major competitive edge.

Since Crown corporations were set up in the 1940s, it seems to me in this province we've had a realization that those corporations operated in a commercial setting that was quite different from the setting the government departments operated in. Crown corporations don't levy taxes and so axiomatically they are not subject to the principle of advanced approval of taxation and expenditure by the legislature.

Nevertheless the people of Saskatchewan have demanded, legitimately and quite rightly, that they have to be held accountable. So what we have done over the last 50 years, in this legislature, through administrations of the CCF, the Liberals, the NDP, and the Conservatives, what we have done is delegate the authority to run the Crown corporations in a commercially viable — and I repeat that — commercially viable manner to the boards of directors of the corporations. They report on an annual basis and they have a minister responsible. We have, as

government, made many changes to ensure that they will report on a much more timely basis and to ensure that the minister is much more responsible.

But we have also, I believe, recognized that those Crown corporations do operate in a commercial and a competitive environment. It seems to me that advance disclosure and detailed investigations of Crown expenditures, such as the member from Shaunavon is calling for, would cause great harm to the commercial competitive position of the Crowns. And we do need those Crowns and we need them to be in a strong and viable position.

I want to give you a couple of examples of where the kinds of detailed investigations that the member from Shaunavon is calling for might cause great negative effects to the Crown corporations. Let's take a look, for instance, at SaskTel. If we had these detailed investigations of the spending plans in advance disclosed by SaskTel, what would happen to plans to expand our cellular telephone network? Why should SaskTel run out and tell Cantel, their competitor, just exactly what their business plan is?

And another example, with SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). Why should we tell other insurance companies in advance what types of general insurance policies SGI is planning to offer so that they can then develop something that can undercut the market that we were hoping to have?

Another point that the member from Shaunavon needs to keep in mind is that many of the spending activities of the Crowns are customer driven. SaskTel, SaskPower, SaskEnergy spend a considerable amount of money each year doing customer hook-ups. Now the amount that they spend is determined by customer demand and not by any set budget line. If we budgeted SaskPower, for instance, in the same way that we do a government department and there was a higher than expected economic growth, we certainly would not want to be in the invidious position of having to tell our customers, I'm sorry, you can't get your power hook-up until the next budget year.

Now the member from Shaunavon said that there were three main problems with the current system of referring the annual reports to the Crown Corporations Committee. He said that only some are referred. I would like the member from Shaunavon, who is also a member of the Crown Corporations Committee, to meet with me later and to let me know just exactly which ones aren't referred. Because I have to tell you, as chair of the Crown Corporations Committee, I thought that all those reports were being referred. And if there is an oversight, I certainly would like to correct that.

He also says that the review of the annual reports are hopelessly out of date. Now I have to acknowledge, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that has unfortunately been the case in the past. During the 10 years when the Progressive Conservatives formed government in this province, they treated the Crown Corporations Committee with major disdain. They did not call

committee meetings regularly, they obfuscated, and they tried to denigrate the whole committee of the legislature called the Crown Corporations Committee.

Since we have formed government, we have tried to bring a greater sense of timeliness into the affairs of the Crown Corporations Committee, and I am very proud that we will be meeting this Thursday to complete our review, with the exception of one Crown corporation, for all of the 1992 annual reports. And we will then be scheduling another meeting, with the concurrence of all the committee members because we do believe in the democratic process, but probably within the next week or so, to begin our review of the 1993 annual reports of the Crown corporations subject to CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan).

Now I'm very proud that we have managed to get those reviews a bit back more on schedule. And I look forward, as the years go by, to the Crown Corporations Committee being extremely punctual and efficient in its review of the annual reports. And there is no reason why they won't be able to, unless the individual legislators are lazy or slack or malevolent. Because we have brought in a Bill, Bill 42, that provides for the timely tabling of the annual reports and provides major provisions to ensure accountability in the Crown corporations.

The other point that the member from Shaunavon made was that the only document that he gets to see is the annual report. As he knows very well, we have been allowing a very broad, wide-ranging set of questions in the Crown Corporations Committee and when members have asked for additional information, almost without exception, that information has been provided to them.

Now obviously the ministers responsible will continue to reserve the right not to reveal commercially sensitive information, but there is really no reason why the member from Shaunavon cannot do a legitimate and proper job as a member of the Crown Corporations Committee and review the operations of the Crown corporations.

I would just like to close by saying that I do feel we have increased the accountability of the Crown sector side in this province. We did set up a Gass Commission, a Financial Management Review Commission, to look at the government expenditures with respect to Crowns, and almost all of the recommendations of the Gass Commission have been implemented. We do have a much more open and transparent system.

The Crown Investments Corporation's annual reports, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, are a model of how annual reports ought to be written. They provide a detailed description of each project and the involvement in them . . . the Crown corporation's involvement in them, and they also provide a description of the solutions we are taking to resolve some of the problems that were created by the former government showing such disdain toward the Crown

sector.

Bill 42, as I have said, has major provisions to ensure accountability, and indeed, even the auditor of this provincial government has commented very favourably on the measures that we have taken.

And I would like to close by quoting from his 1991-92 annual report. He said:

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

(1645)

Consequently, Mr. Speaker, I will not be able to support the resolution from the member of Shaunavon, and I do move my amendment, seconded by the member from Turtleford.

The amendment again is:

that we would delete everything after the word "government" and substitute the following words therefor:

To continue to improve the accountability of Crown corporations, as has occurred through such initiatives as the passage of The Crown Corporations Act; more timely and extensive disclosure in the tabling of Crown corporation annual reports; and timely meetings of the Crown Corporations Committee.

I do so move.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, let me start by saying that it is refreshing to be discussing this issue with this government. As we all well know, the prominence of Crown corporations in this province is due largely to the efforts of past NDP governments. For this we, the ordinary people of Saskatchewan, I suppose then owe them some thanks. I don't think any of us can deny some of the benefits that have accrued to this province through use of the Crowns.

However, Mr. Speaker, the use of Crown corporations through this province's history has also had many pitfalls for which the government and the NDP Party must assume responsibility. The hon. mover of this resolution has apparently come to this conclusion in perhaps a more personal way than we can know, although we perhaps would have preferred him to take his conclusions a little further than he has. Through our deliberations today, we can perhaps start to deal with these pitfalls.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think it would be an exaggeration to say that this province has the most extensive Crown corporation sector of any province in Canada. While we are — I dare say fortunately, but no thanks to the

members opposite — far from the days when Crowns made everything from shoes to bricks, Crowns still are a dominant force in Saskatchewan.

If you look back over the years at listings of the top Saskatchewan companies in terms of both sales and value of assets, year in and year out, six or seven of the top ten companies are Crowns. Now that says a lot about this province. I suppose whether you think that's a bad thing or a good thing depends on which side of the House you happen to be sitting on.

But no matter what position you take, it is undeniable that this is indicative of the tremendous hold, some might even say the stranglehold that Crowns have over the economic life of this province. No aspect of society that has that kind of influence on our economy can expect to hold itself above the scrutiny and regulation of the people's duly elected representatives, and not just a select, self-appointed view of a few of these representatives but all of them.

You can be quite sure that if this province had a single private industry or a single private investor who held the kind of sway over business life in this province that the Crowns do, the members opposite, for all their fine words of late about promoting private investment and encouraging industry, would be falling over themselves to find new and ever more clever ways to regulate, license, tax, and harass that owner. Commissions would be struck, inquiries held, cartel laws would be pondered and evoked. If the members opposite applied a tenth of the suspicion that they have about private business towards Crowns, the resolution that we are considering today would be redundant and unnecessary.

That, Mr. Speaker, however is not the case at all. Instead we have a situation where a number of economic giants — SaskTel, SaskPower, SaskEnergy, SGI, STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) and on and on — roam at large with virtually nothing to keep them from trampling over the citizens of the province who supposedly own and control them. They set their own budgets, charge whatever fees they please, and the only recourse we, the ordinary people of Saskatchewan, have over them in advance is a relatively small group of men and women who sit on cabinet, who meet in a closed session, and whose thoughts, deliberations, and reasoning are guarded as state secrets from, again, the people who supposedly own these companies.

Mr. Speaker, if I held shares in a private company that treated its shareholders this way, I would be selling my shares fast. In a way, that is exactly what happens every day when this government drives people out of this province.

However this situation goes far beyond the economic aspects of Crowns, Mr. Speaker. Increasingly, the Crowns have become part and parcel of government policy other than in the provision of services. As we all well know, SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation) has been an important part of successive governments' economic policy.

And we can expect the new SOCO (Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation) to be much the same.

Virtually the entire list of Treasury Board Crowns is composed of Crowns that serve a policy function, whether it be in agriculture with the Agricultural Credit Corporation and the Ag Development Fund, municipal government, as with the Saskatchewan Municipal Board, or scientific research and development with the Saskatchewan Research Council.

Recently the Minister of Economic Development announced the formation of a new corporation to take over the functions of the department of trade. So here we have these vast policy areas of government mirroring many if not all government departments, composing almost a shadow government, Mr. Speaker, and all of them are almost totally beyond the scrutiny of control of the ordinary citizens of this province or their representatives.

Mr. Speaker, the government claims that there are already enough mechanisms in place to regulate the Crowns. But what exactly are these mechanisms? Do they measure up to the standards of accountability and effectiveness under which governments in the '90s must operate? As I've already mentioned, we have the cabinet review, a process that is shrouded in secrecy. Does this give the public a feeling of confidence that their money is being well spent and that the fees they are being charged are fair? I don't think so.

How about the Crown corporations review committee, a body that reviews the actions of the Crowns after the money has been spent. The policies have been implemented and the damage has been done. I don't think the general public would possibly feel that this gives them any real control. Maybe it allows them to give the heads of the Crowns a slap on the wrist after the fact, but no real control.

How about the Provincial Auditor, Mr. Speaker, an office whose integrity, honesty, and lack of bias are widely respected by the public. Well of course he doesn't even get to see the books of the Crown corporations. That is really quite a statement, Mr. Speaker. The person holding possibly the most trusted position in the public eye, and the government does not want him to see the books.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, something has to be done about this situation, and we are in full agreement with this resolution and its mover. However we feel that the situation has been such a gross miscarriage of democracy that strong, urgent action must be taken soon to correct it.

We have suggested previously that the government, if it is serious about democracy and accountability, make use of the resources available to it in this House, on both sides of the House, and form a legislative review utility committee. This would at least bring most of the CIC Crowns into the public spotlight. This however can only be a first step, Mr. Speaker, to

correct the abuses, the duplicity, and the public mistrust the people of Saskatchewan have come to associate with the Crown sector.

Mr. Speaker, the other day in question period, we had raised the issue again of the legislative review committee, and the Premier of the province stood in this Assembly and said that if the members would take the time to attend Crown Corporations Committee meetings, they could address those issues.

And at the time, Mr. Speaker, we had raised the question, but the fact that when we're discussing Crown corporations, we're actually discussing Crown corporation decisions that have been made one, two, three — actually two and a half years past, Mr. Speaker, long past the time when the public have already been gouged through rate increases either through SaskTel, SaskPower, SGI; these rate increases that we do not have the ability of . . . And the member from Shaunavon indicated that today, that when the rate increases are coming into play, we really don't have much of an opportunity to address those issues.

And yet the other day the Premier of this province let us believe and led the public to believe that yes, we do have that opportunity. We can just . . . if we attend Crown Corporations Committee meetings, as the Premier said, we can raise the issues.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the Premier, if indeed he wants to give us that ability to address the issues today, not tomorrow after the fact, then allow the process of a legislative review committee or allow the discussion on rate increases to take place in this Assembly, right on the floor of the Assembly, as the increases are coming into play or decisions are being made.

And contrary to what the member from Saskatoon had indicated, Mr. Speaker, it's not necessary that ministers responsible lay out all the information that might interfere with decisions on a business level. But there are many aspects of the Crowns that we could deal with that would be very pertinent that the public are very concerned about.

I guess there's, of late, Mr. Speaker, one concern that I have in Crown Corporations Committee — and the member from Saskatoon Wildwood indicated how open and how forthcoming Crown Corporations Committee meetings have been. As we met two weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, we were dealing with SEDCO which was 1992 — 1992. We're already into 1994 business.

What I found very interesting was yes, it's right, the minister can decide whether or not they want to address questions outside of the year under review. But I found it very interesting that the chairperson kept interfering in the business and suggesting to the minister that it wasn't his responsibility to address any questions outside of the year under review. And it would seem to me that if the minister felt that maybe some of the questions that were being put . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I think the member knows that he can't get into the process of the committee's operation and discuss that in this legislature. That's more proper to be discussed in the committee itself. Okay?

Mr. Toth: — Well I thank you, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, as I was indicating as we're discussing the motion before us — that this Assembly urge the government to improve the accountability of Crown corporations — I think based on that, some of the suggestions I was making were areas that we might, should, or maybe ask the government to bring before the Assembly if they're going to be really open and accountable to allow all members . . . And I must indicate that all members of this Assembly, because I'm sure members on the government side of the House, MLAs on the government side of the House are having some of the real questions, same questions being raised that are raised with us on a daily basis. And that's why I was bringing some of that to the forefront so people could understand a little bit of how the Crown Corporations Committee works.

However, Mr. Speaker, I will abide by your ruling and say to you that we are supportive of the motion that has been brought forward. However we would have encouraged the member from Shaunavon to have gone a little further. We trust that as we continue in this present session that basically, as we look at the different discussions and the debates that will take place, that at the end of the day the government will come to its senses and realize that the public in general want a greater accountability and a greater access to information prior to, rather than after implementation.

With more to say, Mr. Speaker, I think that many other speakers would like to speak. But at this time, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:57 p.m.