

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, in your west gallery, sir, I'd like to introduce 23 grade 5 students from St. Mary's School, in the constituency of Regina Rosemont. They're here today, accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Ferrara, and have five parents as chaperons. It's a fairly interesting ratio. I don't think they're that bad a group in need of that many chaperons. However, I want to welcome all members and ask members here in the Assembly to welcome this group today.

We'll be meeting at 2:20 for pictures in room 218, following that for discussions of today's proceedings in the Assembly. So I'd ask all members to welcome St. Mary's School here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the member from Souris-Cannington, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce a school group from Alameda. They're seated in your Speaker's gallery, Mr. Speaker.

They are a group of grade 6 and 7 students from Alameda. Their teacher is Jeff Cameron and their bus driver is Donna Fraser.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be meeting with these folks after question period this afternoon, and I ask all members to join with me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, it's my honour on behalf of the Premier, the member from Riversdale, to introduce to you and through you to other members in the House, three persons in the west side of your gallery, Mr. Speaker, who are with Script Services from Saskatoon. They are Pat Thériault, Gary Martin, and Bev Lasuita.

Their company does language training and translation for the public sector, as well as provincial and federal governments and for the universities. The group today is doing French language training; they're from the Federal Development Bank.

And I am looking forward to meeting with them later on after question period in the Speaker's boardroom. Some of the work that they do in translation is not at all unlike the work that I used to do as a verbatim reporter, as a court reporter. So I'm looking forward very much to our discussion and ask members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming our guests here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you to the other members of the Assembly, two guests that are in your gallery today, sir.

And we have with us two members of the State legislature for the State of North Dakota and I would ask them to stand when I introduce them. We have Representative Frank Wald and Representative Rex Byerly, and these are both current, serving members of the State House, both Republicans, and here on a fact-finding mission with issues that are of mutual concern both to Canadians and our good friends to the south of us.

And I might say, Mr. Speaker, that they also came here to apologize on behalf of Senator Conrad who made those awful remarks about the missile silos.

We've had a nice visit with them today and I would ask all members of the House to please welcome our good friends from North Dakota.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Fourth Regional Economic Development Authority Formed

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday I was pleased to be present at the announcement of Saskatchewan's fourth regional economic development authority. The formation of the Northwest REDA was announced in Buffalo Narrows by the Minister of Economic Development and by its chairperson, Mike Blackmon.

The members of the Northwest REDA include communities such as Beauval, Goodsoil, Green Lake, Buffalo Narrows, as well as several organizations such as the Freshwater Rural Development Corporation and the Northwest Tourist Group. We have a good mix of business, tourism, and local government among the founding members, covering a large area of north-west Saskatchewan. It is my sincere hope that all communities and interested groups in the region will become involved in this very important development.

Mr. Speaker, the north-west region of Saskatchewan is a unique area with great economic potential in tourism, in natural resources, in commercial and sport fishing. With the establishment of the Northwest REDA, we face the challenge of changing traditional patterns of shipping out our raw resources to southern points, and with them go the jobs that Northerners so badly need. There is opportunity for us to begin finishing our products and keeping our jobs at home.

As the REDA completes its organization and begins to develop, I look forward to more activity and

opportunities for Northerners in their home communities. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

World Hockey Championship

Mr. Knezacek: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday Canadians welcomed home the young men who won Canada its first World Hockey Championship in 33 years. Not since 1961 when the Trail Smoke Eaters captured gold, have Canadians done as well.

Already this year, Canada has won four world curling championships as well as the women's, junior men's, and under 17 world hockey championships. Truly we are masters of winter sport.

This year the World Hockey Championship was decided amid high drama. Canada tied the game late in the third period, to force overtime and two shoot-outs before persevering to win.

Of course no hockey success story is complete without a Saskatchewan connection. Four of the players have our province to thank for their hockey upbringing. Although not native to Saskatchewan, Geoff Sanderson and Joe Sakic played junior hockey with the Swift Current Broncos, while Rob Brind'amour was a product of the Notre Dame Hounds.

But the young man who we can be most proud of is Kelly Buchberger. Kelly is a native of Langenburg, in my constituency, and a former Moose Jaw Warrior. A rugged defenceman, it is Kelly's style of play that helped Canada win eight straight games on its way to the gold medal. In just seven years, Kelly has been part of two Stanley Cup winners and now a World Hockey Championship. Not bad for a young man of 27 years.

Today I congratulate all the players from the championship team, but especially a fine hockey player, Kelly Buchberger. I know that his family and the community of Langenburg and the entire constituency of Saltcoats are very proud. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Climax Farmers Helping Newfoundland Fishermen

Ms. Bradley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It pleases me to inform the Assembly about an example of the sharing nature of Saskatchewan farmers. Twelve farmers in the Climax area have merged together to help their neighbours, the fishermen of Newfoundland.

The twelve include: Les Mything, Bryan Bennett, Lloyd Bakken, Richard Adelia, Don Stueck, Ross Gates, Bill Lowe, Maynard Rapley, Stan Peterson, Leo Coburn, Ken Cosgrove, and Charles Rapley.

These outstanding farmers have agreed to donate 100 bushels of grain each, which by the time it makes its way to Newfoundland food banks will be in the form

of flour.

This consolidated effort began last January, when Gordon Stueck, who now lives in Leader, sent 500 pounds of pancake flour to Newfoundland. Stueck decided to do this in support of the fishermen who had recently lost their right to fish for cod and help them in their time of crisis. The shut-down of cod fishing in the Maritimes has meant real hardships for families that rely on their industry. Stueck's donation made national news, and now many more have joined the effort.

CSP Foods has agreed to grind 2,000 bushels of wheat into flour, bag it, and ship it to Winnipeg, all free of charge. The 1,200 bushels of grain from Climax has also been delivered to Saskatoon on its way to Newfoundland free of charge, by Bickner Trucking of Vanguard. The grain being sent to Newfoundland from Climax will produce around 81,000 loaves of bread.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize these outstanding farmers of Climax for their generous hearts and for showing the rest of Canada the true spirit of all Saskatchewan farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Medical Research Council of Canada Grants

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you. I have a good news/bad news announcement today. The good news should be better; the bad stands to be corrected by a federal government ostensibly dedicated to correcting regional disparities.

The good news is that in the fiscal year 1992-93, the Medical Research Council of Canada awarded \$3.715 million to the Saskatchewan research establishment for medical research.

The bad news is that this amount is only 1.5 per cent of the MRC's (Medical Research Council) total budget of more than \$259 million, and that 1.5 per cent is down from 1.9 per cent two years before. And this is despite the fact that Saskatchewan has 3.7 per cent of Canada's population and we pay 2.6 per cent of the total individual income tax received by Ottawa.

What conclusions can we draw from this? Does it mean we have no qualified medical researchers in Saskatchewan? Tell that to Dr. Carol Haines who is pioneering survey research in breast cancer. Or perhaps our outgoing Lieutenant Governor who did research on cobalt treatment for cancers, should be told that what she did in Saskatchewan wasn't worthy of recognition.

No, Mr. Speaker, we have the facilities and we have the experts. What we haven't had in the past and what we don't seem to have at the moment is representation within the federal government that will speak up for Saskatchewan. That is the bad news.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Aboriginal Business Magazine

Mr. Cline: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to inform the House about a new magazine starting in Saskatoon called *Aboriginal Business Magazine*. The concept for the magazine arose last year when Leighton Wensley and Brent Ballard, both of Saskatoon, posed the question: how are aboriginal people investing their money?

And the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that there are 3,000 viable aboriginal businesses in Canada. Indian, Metis and Inuit people and organizations are very active in the Canadian economy and the role that they play is growing every day. A lot of people don't realize that and I think the magazine will make Canadians better informed about that fact.

The first issue will be out June 1 and it will deal mostly with Saskatchewan, including expected articles on ventures like Saskatoon's McKnight Commercial Centre and the Kitsaki Development Corporation, a very successful business operating out of La Ronge.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we should applaud the people behind this magazine who are going to keep us better informed and wish them luck in what is hopefully going to be a very long and successful venture.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS**Pipeline Explosion**

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment. Mr. Minister, for the second time this year, a major pipeline explosion has occurred in Saskatchewan. Fortunately, no one was injured in this, but once again this raises some very serious concerns about the safety of various pipelines running throughout our province.

Back in February when the first explosion occurred the Energy minister told us that this was a very rare occurrence and no reason for ongoing concern. Now that a major explosion has occurred for a second time in three months, Mr. Minister, are you going to take this matter more seriously? What steps are you taking to ensure that these pipelines are made safe and that no further explosions occur?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — I'd like to thank the hon. member for his question. I'd like to first point out that in this case, again this is not a TransGas pipeline; it's a pipeline that is owned in most part by Amoco, a private company. There is no provincial jurisdiction over this or the Foothills pipeline; it comes under the purview of the National Energy Board.

The Transportation Safety Board, which is a federal

agency, is doing an investigation as we talk here today. They will be making a report to the National Energy Board. And if there's a problem with the integrity of the system, they'll undertake to take corrective action on that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, although no one has been hurt in the two explosions to date this year, the potential exists for a major, life-threatening disaster. Many of the pipelines which run through Saskatchewan pass very close to farms, to railways, highways, communities, and Indian reserves. Because of this, Mr. Minister, there is a great potential for a major disaster.

And the messages you've been receiving from people all over Saskatchewan should tell you that as well. In fact, when we asked earlier about the Transportation Safety Board's report, warning of this very thing, the Minister of Economic Development simply told us this is a federal matter.

Mr. Minister, even if this is a federal matter, this is Saskatchewan people that are at risk. What are you going to do? What are you going to do to ensure that these pipelines are safe and that no further explosions occur?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — The member asks, what are we going to do. There are a number of items open to us, but I again stress that if the pipeline's integrity was in question and we wanted to shut it down, we have no authority to do that. And I want to make that very clear, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member from Kindersley.

What I want to say in terms of what we're going to do is that I've had discussions with the Minister of Environment and Resource Management this morning, and we are concerned about public safety in regard to having two pipeline incidents so close together; in a period of three months there have been two explosions in Saskatchewan.

I have drafted a letter this morning under my signature — it'll be reviewed by the department later this day — for the chairman of the National Energy Board, Mr. Priddle. And I'm asking Mr. Priddle to, upon the conclusion of the Transportation Safety Board's examination of the incident that happened at 2 a.m. this morning, to have a look at the integrity of the pipeline system in Saskatchewan, to give a level of comfort to Saskatchewan residents that they're not in danger. If there is some danger, then I would insist that the National Energy Board take corrective action.

The other thing that we're willing to do at SaskEnergy and TransGas is to provide an information workshop for all members of the Legislative Assembly, if you so wish. If you want more information, we can tell you very clearly that TransGas, a Crown corporation, has one of the safest systems with the most integrity

anywhere in North America, and we'd be more than willing upon your request to provide you with a full information package and presentation to opposition and government caucus members.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, could you tell us what has been done about the explosion that occurred near Maple Creek earlier this year? What follow-up has been done with regard to that explosion; what testing has been undertaken; what have you found out about the cause of that explosion? And, Mr. Minister, what specific things are you doing besides writing letters with regard to these explosions so that future explosions can be prevented?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Anguish: — Well the pipeline explosion happened back on February 15. We've met with Mr. Bob Reid, who was the president of Foothills Pipelines at that time. The particular incident that happened with the Foothills pipeline is something that's very complex and hard to explain in the short time that's here before us at question period, but we can get into that at the presentation that we're willing to provide to MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly).

The actual cause that was identified is something called hydrogen-induced cracking, and it's some very unique conditions that have to take place for that to occur. In this case that did occur and there was an explosion on that particular pipeline.

What the member opposite is suggesting I think, unless he's trying to make political hay, Mr. Speaker, is in fact we shut down the entire pipeline system in the province. And that's not acceptable to us. We are concerned about the explosion that happened — two of them in the past three months — and we're looking at that very carefully. And if there's action required, we will in fact take that action.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

No-fault Insurance

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). For many days my colleague from Souris-Cannington has been asking you questions regarding no-fault insurance, and your answers have shown your complete lack of knowledge regarding this very important and ill-advised initiative.

Mr. Minister, this problem appears to be widespread. Last week's edition of both newspapers in The Battlefords contained articles about a recent meeting you had with both local lawyers on no-fault insurance. The *News-Optimist* says, quote:

Several lawyers who attended the meeting said the meeting was nothing more than a façade

led more by SGI bureaucrats than Goulet himself.

Local lawyer Micheal Hudec said:

The minister didn't have much to say. The people he had with him did most of the talking.

Mr. Minister, it is painfully evident that you don't have a handle on this issue and you are being led around by the hand. Mr. Minister, if not you, who is in charge at SGI? Can you tell us that, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, I think that the member completely lacks any knowledge. These members from across for the past two weeks have been there raising absolutely nothing except process questions.

Mr. Speaker, they have absolutely no concern for the fact that the seniors have the best benefits from any insurance scheme in Canada. There is the best in regards to home-makers, Mr. Speaker.

These people from across do not want to debate that — they just read out from prepared text every time they stand up. I think that they're the ones who have absolutely no understanding of the Bill.

There was also youth in regards to youth benefits. You have not raised one question about youth. You are the people who lack absolute knowledge in regards to this issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Minister, it's clear that you're not in charge otherwise this widespread consultation program that you've embarked on would be reality instead of fiction. The Battleford *Telegraph* said that, quote:

Local lawyer Harvey Walker boycotted the meeting because he described it as completely reprehensible (Mr. Minister), a farce intended to make it seem as though Goulet is consulting with legal professionals.

Walker goes on to say that:

If they did any consulting it was with three or four select lawyers. Some half-serious conversations over a cup of coffee does not translate into widespread consultation.

That's what he said. And Mr. Harvey Walker is a long-time, respected legal counsel in the town of North Battleford.

Mr. Minister, in the face of this very real and very widespread concern, will you take the responsibility to delay the passage of the Bill until you have consulted reasonably and considerably with the people of the province of Saskatchewan? Will you do that for us, please?

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, both the Liberals and the Conservatives will want to have a 24 per cent increase in regards to insurance rates in this province. They have absolutely no care at all for the people of the province of Saskatchewan. They will want 8 per cent increase every year. This is the position of the Liberals and this is the position of the Tories. They're the same in that regard.

There is no concern for the people of this province in that regard. They're also having no concern on the seniors, the home-makers. Ninety per cent of the people who are employed, the self-employed, absolutely no care at all. All they worry about is saying this and that about the process. Absolutely nothing of substance.

Quit reading your reports and say something special in regards to the issue of no-fault in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Minister, this whole process is becoming a sham. It's nothing but an it's-not-my-fault insurance program that you're putting out.

Before the meeting in North Battleford, the media asked you if they would be allowed in. You told them that you had no objections and that you would ask the lawyers if they had any, and they did not; the media would be allowed in. Moments after the meeting started, a member of your staff told the media that they would not be allowed in.

Yet one of the lawyers present at that meeting said, and I quote:

At no time did Mr. Goulet ask if the media would be present, or could be present. That's a lie and it's just typical of how the government has handled this entire no-fault insurance thing.

Mr. Minister, now it appears that you are going to drastic measures to cover up your incompetence. Mr. Minister, why would you find it necessary to bar the media from the meeting they were invited to and then mislead them as to the reasons why they were barred? Do you feel that is proper for a minister of the Crown to do that with your responsibilities to this Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I think the member is misleading the Legislative Assembly. I said, number one, I had a working meeting with the lawyers in North Battleford. You cannot blame the lawyers or anybody for the decision that I make. The decision was whether to include the press during the meeting or after the meeting. I made the decision to include them after the meeting. After the meeting they could contact any lawyer in that room, which they did. And also they contacted me in regards to a 20- to 30-minute speech.

Now when I looked at it I talked about the seniors' issue; I talked about the issue of the youth;

home-makers. It seems to me you're making the issue of whether or not the press coming in during the meeting or after the meeting is more important than the issues of the youth, the seniors, and everybody else in this province.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, he should be accurate, read the Bill and be accurate about exactly what happened in North Battleford before he stands up. Quit reading from your prepared text and speak up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, the *Battleford Telegraph* states, and I say . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. I would like to ask the government members to please not interrupt when the member's on his feet and is trying to ask his question. He has the right to ask that question and you should respect that right.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for SGI. The headline in the *Battleford Telegraph* says, and I quote: Goulet lies to media.

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. I think the member from . . . order. I think the member from Morse knows full well that he can't do indirectly what he can't do directly; and simply by quoting someone else does not give you the right to use . . . or accuse a minister of misleading or lying to this House. That simply is unacceptable; and I ask the member to withdraw from it. Order.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that line. Mr. Minister, the *Battleford News-Optimist* says, and I quote:

Micheal Hudec said the number one feeling is that SGI is being dishonest and misleading about their advertising.

Mr. Minister, it is clear the minister responsible, as you are, for SGI — or supposedly are — do not enjoy the confidence of the professionals nor the confidence of the public who are answering the questions. Instead of dealing with the issue of no-fault insurance, you're talking about different kinds of areas than you really should be. It is too important an issue, Mr. Minister, affecting thousands of Saskatchewan people, to have a person like you fumble the ball.

Will you, Mr. Minister, provide to the people of the province an opportunity to openly discuss the issue of no-fault insurance across the province of Saskatchewan, leaving the door open for communications from the public to give you the answers that they want to have and not what you want to tell them to do?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I think those members should quit hiding behind prepared text and

learn to speak from their feelings and from their knowledge. I think that those members are scared to talk about the fact that they are asking for a 24 per cent increase for the people of the province; that 24 per cent increase which is backed up by both the Conservatives and the Liberals. I think that's what they're scared to talk about. All they're talking about is process issues.

They also forget to talk about the fact that the Canadian Physiotherapy Association, the Saskatchewan physiotherapists association support no-fault. The insurance brokers support no-fault. The Canadian Paraplegic Association supports no-fault. The Lac La Ronge Indian Band supports no-fault. And their basic position is that a lot of poor people are left out in this system right now. And I think that's the way that they want to see it. They say that this no-fault system is the best for the province of Saskatchewan. You are back in the Dark Ages on your 24 per cent increase.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Expansion of Gaming

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is for the Minister of Gaming.

Mr. Minister, on December 11, 1991 I asked the hon. member from Saskatoon Fairview, the first in a long line of subsequent NDP (New Democratic Party) Gaming ministers, to explain, and I will give you my direct quote:

What the overall plan is concerning gaming before any changes are made or any new concepts introduced.

The then minister said, and I quote him directly:

I agree that this policy seems to have drifted along without any firm direction and without any concept of where we want to go with this kind of gambling activity.

Mr. Minister, I've been waiting now, and the people of Saskatchewan have been as well, for some two and a half years for an answer to my initial question.

I ask you today: will you put a halt to further gaming expansion until you can produce your plan, complete with supporting research for your decisions?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member from Greystone that I find her confusing. One day she supports the expansion of gaming, urging us, as I've said before in this House, to hurry up and introduce the VLT (video lottery terminal) program because we're losing 50, \$60 million in revenue. The next day she's saying, slow down because you're going too fast.

Now I say to the member from Greystone, you can't ride both horses. I ask you if you support jobs for aboriginal people, if you support the Market Mall

study that was done that indicated that we'll create hundreds of new jobs in Regina. Do you support those jobs? I ask if you support the \$25 million of investment that will happen to create jobs in construction in this province. Do you support that?

With respect to our policy, I say to the member from Greystone that our position and our implementation policy is clear, as it was with the video lottery terminal program. We have, and we continue to believe in, controlled expansion of gaming, which is why we introduced the video lottery terminal program at 50 per cent of market saturation.

And I want to say, with respect to that particular program, we haven't had a glitch since it started running. The central computer system is working well, the hospitality industry is comfortable with it, and I think the member from Greystone should put her case forward. Do you oppose that video lottery terminal program? Do you oppose the investment of some \$50 million in this province in the casino expansion or don't you? Which side are you on?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Minister, you simply don't seem to understand that question period is for you to put forward your answers to the people's questions.

There is a growing level of discomfort with your very haphazard approach to gambling in Saskatchewan. Even the people who do not oppose gambling very much object to the lack of comprehensive planning that is evident in your approach. On Friday you indicated, as you did today, that some of the research you're relying upon for the Regina casino expansion was done by Peat Marwick. You just mentioned it to me right now.

Mr. Minister, the title of this study paper is, "Casino development in Regina: building a case for a downtown location." Now the study is overwhelming with the benefits of a downtown casino, but not one word on the negative costs. Now do you consider this to be objective research, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Let me say to the member opposite that you can find studies on both sides of the issues. There are people who are opposed to gaming and who are not proponents of gaming, who will give their background and give their analysis of the issue. And we have looked and analysed studies from both sides.

And I want to say to the member opposite, one of the reasons that we embarked on the expansion of casinos in a measured way, as we have done, with only two locations, regulated and controlled by the Liquor and Gaming Authority, is because one of the reports clearly indicates that the expansion should be controlled and regulated. And we're doing that. And I think that's reasonable policy.

Now I want to say to the member from Greystone that we were one of the first jurisdictions who acted, and in

advance, with respect to the minister's advisory board on the social impact of gaming. They have made a number of recommendations to us, many of which we have introduced. They've asked us for an awareness program; we're developing that, it's ongoing.

So I say to the member from Greystone, we have a policy and it's quite clearly articulated. We have a policy with respect to video lottery terminals; that too is quite clearly articulated. And if you can't understand what the policy is and what the program is, and if you can't understand the fact that we've got a minister's advisory committee making recommendations ongoing to this government, then I'm sorry, ma'am, I can't help you to understand.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Just take a moment, Mr. Minister, and talk about how you've relayed and articulated your policy to your own caucus members. On May 5, 1992, the NDP caucus was provided with this document, consisting of questions that members might be asked about gaming. They were alerted to the concerns of the public which included an increase in prostitution; in crime; incidents of addiction; concerns about an increase in alcohol consumption and access to VLTs by minors.

The document also provides suggested answers which completely ignore the concerns of the public and proposes this response from members of this NDP government. Quote: VLTs will provide the site-operators and the province with a much-needed source of revenue.

Mr. Minister, it is obvious that your members have been instructed to ignore the public's concerns; that your government has abandoned its real responsibilities on this issue. Mr. Minister, will you impose a moratorium on further gaming expansion until you can prove to the people of Saskatchewan that you've actually done your homework?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member from Greystone that yes, we have communicated with members of our caucus to be aware of issues that may be raised — some of them based on fact, some of them based on none. But I want to say what has become very clear here today, Mr. Speaker, is that this member, this member from Greystone, the Leader of the Liberal Party who promised the people of Saskatchewan that she was going to bring a new form of politics, a new standard of ethics, drags information from a former member of this caucus into this legislature that was given to him as a member of this caucus and this is what she displays as the new ethics.

I say, Mr. Speaker, this is low, gutter politics and it's not unlike what Liberals are known for all over.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Interprovincial Trade

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development. Mr. Minister, your colleague the Deputy Premier is currently at a conference on interprovincial trade.

As you know, the opposition supports free trade and the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers. We are having a hard time understanding your government's desire to keep these trade barriers intact. I understand that one point of contention is your government's continued support for restrictions on foreign ownership of land.

I was wondering if you could clarify your position for us, Mr. Minister. Just who are you talking about when you refer to foreign ownership? Do you consider Canadian citizens who live in other provinces to be foreigners?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the deputy leader is attending a meeting in Winnipeg at the present time, dealing with provincial barriers and the removal of provincial barriers.

So the member understands the position of the Saskatchewan government; we are working diligently with the other provincial premiers to remove barriers. And I want to make it clear as well that there are areas where we believe we will not have the restrictions removed by the 30th deadline.

These are restrictions that you had in place while you were in government, as well as this government, and they are there. And they're part of the economic development strategy that was there when you were in government; they're there now.

What we're saying is that there is no way in the world that all of the restrictions can be removed by a June 30 deadline. But we are confident that if everyone is patient, that we can come to some sort of an agreement by the date of June 30 whereby most of the barriers, significant barriers between provinces, can be removed.

Whether or not that decision has been reached at the meeting in Winnipeg, I don't know. I'm not even sure that they're concluded their consultation and deliberations. But we are hopeful and optimistic that if there is consideration given to provincial needs and aspirations, that a deal can be reached by the June 30 deadline.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Well, Mr. Minister, the question I asked you — and I believe we are all Canadians here or we're not. Your Premier, the member that was part of the constitutional process a short time ago in our history, believed that we should all be Canadians — what I asked you was: do you support the dropping of barriers on the ownership of farm land for other Canadians?

Our caucus supports it 100 per cent. We moved the restriction from a quarter section to a half section. We

believe it's right now in our history to move up to unrestricted ownership of our farm resource by other Canadians.

Mr. Minister, do you support that stand and will you pass that on to your minister, your Deputy Premier?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well look, if the member wants to give his head a shake, he'll realize how convoluted his logic is. You had foreign ownership legislation on the books when you left government unceremoniously in 1991. You had it in place. And you made amendments to it and you left it in place. And it's there.

What we're saying is there will be no changes to that legislation which you had in place, amended while you were in government, before the June 30 deadline. So that isn't going to be done.

What we're saying, in the negotiations that are ongoing, it's unusually naïve to believe that every barrier can be removed — whether that's the monopoly of Crown corporations, the affirmative action in northern Saskatchewan, or your farm land security Bill which you amended and had in government for nine years — that's what I'm saying. So for you to say that you're absolutely opposed to any restriction on foreign ownership as it would relate to other Canadians, that's a phoney argument because you kept it in place for nine years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 65 — An Act to amend The Natural Resources Act and to enact a Consequential Amendment to The Forest Act

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Natural Resources Act and to enact a Consequential Amendment to The Forest Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 66 — An Act respecting the Superannuation of Teachers and Disability Benefits for Teachers

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that a Bill respecting the Superannuation of Teachers and Disability Benefits for Teachers be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 67 — An Act to amend The Crown Corporations Act, 1993

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Crown

Corporations Act, 1993 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.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Resolution No. 86 — Government's Gambling Strategy

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to finally have the opportunity to engage in some serious debate about the issue of the government's gambling strategy. And I find it interesting that the NDP has chosen to make gambling the mainstay of its economic development policy without really having a comprehensive understanding of the industry itself.

Mr. Speaker, there are many elements involved in the current gaming industry in Saskatchewan. The first legalized gambling in the province was horse-racing. And free from competition from other gambling forms, the industry grew and flourished in the 1960s and in the early 1970s.

At its peak, the horse-racing industry employed thousands and generated hundreds of millions of dollars in economic spin-offs. The racing industry was the foundation of legalized gambling in our province of Saskatchewan.

With each government that is elected, renewed promises are made to the participants in the racing industry — promises that the industry will not die, that government after government will see to it that horse-racing lives on.

It is interesting to note that rarely is anything actually done to support those claims, but politicians continue to show up to the annual Saskatchewan derby and other prestigious events in racing to make the same claims and then they disappear.

(1415)

In the early 1990s the previous administration spent considerable time and considerable money studying the industry and decided to expand the industry through teletheatre betting terminals across the province. This meant that communities such as Prince Albert, Melfort, Yorkton, Melville, Estevan, Swift Current, and Moose Jaw, just to name a few, were able to place bets at their local *pari-mutuel* theatre and watch the races on satellite television direct from the post track.

For a while the extra revenue became the lifeblood of racing, but lately new competition from video lottery terminals has sounded the death-knell for racing once again.

You know the minister has talked a good line with a lot

of groups, but they are realizing all too quickly that the government strategy was to tell them what they wanted to hear, just to minimize opposition to its plans.

And here is an example of the kind of thing told to the horse-racing industry. And I quote from the minister's letter of October 15, 1993, and this is a direct quote, Mr. Speaker:

Since being sworn in as the minister responsible for horse-racing on March 17, many horsemen have told me their concerns about the future of racing in this province. I'm writing to you today to assure you that I both know and understand the importance of this agri-based industry and its benefits to the Saskatchewan economy. Further, I want you to know that the Saskatchewan government is committed to its renewal.

The minister ends his letter by saying:

I encourage you to develop your breeding program, to select your racing stock, and count on employment plans with the confidence that horse-racing in Saskatchewan is about to realize its true potential through renewal.

Interesting. Especially that a member of the Prairieland Exhibition management recently told the minister that horse-racing might have to be sacrificed, depending on the government's casino expansion plans. And the minister in charge of Gaming this very day reportedly replied, and I quote:

Well you are in charge. You'll have to do whatever you have to do.

That hardly sounds like a strong commitment to the horse-racing industry.

So, Mr. Speaker, a society which began with horse-racing gradually progressed to other forms of betting. As public acceptance of gambling grew, other forms of competition sprang up around the province and across the country. Government-sponsored lotteries caught on quickly, and the new revenue source provided funding for sports and cultural organizations who put the money to work, supporting an important volunteer infrastructure at the community level.

Lotteries were initially a federal jurisdiction. But the provincial governments knew a good thing when they saw it, and soon provincial revenue-sharing agreements led to the establishment of the Western Canada Lottery Corporation which oversees the operation of lotteries for the prairie provinces. Sask Lotteries is the administrative arm of the Saskatchewan Lotteries, and Sask Sport oversees the sport and culture organizations funded through the proceeds.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that government has continually increased its share of revenues going

into the general coffers over the past few years. On a parallel level, bingo began to expand and move into the electronic age. From plastic markers and popcorn kernels on cardboard cards played in the local church basement for turkeys and hams, bingo moved into the realm of commercial enterprise regulated by governments. Prizes sky-rocketed and profit operators . . . private operators took over the marketing and promotion of the game for a share of the profits.

The first commercial bingo hall was introduced in Saskatchewan in 1981, and the first operators of that enterprise encouraged the government of the day to move quickly — quickly — to implement stringent rules for the control of commercial operations.

But government did not move quickly, and the development of stringent rules we are still waiting for; in fact they are still ongoing. The guidelines developed by the previous Conservative administration were responsible for allowing abuses by many operators in the province of Saskatchewan — abuses that went unpunished at the expense of many charitable organizations.

The Conservative government, under tremendous pressure from charitable organizations to implement fair and understandable controls, finally called a provincial bingo inquiry to seek advice. In spite of the many excellent suggestions put forward during that expensive inquiry, the government of the day summarily ignored it. They knew, Mr. Speaker, that the industry was rife with problems and they chose to do virtually nothing about it.

Not only did that mean that many charities were victimized by lack of control being exercised by the Gaming Commission, it meant that operators and community bingos who attempted to adhere to the guidelines without the enforcement support of the Gaming Commission were placed in an uncompetitive position and ended up being forced out of business.

Today the business is controlled by very few operators. And although the government has moved to increase the charity's share of the profits at the expense of the private operators, which is a very good thing, the government has doubled the percentage of revenue it collects in the name of a licensing fee.

The end result is that commercial bingo operations have remained under licence by the provincial government. And current policy does not reflect any intention on the part of this administration to change that situation. Another result is that the level of gambling on bingo in Saskatchewan has increased dramatically since the advent of the first commercial bingo hall in 1982 and the introduction of the current system of play on disposable paper cards.

When electronic bingo, as it was known then, was first introduced in 1981, the per-player spending at any given bingo event was in the range of \$8 to \$10. The faster-paced games, higher prizes, and more expensive prices encourage not only more players to

participate but had people digging into their wallets for \$30 per person per night within the very first year.

The introduction of break-open tickets, growing jackpots, and larger mega-bingos served to steadily increase the amount that people were willing to spend on a game. At the time, although some concerns were raised by church groups and other organizations morally opposed to gambling, government saw the licensing fees from bingo as a windfall for their revenues.

And local charities were earning more money than ever before, in spite of the fact that a disproportionate share was often ending up in the hands of the commercial bingo hall owners due to the lack of enforcement of the rules.

In 1981 in Regina, for instance, there were approximately seven different charities running bingos every month. By 1986 there were more than 100 charities earning revenue from bingo, thousands licensed throughout the province. At no time did the government undertake to measure the impact of increased gambling on the economy, but addiction began to surface as an identifiable problem within the industry during those early years and has continued to mount as gaming proliferates.

Section 190 of the Criminal Code of Canada also allows for casino gambling to be supervised and licensed to agricultural fairs and exhibition boards, something which was only allowed during Exhibition Week in the early 1980s. The government relaxed the rules on casino gaming as time went on, gradually licensing events at which there were animal judging events until the point where simply having a cow on the exhibition grounds constituted permission for a casino licence.

In the 1990s, casinos have operated as standalone enterprises for the Regina and Saskatoon exhibition boards, and the number of dates per year has dramatically increased in satellite cities such as North Battleford, Prince Albert, Lloydminster, Moose Jaw, and Yorkton, with Swift Current holding casinos during special events.

Break-open tickets increased in popularity, starting in the licensed premises of veterans' clubs and then moving into bingo halls. In the mid-1980s, a deal was struck between the hotels association and the hospital foundations in Regina and Saskatoon, wherein the hospital — pardon me, the hotels — would sell the tickets for a small commission and the hospitals would apply the profits to purchase equipment and supplies.

For the most part, the history of gambling in our province then has been one of charitable fund-raising.

Very recently, with fiscal situations being what they are for governments not just in Saskatchewan and Canada but across North America, gambling has become increasingly appealing as a quick-fix solution for cash-strapped public administrations. Start-up

costs are cheap, cash flow comes in fast, and what the heck, people are doing it anyway, so why shouldn't government profit?

Therein, Mr. Speaker, lies the dilemma. What we must attempt to determine is what is the role of government in the gambling business. Well first off, I would like to say that government does have a role, that government must act, above all, as a regulator; that is not a job which can be left to outside forces for obvious reasons.

But should government share directly in the profits? Well traditionally the Saskatchewan government has been getting a pretty reasonable share of the profits through licence fees. But lately there has been greater lures of coffers overflowing from VLT revenues and profits from expanded casino gambling. In other words, gambling has become an economic development strategy for the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it matters little whether we are talking about developing energy options or expanding gambling opportunities. In that context, the province has spent huge amounts of time and money trying to quantify the perceived risks and the benefits of the nuclear industry, for instance.

And why have we done that? Because the people want to have a level of comfort that elected representatives and business leaders have done their homework, have researched the positive and the negative consequences of policy actions, and have based their decisions on objective evaluation of the information at hand.

I have applied consistent pressure since 1991 for the government to produce its gaming strategy, not because I was in a hurry to install anything. In fact a review of *Hansard*, of every single thing that's been said in this House by me, whether it be in estimates or in question period or others, will indicate at no time did I ever tell the government to hurry up and do anything with VLTs. But I did this: I raised the issue of the government producing its gaming strategy because it was obvious that the government was in a hurry to install VLTs.

I have not questioned the government on its lack of consideration for the horse-racing industry because I had a share in a horse one time ago, but because my brief involvement with the industry and the many people that it employs gave me some understanding of the value and yes, the potential of the industry.

I have no interest in trying to protect the bingo industry because one of my staff was involved five years ago. I'm concerned that charitable revenues be protected from government competition, because I acknowledge the tremendous challenge it is for non-profit agencies to raise money to do the wonderful work that they do in communities from one end of Saskatchewan to the other.

Furthermore, for the record, the viewpoint held by the

present executive director of the Liberal Party on whether or not to pursue a casino in Moose Jaw five years ago should hardly preclude me or him from asking this government to produce evidence that its actions are based on sound research and strategic planning.

No matter how many red herrings the government chooses to hold out in question period, the fact remains that there is no specific strategic plan. Somehow it has never occurred to this government that I was pressuring them to produce a gaming strategy because it was the sensible way to approach the decision-making process.

Since the government members are forever curious about my position on gaming, let me say this for the record: there are many people in the Liberal Party who support gaming; there are many people in the Liberal Party who are opposed to gaming; there are Liberals who have wanted to pursue casinos in Moose Jaw; and Liberals who have spoken out against the damage that gambling can do to our society. The thing which gives me most pride in the Liberal Party is that we can sit down and objectively examine this issue, free from foregone policy conclusions.

Something which all Liberals agree upon is that there is gambling in Saskatchewan, and that it is likely to stay. Therefore, the focus of the discussions about gambling in the Liberal Party is centred on how to measure the actual benefits and the actual detriments that can accrue from further gambling expansion, and what role government should play in the gambling industry.

As I mentioned, there seems to be some confusion in the government ranks about my approach to and position on gambling, which is fairly obvious that they're trying to ensure they don't have any clarification on this afternoon, by their attempts not to listen.

So I am very pleased to have this opportunity to walk the government members down memory lane from the start of the legislature, just to remind them how difficult it has been to get any sensible answers from the four different ministers responsible for Gaming since the NDP came to power in 1991.

(1430)

Let's see. I think it all started back in December of 1991. I questioned the hon. member from Saskatoon Fairview, who was then minister of Gaming. My opening statement was, and I quote from *Hansard*:

(Mr. Minister) You made comments recently concerning computerized slot machines being allowed in Saskatchewan. The whole gaming industry in our province from bingos to casinos and horse racing and lotteries should be re-evaluated. And there's tremendous potential within these industries. And at the same time, due largely to the lack of planning by the previous government, there are (many)

problems.

Will you please tell us, Mr. Minister, what the overall plan is concerning gaming in Saskatchewan before any changes are made or any new concepts are . . . introduced.

Now I remind the members that this was the question I asked in December of 1991. That was two and a half years ago, Mr. Speaker. At the time the then minister of Gaming replied, and I quote:

I agree very strongly with certain parts of the preamble to the member's question, particularly that this policy or the policy in this area seems to have drifted along without any overall concept of where we want to go with this kind of gambling activity.

That was the answer in 1991. There was no policy at the time that gave firm direction or overall concept of where the government wanted to go, Mr. Speaker.

Fair enough. Their government had just been elected and understandably they needed time to put things in order. I was quite accepting of that at the time. They certainly didn't hear me saying, build a new casino or let's plug in those VLTs without a moment's hesitation.

What I did say, and I refer again to page 219 of *Hansard* on December 11, 1991, and I quote:

(But) although governments have allowed gambling, they have never dealt with it from the standpoint of economic potential. And there is tremendous potential for an overall plan which could connect tourism and non-profit agencies and I believe would generate employment as well.

So the members opposite will see clearly from that statement that I was anxious for the government to develop a plan that examined the potential. I also asked the minister to re-examine the findings of the public inquiry on bingo but never received any indication that he had done so.

There were opportunities very early, very early on, for the NDP government to sit down with the industry participants and bring all the variables to the table. But the sad fact of the matter is, the government got a sniff of the potential government revenues and the spirit of planning and cooperation was replaced by greed — greed to get the cash before the charities did.

Still in December of 1991, I asked the minister of Agriculture, who was responsible for horse-racing, if he would outline his plan for the horse-racing industry with respect to where video lottery terminals would be placed because of the competition threat they posed to horse-racing. I don't claim to have special anticipatory powers, Mr. Speaker, but it seemed obvious to everyone but the minister at the time that video lottery terminals would not have a positive impact on horse-racing.

Now let's fast-forward to 1994 for a moment. Three years have passed and the newest minister of Gaming still hasn't bothered to figure out the impact of video lottery terminals on the horse-racing industry either. One day he announces that there will be "no video lottery terminals at the racetracks." Less than a month later he's back in the news saying that there will be video lottery terminals at the racetracks. But that's okay because people need to come out to bet on the horses and . . . well, the logic was extremely hard to follow and quite honestly most people simply gave up at that point.

The point is that all the right questions were asked in 1991, the right questions were asked in 1992. I questioned the government about horse-racing, about bingo, about decreased Nevada ticket sales by hospital foundations, about the need to resolve the native casino gaming issue. But not one minister, Mr. Speaker, not one had the common sense or the respect for the magnitude of this issue to provide a detailed, comprehensive plan for a gaming industry.

Now was that too much to be asking for? I wonder. I wonder when all of them sit in caucus meetings, doesn't anyone ask the Premier, doesn't anyone ask the cabinet, why don't we have an intelligent plan for gaming?

You know the public can't understand that either, how 53 intelligent people can't even come up with a plan on gambling. The people figure that if they can't do that, Mr. Speaker, it isn't surprising that the economic development strategy for the province has fallen flat on its face.

Now let's go back to gambling. My motion today is to urge the government to do a couple of very simple things. First of all, and I implore with a please, can we see the detailed plan that they are following to coordinate all the component parts of gambling. Show us that you've brought all of the participants of the industry together; bring them together at a conference or a series of meetings, all of them at the same time, to achieve some consensus on what their expectations are for the long term as far as government control, regulation, and involvement in gambling. That is step number one.

If they've done it, which they have not done, the evidence should be easy to produce. There must be minutes of all of these meetings where people have gathered, each and every part of the gaming industry. There must be recommendations of the task force. There must be something. But there has been nothing produced to be brought forward in this House.

Step two is also a simple step. As we have asked on numerous occasions, as recently as last week, show us and show the people of Saskatchewan all of the research the government has commissioned, and in particular, the definitive, objective study being used to guide the decision-making process.

Now let's face it, no self-respecting government would make a decision to plunge headlong into the

gambling business without fairly assessing both the positive and the negative aspects of casino gambling. Or would they? To this point, we have unearthed a few pieces of research in spite of being denied full access to the Bill Eadington report referred to by the minister on June 1, 1993.

In that report the minister indicates that Eadington's research suggests that Saskatchewanians are not gambling to their potential. I quote *Hansard* from June 1, 1993, Mr. Speaker: The present per capita gaming of Saskatchewan residents is \$150. The potential will increase as other forms of gaming are introduced and that, as the industry matures, "there's potential for \$500 per capita." End of quote.

Wow! Five hundred dollars per capita for every man, woman, and child in the province. That works out to \$250 million a year. That sounds like a lot of money. It sounds like a lot of money, Mr. Speaker. In fact to quote the minister on June 1 of 1993, and I directly quote:

Now how that might break down and if we can reach 500 or if we can reach 300, I just don't know. I guess we can speculate, but it would be nothing better than an educated guess.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that sure makes me feel secure. The minister in charge of gambling expansion using words like "guess" and "speculate." I wonder if he had never thought of doing actual research to examine the demographics of Saskatchewan, to determine what impact \$500 annual spending by both adults would have on a family that lives on welfare.

The minister, having already undertaken to install VLTs in Saskatchewan at that point, gave us his educated guess. Well, Mr. Speaker, he was definitely not on the mark. In the first year of operation, almost a billion dollars in loonies will be bet through VLT machines. If you just count the actual cash from which the government keeps 15 per cent, total amount plugged into VLT machines alone is, according to the February 19 *Leader-Post*, \$1.014 billion. So much for the lucky guess of the minister in charge. If he guessed this badly once, how many other things did he guess wrong about?

It is obvious that the minister has no intention of revealing the bases for his decisions. Because, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, I think he would be laughed right out of the province. People in Saskatchewan are not naïve. There isn't a person in this province who believes that the government can suck \$700,000 per year out of towns the size of Melfort and Assiniboia without having those communities pay a price somewhere down the line.

And small towns and small cities are really a microcosm of what goes on in our larger cities — cities like Saskatoon and Regina. It isn't hard to imagine what will happen to the economy of a Melfort if \$700,000 leaves the community this year. I can't quantify the effects exactly, but I do know that a great deal of that money would have been spent in local

restaurants, in bars, in movie theatres, in retail outlets, if there were no VLTs to plug into. Certainly some of it would have found its way to Las Vegas, but most of it wouldn't have been gambled at all.

So why didn't the government take the time to figure this out? What possible explanations could there be for not wanting to figure this out? Well we could assume that they had no way to calculate the effect this would have on a community. I doubt that is true; economists can measure anything.

And that isn't a complicated equation. Establish the annual income of the community, extract \$700,000, and figure out which sectors that it's likely to come from. Recalculate the bottom line of those businesses with \$700,000 missing in their collective sales, and you'll get a fairly accurate picture.

The other possible explanation is that they knew how to figure it out, Mr. Speaker, but they didn't really want to know the truth, or at least they didn't want other people to know the truth. And I find that to be a far more plausible explanation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that far too many governments have moved to expand gambling for all of the wrong reasons. In many jurisdictions gambling has become a last-ditch salvation for administrations bankrupt of other economic development ideas.

Therefore the Liberal Party would like to see the government undertake objective research which examines all of the economic and social implications of expanded gaming opportunities before moving into any new projects. The Liberals call on the minister to immediately invoke a moratorium on all further gaming expansion for a period of 18 months.

As of today the exhibition boards have expanded casino gambling and there are almost 4,000 VLTs operating across our province of Saskatchewan. Charitable organizations are beginning to feel the pinch in their bingos and break-open ticket sales. Horse-racing will suffer ill-effects from the competition and we have no concept of the impact on local economies.

So far the only reasonable argument put forward by government for having to rush into building two \$40 million casinos has been to create aboriginal employment. If the government is serious, why not encourage the exhibition boards to increase the number of aboriginal people working in the existing casinos while we take the time — the government takes the time — to measure the possible impact on our society and the overall economy because of their expansion of gaming.

And if the government is so concerned about aboriginal employment, why not dip into the VLT profits to create some sustainable jobs for first nations people? Jobs that will not contribute to the equal decay of their society.

Mr. Speaker, it is so easy to build the politically correct

argument for expanded casino gambling. After all, who's against entertainment? Who's against jobs and aboriginal employment? But in fairness to the people of Saskatchewan, let's ask the whole question, complete with empirical evidence on the other side of the issue. Let's ask: who wants to encourage an industry which is known to increase crime, erode the profits of charitable organizations, feed addictive behaviours, cut into the revenues of other entertainment businesses, and possibly have an overall negative effect on our economy?

I am vehemently opposed to government taking a position of pro-gambling or anti-gambling. The leadership role of elected representatives should be to insure that all aspects of the issue are objectively examined, that expert advice is sought, and that the facts — all of the facts and nothing but the facts — are presented to the Saskatchewan people in order that society can reach a decision as to what is in its best interest.

If the government believes so strongly in its gamble for economic development, why are they unwilling to hold up the concept to the scrutiny it deserves? Mr. Speaker, this government is not the only one that is guilty of trying to pass a sow's ear as a silk purse.

(1445)

I recently drew the attention of the Assembly to a study done by Professor Robert Goodman. This comprehensive, 222-page study was paid for by the Ford Foundation and the Aspen Institute. The Ford Foundation typically funds studies on economic development and the Aspen foundation typically focuses on studying issues of broader social implications. One could argue successfully that neither of these institutes has any interest in promoting or discouraging gambling.

Dr. Goodman concentrated his research on the information relied upon by governments to reach decisions about the expansion of gambling . . . of increased casino gambling.

Goodman says, and I quote:

The report does not recommend either for or against legalized gambling. Rather, it describes consequences of the ways in which community leaders, the media, and the public are learning and making decisions about legalization.

In compiling his research, Goodman interviewed over 50 public officials, business and media people. In addition, working meetings were conducted with government officials. They exchanged information with researchers and reviewed local as well as national studies.

There are some very interesting conclusions drawn by Goodman. But after analysing 14 different studies relied upon by governments to make decisions about whether to proceed with casino gambling expansion, I quote:

Claims of economic benefits were exaggerated while costs were understated. Most could not be considered objective descriptions of the economic benefits and costs. Ten of the reports were either unbalanced or mostly unbalanced.

That's 10 out of 14, Mr. Speaker. That's astonishing.

I believe that we must give this conclusion some serious thought. If governments are making decisions based on incomplete or missing or misleading information, it is incumbent upon us as an Assembly to ensure that this does not happen in Saskatchewan.

I'm distressed by the political defensiveness exhibited by the minister of Gaming, when presented with simple questions about the impact of expanded casinos and video lotteries. Obviously if the government had done objective homework, they would simply furnish the evidence. They would give us the evidence of the quality research that had been done, draw and substantiate their conclusions, and move on. The fact that there has been no attempt made to provide substantive argument for their policy decision on gaming is indeed cause for alarm.

I want to make it crystal clear to this Assembly that while I believed in 1991 that there was great potential in the gaming industry, I clearly understand the difference between methodological exploring and evaluating the potential and stumbling blindly along the way this government is doing.

Mr. Goodman asked all the right questions about gambling. He did not avoid the tough questions because he was not afraid of the answers. Goodman says, and I quote:

Governments should avoid the consequences of becoming financially dependent on gambling ventures. When revenues from gambling do not meet goals, important public programs can be jeopardized. To avoid these consequences, governments should consider alternative sources of funding public programs.

I wonder whether the government is obsessed with gaming revenue because of its inability to generate identifiable economic development, or whether they simply do not care about the negative impact that this is almost certain to have on our society in the long run.

Goodman also articulates what I have been trying to convey to this particular government. He says, and I quote:

In contemplating legalization, communities need to make more use of objective and accurate information about probable economic and social impacts. They should avoid reliance on forecasts and studies provided by researchers and consultants who work either for the gambling industry or for pro-gambling constituencies.

I cannot see why this is so difficult for the government

members and the minister in charge to grasp.

Mr. Speaker, I have received a long list of complaints from community organizations, from hoteliers, and from gambling addicts. The evidence is overwhelming. And there are many, many people in aboriginal communities who raise exactly the same kinds of concerns — that this government has already become addicted to gambling revenues and is deaf to the concerns of people affected.

Many hotel and bar owners claim to be noticing a marked decline in their liquor sales and hence their liquor profits now that VLTs have been operational for a few months in their establishments.

I contend that a moratorium on further expansion would give the opportunity to the government to conduct an objective impact study on the hotel and restaurant industry. I contend that it would provide an opportunity to determine the full effects, both social and economic, on Saskatchewan's communities, taking into account factors such as income levels and the demographics of those communities. We would be interested in data on how much money is being spent in communities where there is a high concentration of welfare recipients, in monitoring the extended impact on their lives.

I believe that the imposition of a moratorium would provide the government with the opportunity to conduct real consultation with charitable organizations who are beginning to feel the true impact of government competition for gambling dollars. Unless government is prepared to pick up the slack in funding where it competes with non-profit groups, then their gambling policy must address the issue of compensation to those charities when those charities' revenues are eroded by what is nothing less than government competition.

The issue of job creation is often attached to casino gambling expansion. I take issue with the projections provided in the reports being relied upon by the government. Given Robert Goodman's contention that studies often exaggerate the jobs created and the economic benefits derived from casinos, and given that at least two of the studies being referred to by government were done by or commissioned by proponents of casino expansion, I have very little faith in the accuracy of their projections.

What is of great concern as well is the failure of government to attach any cost-per-job figures with respect to jobs in the casino industry. I need to be convinced that there is an overall net gain to this investment based on what it costs to create these jobs and the socio-economic costs of sustaining them. This should be the measure of viability for any job creation program undertaken by government, and casino gaming expansion should be no exception.

Mr. Speaker, I could continue for many hours on this subject, but I am hoping is that the remarks that I have made will clarify my position on the issue of gaming in Saskatchewan, and that the time will allow for many

members of the government side to put their positions on the record.

I would be most pleased of course if the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow would speak on this issue, would speak on this issue this afternoon, making it very clear where he stands on the issue of expanded gaming and gambling in the province of Saskatchewan. I would be very pleased as well if other members would stand on their feet and discuss why it is they feel confident that this is the right thing to do.

I want to close by summarizing. The Liberal Party recognizes the existence of gaming in Saskatchewan and recognizes that the proper control and direction of gaming expansion has some economic potential.

The Liberal Party considers it irresponsible for any political party, local or provincial government, to proceed with plans for expanded gaming beyond the current level of activity without complete and objective research on the economic and social impact of those plans being presented for open and public discussion.

The Liberal Party believes that any policy decisions made must take fully into account the existing participants in the gaming industry and show respect for their traditional revenue sources, ensuring that they do not suffer at the hands of government competition.

Our party believes that the government must accept full responsibility for accurately assessing, evaluating, and consulting about the implications of its policy on gaming before making any moves to expand the basis of gaming operations in the province of Saskatchewan.

The Liberal Party believes that the government should declare a moratorium on any further gaming expansion until it has done the following:

- (a) conducted extensive and objective research on the overall issue, with special attention to measuring the economic and social implications of both the current levels of gaming and the effects of proposed expansion;
- (b) engage in open and public debate about the issue, inviting input and critical comment from all organizations and individuals concerned with the consequences of the government's gaming policy;
- (c) introduce legislation that clearly identifies the revenue-sharing agreements for all gaming revenues generated in the province before any further expansion takes place; and
- (d) clarifies the government's legal position on the expansion of casino gaming on first nations reserves to ensure a fair and peaceful participation in the gaming industry by aboriginal peoples.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this Assembly now urge the government to declare a moratorium on gaming expansion until the government presents a full gaming strategy including a full accounting of its projected revenues from gaming, all research and documentation held by the government on the Saskatchewan gaming industry, with emphasis on the evidence showing that the gaming projects undertaken by the provincial government are sustainable and that all participants in the gaming industry such as volunteer and non-profit organizations, hoteliers, exhibition associations, aboriginal groups, the horse-racing industry, hospital foundations, local governments, and those addicted to gambling, are being and will continue to be treated fairly in the face of increased government involvement in the gaming industry.

I so move, seconded by the member from Regina North West.

Mrs. Bergman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to second the motion put by the member from Saskatoon Greystone. It is not uncommon for government members to put motions forward, asking the Assembly to commend the actions of one minister or another.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the member from Saskatoon Greystone for taking a leadership role in exposing the shortcomings of the government policy on gambling.

Mr. Speaker, I have talked to a large number of people about this issue. There are differing points of view, as one might expect, about the morality of gambling. However most people, even those who are morally opposed to gambling, admit that it is here to stay and that the critical question is how to manage the level and the impact of gambling activity in Saskatchewan.

Fundamentally people do not oppose the concept of raising money through gambling activity; however people understand that there are limits to the amount of money that society can contribute through gambling without producing serious negative impacts. What people do not understand and what they expect government to have determined is where that line is.

Generally, Mr. Speaker, people are placing their trust in government to employ the extensive resources at its disposal to ensure that government does not enact policies which will have a negative impact on society. This is where the wheels appear to have fallen off the New Democrat approach to gambling.

(1500)

Where to begin? In the first place, it is obvious that the government really did not take into account the level of gambling that was already happening in Saskatchewan to create a benchmark for measuring the effects of increasing gambling activity. No control

groups were selected to monitor the impact on charities or on particular demographic groups who engaged in gambling activity. The minister's own advisory committee to study the social impacts of gambling raises those concerns, but to date nothing is in place to address them.

I quote:

As part of our ongoing mandate to study the social impacts of gaming, our committee will continue to try to answer some of the many questions that we have not yet addressed. In order to deal effectively with the results of problem gambling, we must first answer a number of important questions.

Who participates in gaming in this province?

In what forms of gaming do they participate?

How often do they participate?

Why do they participate? Where do they live? How many of them have problems associated with the result of their gaming activity?

What causes people to gamble, or to quit gambling?

The committee report continues by saying:

We recommend a participation and prevalence study be conducted during stage 1 to answer these and other questions about the extent and social impacts of gaming in Saskatchewan. We suggest that these studies be designed and undertaken in such a way as to ensure attention is given to adolescent and Aboriginal gambling activity.

The (government's own) Committee believes that adolescent gambling has not received the attention that it should, and as a result, the true level of problem gambling amongst adolescents may be much different from that which is currently estimated.

Mr. Speaker, the committee has identified some very real and very pressing concerns. That was done in August of 1993. But the government, seemingly oblivious to the committee's recommendations, forged ahead with the installations of video lottery terminals and proceeded with planning casino expansion.

The committee's report was based on one study conducted by Tanka Research, but it was a random phone sample of 1,000 people. The government's committee clearly recommends that gamblers be examined to determine who they are, where they live, and why they gamble.

While the Tanka study may have been an attempt to show that research was being conducted, nobody has ever asked those important questions proposed by the

Minister's Advisory Committee on the Social Impacts of Gaming. At least if they have, the results have certainly been a well-kept secret.

What is of enormous concern to me is that the government, knowing that there are inherent problems associated with gaming, having been advised of how to identify and possibly solve those problems at the outset, chose to summarily ignore the advice of its own committee. Instead, they have really only paid lip service to the negative impact of gambling by providing less than 1 per cent of VLT revenues to address the problem of gambling addiction.

Mr. Speaker, there is overwhelming evidence that the government has not shouldered its responsibility for its gambling expansion policy. The Liberal caucus has become a central point of input for people from all over the province who have concerns about the policy. And believe me, they are steady, wide-ranging, and consistent in their criticisms.

We hear from charitable organizations who feel that they are under attack from a government addicted to gambling revenues. The hospitals' foundations have seen the revenue steadily decline as the VLT income increases in the government coffers. Volunteers are left shaking their heads in disbelief as government sets up shop in direct competition with them and undermines the many worthy causes they attempt to support.

All over Saskatchewan local service clubs are being told that they must abandon traditional fund-raising schemes and are left wondering how they fight a government driven by greed.

Here is a sample of some of the correspondence we've received. A letter to the Shaunavon Knights of Columbus from the Gaming Commission which reads:

The 5/18 draw licensed for your organization closely resembles a lotto 6/49 lottery scheme managed by the Western Canada Lottery Corporation. The province, by agreement, has indicated that it will not license lottery schemes similar to those offered by the WCLC. In the future we suggest your organization choose a different lottery scheme as 5/18 draws will no longer be licensed by the authority.

In another letter the Swift Current Exhibition Association wrote to the minister on January 21, 1994:

The new policy announcement effectively puts us out of the gaming business. With the introduction of the two major casinos in the province, combined with the VLT program that is already in place, we can no longer compete, and to continue in a same capacity would have been disastrous.

In yet another letter, the Nipawin Elks have been told

that the snowmobile rally they operate with the local RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) to raise money for drug awareness programs will no longer be licensed.

The Weyburn community bingo is having its viability threatened by government policy.

Hotel and bar owners are calling to tell us of the serious problems VLTs are presenting for their customers.

I have talked with members of the mental health association who tell me that the government's plan for addiction includes little in the way of treatment. I understand that most of the limited resources now in the budget are being directed at education. While that is a laudable goal, the fact remains that the education program will provide effective political window-dressing but won't go in far in curing the very real problems of gambling addiction.

Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, the potential for charitable organizations to do good things with the money they raise through gaming is very real and very valuable. To date Saskatchewan has had a proud history of volunteer involvement in raising money to support worthy causes. The actions of this government to proceed willy-nilly with expanded gaming at the urging of casino proponents is ignoring the very real dangers of gambling addiction and negative impacts on the economies of our communities. Such reckless pursuit of revenue downplays the value of our charitable organizations and ignores legitimate concerns of those who have challenged the sustainability of the government's gaming proposals.

Mr. Speaker, I fully support the repeated requests of the member from Saskatoon Greystone to obtain objective and complete research on the gaming issue. As a member of the Liberal caucus and as the representative of the people of Regina North West, I am pleased to second the motion before the Assembly and I invite every member of this Assembly to take this opportunity to go on the record in support of this more sensible and necessary instruction to the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate very much the opportunity to rise to address the Assembly on this issue. I was, Mr. Speaker, the critic responsible for gaming and liquor in the last session and I took it upon myself to raise a number of very important issues as it dealt with the video lottery terminals, as it dealt with gaming in the total perspective. And so I am very comfortable, Mr. Speaker, and members of the Assembly, that I want to speak on behalf of and support the resolution as it's presented.

Our caucus has repeatedly tried to make the government account for its gaming strategy, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the past two years since the government decided they were going to go on a spending spree in buying video lottery terminals, it has been a sense that I have had, and a lot of people in

the public, that people of the province of Saskatchewan are not prepared for this overwhelming gaming to be presented to the province.

I go back and ask the members to reconsider or just to consider if they haven't seen the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* that they . . . that was written up on a Saturday last year. It identified a major part of the reasons why I think the people of Saskatchewan — and it represented I believe the views of a lot of people in Saskatchewan — why they believe the gaming should be restricted in many, many areas.

And I believe that this government has decided it's not going to do that. It's just going to go ahead and establish this at all kinds of risk to our communities, and all kinds of risks to various agencies, and all kinds of risks to various individuals in the province of Saskatchewan. And I think it's time to take a serious look at this.

The government looks to gambling as being a magnificent revenue generator and a boost to the province's tourism. That is what they are believing in their own minds, Mr. Speaker. And I believe that they have done this just to set aside the real issues that are there. However, even some of the government's own caucus members don't believe this. And I wish they would speak out to present a clear understanding not only on how they believe, but also how their constituents would vote on this issue.

Another point is the government needs to be held accountable. This resolution speaks to accountability, and I believe that it's necessary to hold the government accountable in a very dispassionate understanding of the pluses and the minuses of gaming in Saskatchewan. We need to have a lot of research going into this because it is very high risk.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the Assembly an article that appeared today in the *Leader-Post*. It says: bar manager sees effects of VLTs. It's written by Dale Eisler. I took the time to read that, Mr. Speaker, and it deals very pointedly with some very important, fundamental social implications as it relates to the gambling issue in the province of Saskatchewan.

And it talks about an individual who is from the Black Bear Inn, and this individual's name is Blaine Walsh. And he gets a close-up look at all of this in the Sturgis hotel. And he's talking about VLTs.

He talks about gambling as a "cancer on the whole society" and predicts it is gradually going to ruin not only countless people, but the economy it is supposed to help.

That's an observation that Mr. Walsh makes as a part of his observations about VLTs. And he has them in his own bar, Mr. Speaker.

I want to point out some other things that he says:

The addictive effect of VLTs is something that Walsh not only sees in other people, but

something he felt himself. He found that he was developing his own gambling problem, a habit he kicked two months ago and is determined to avoid in the future.

But in the meantime, Walsh sees people every day who have become hooked on the machines. This past weekend, he said one middle-aged man spent \$1000 playing the VLTs in the bar on Friday and Saturday.

"I finally told him that he should stop, that he's spending too much money. But you have to ask if it's my responsibility to try and get people to stop gambling if they can't afford it?

Mr. Speaker, and members of this Assembly, we are running into a very serious social problem. And I'm going to point out some other things that Mr. Eisler . . . and I think he did a real good job of bringing out the issue. It is not only an economic issue that we have to talk about, it isn't only a tourism issue that we need to talk about, it's the social impact in our society that we need to start to address.

The article goes on to say:

. . . the addictive effect gambling has on individuals is only one side of the story. What is perhaps more insidious and potentially destructive is the addictive quality that gambling revenue has on governments.

Not only is it a bad attitude to have on the part of society, but governments, he says, get hooked on the very fact that this is a revenue-generating part of their programs.

In that sense, gambling revenue is like any other money that flows to government. It becomes a necessity (of government) . . . part of government's ever-growing appetite for money.

Mr. Speaker, that's what the people are beginning to see that gambling is doing in the province of Saskatchewan.

(1515)

Going on in the quote:

Perhaps the best description of this problem comes from R.S. Salomon, chairman of the New York brokerage firm of Salomon Brothers that, for years, has been the lead agent in the sale of Saskatchewan government bonds.

This is what he says, and I quote:

"When individuals become compulsive gamblers, self-help groups and counselling services stand ready to help them overcome their addiction. When state and local governments find themselves in the same predicament, officials look for new ways to

feed the habit," says Salomon.

In other words, gambling, as a source of revenue, is just as addictive for government as it is for individuals trying to strike it rich. In effect, the moment the door is opened to legalized gambling, especially where the government has a significant stake in its success, it becomes impossible to eliminate. Not only does government get hooked on the money, but another vested interest is created where jobs depend on a continuous flow of gambling dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we need to have this problem identified very, very clearly as outlined by the resolution. We need to have it identified. We need to have people say this is wrong, this is going to be a curse on the people of Saskatchewan for decades, if we don't start to recognize what the problems are.

Going on in this article, I believe it's important for all of the Assembly to note:

As such, we should not underestimate the far-reaching effects (and I quote) of the Romanow government's decision to get involved in legalized gambling. The door has been opened and there will be no turning back.

And because the decision is virtually impossible to reverse, you would think the social and economic effects of this issue would have had (at least) a full public hearing. But they haven't. There have been no public hearings, no studies into the social and economic impact on the province, no process to do a social and economic cost-benefit analysis.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point here is that there is no evaluation on the economic part of it, there is no evaluation on the social part of it. And put those two together, Mr. Speaker. If we were going to put, if we were going to put — and it goes on to talk about environment — if we were going to put an environmentally unfriendly building, construction of any roadway, power line, anything in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would in fact have an environmental study where the public could get involved with it; the public could say, I want to become involved in determining what is going to happen to my province.

In an environmental way, everybody would demand the right to do that. And in the environment of a socio-economic condition that will exist in the province of Saskatchewan, we just say . . . or we hear the government say no, I don't want to become involved in that; I'm not going to open the door for that because I may have to make a decision different than the executive branch of this government.

And that is a serious problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because as we go around the province it's going to become more and more evident that not only are the

people going to become addicted to the woes of gambling, the government is going to become addicted because of a source of revenue for various parts of their services provided to the people of the province.

That's the reason why it's important to address this and to ask the government to bring forward those studies that show that they are truly doing this on an economic basis. They should make them public. The minister should go around to the public and ask the question, should I put this in here or should I not?

And, Mr. Speaker, many, many times people will say that it's because I'm a religious person that I get up and say this. Mr. Speaker, I am trying to point out to individuals of this Assembly that the social impact in this province is going to be overwhelming because of the gaming and the gambling that have been established as a part of this executive government's decisions.

They are going to be serious social problems. And, Mr. Speaker, who's going to be there in the 1-800 number when the mother who has just realized that her husband has spent all the money on gambling and she is supposed to buy groceries from the pay cheque, where is that 1-800 number going to get her groceries? Where is that 1-800 number going to supply the individual who I heard about as I watched television last week — in United States, high schools are having a very, very serious concern on how gaming is run in high schools.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in United States they have come to the place where they believe that they have a number one problem. It is greater than drug addiction, it is greater than prostitution, it is running the schools in many states in the United States, the high schools. People who are under age going and gambling and losing the money; then going to their parents and saying, I lost this money. Further to that, what is happening is that the individuals are having the bookies going to the parents and demanding the money — at risk to themselves and their own safety.

That's what's happening, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have a social problem that is very, very serious. And it will happen in Saskatchewan.

The first time this was addressed a reporter came to me and asked me, he said, do you think that this is going to have a negative impact in our society? After all, if we put one in Regina and put one in Saskatoon, people will have to go a distance to get one, to go to gamble, to get addicted.

Well they've got it in Alberta and they've got it in Manitoba; they can go to those provinces. They've got it in the United States; they can go to those places. Well, Mr. Speaker, if the availability of an addiction is right next door, it is a lot easier and it becomes . . . and the greater the pressure for you to foster that addiction. The greater the addictive process becomes, the greater the intensity. And if it's in the bar in Sturgis, if it's in the bar in Meadow Lake, if it's in the bar in

Consul, if it's in the bar in Maple Creek, then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have access to it all over the place.

And where does the economic benefit occur, Mr. Speaker? Those are dollars that are used to do economic development, that the individual has. Let's just take a family, for example, in rural Saskatchewan. What do they spend their money on? Mr. Deputy Speaker, they spend it on various kinds of things, but they also spend it on economic development. So they take this economic development money that they're going to use to buy cows or hogs, or create wealth within the framework of their farm and then they put it into the gambling machine.

And where does that go? It goes out of that community forever, Mr. Speaker, it goes out of that community forever.

And where does it end up? It ends up in the treasuries of this province and in that community you have a social problem; you develop a social problem.

And as I pointed out, the bar manager at the Black Bear Inn in Sturgis had to tell a man who had spent \$1,000 to quit; it's time to quit.

Where was that money going to go? Was that going to buy \$1,000 worth of fertilizer for his farm? Was that going to buy \$1,000 worth of groceries for his family? Was that \$1,000 going to go buy a car? Was that \$1,000 going to be spent on repairing the tractor so he could seed his crop? Where was that \$1,000 going to go?

And that is \$1,000 in every community. In every home in the province that same thing can happen. If it's 200 here, it could be 1,000 in the next one, it could be 10,000 in another one.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why this government needs to come forward with a plan on how they're going to control that, how they're going to regulate that. And I think it's time to say we got to start to seriously think about the social impact that this is going to have, a serious, serious social impact.

I'm going to go on and point this out:

Others paint a much different picture. Robert Goodman, in an exhaustive analysis of legalized gambling . . . as a strategy for economic development (of the U.S.), talks about the "cannibalization" of other jobs by money diverted into gambling.

That's very serious stuff, Mr. Speaker. That is just what I talked about.

Where does this \$1,000 go that this man was going to spend on whatever it could be in the home? Could be a new washer or dryer. It could be a various numbers of things including food for his family.

And where does it go, Mr. Speaker? It's cannibalizing

the very area that the individual was supposed to spend it on in the first place. And that is the reason why it's really important to consider it.

There is an article in the *Star-Phoenix* today as well that I think needs to be seriously considered. The title, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is "Forget the Casino! Put a brothel downtown."

Mr. Speaker, there are certain things that initiate certain reactions and certain responses. And it goes on to say here: "Forget the casino! Put a brothel downtown". This is speaking about Saskatoon.

Like it or not, gambling looks very much like an irresistible force.

Quoting:

Mr. Roy Romanow, acting in the proud tradition of Tommy Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd and Allan Blakeney, seems determined to leave video gambling and casinos as his legacy to the people of Saskatchewan.

Now what a legacy to leave — what a legacy to leave. And he goes on to say:

They justify a downtown Saskatoon casino as a solid foundation for various subsidiary projects including a new courthouse, a new convention centre and a windfall for Indians. Think of it as justice and prosperity for all through vice.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, forget the casino, put a brothel downtown. That's what the people in Saskatoon are going to start to say. Is that what the people in Regina are going to start to say soon?

And then, tongue in cheek, he says:

(To make sure it's done right, I'd put Jack Messer in charge, but that's by the way).

That's the kind of reference that the media are starting to make regarding the issue of gaming in the province of Saskatchewan. They are serious about it, and I think we, as a legislature, need to be serious about it as well.

The whole issue, I believe, needs to be resolved in a way that would provide public input. Public input is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the most glaring mistake that the people of this government have made. They have not allowed public input in this issue. Why? I believe I know why. When there was even a hint of this in Moose Jaw, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when there was a hint of this in bygone years in Moose Jaw, the people of Moose Jaw wrote letters, letters after letters.

And I was in government, Mr. Speaker, when a decision was made by our government at the time not to do this. A decision was made — I will not put video lottery terminals in the province of Saskatchewan. The decision was made that we wouldn't do that.

And, Mr. Speaker, many of us stood there and said,

that is the right decision. Today, why doesn't the public have an opportunity to tell the government that it's the wrong decision to put it in? Why don't they have the opportunity to do that?

And why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government doesn't go out to ask? They need to go out to ask. I think they need to put a complete strategy out there and say, is there a better way to get native employment rather than in the gambling? Is there a better way to get people employed than gambling? Is there a better way to do it? And I say to the members of this Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan, there is.

And I believe that people recognize this for what it is. People in the province of Saskatchewan do not believe that casinos and video lottery terminals should be in place.

And as I read through that *Leader-Post* article, which had done a review of the various issues and the various kinds of gambling, there was acceptance of 6/49's, there was acceptance of bingos, there was acceptance of Nevadas, but where did they draw the line, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They drew the line on casinos and video lottery terminals. That's where the people drew the line. They said, it's going to hurt us.

And then when the demographics ... they showed the demographics of the people who were against it the most; and I find this very, very interesting. They found that the people who were most against this were that age group of people who were between 20 and 35, female. Why, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Why? My greatest belief, and this is the reason why this group of people was the most against it, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this was money that was going to be allocated to video lottery terminals and to casinos which should go into providing food for families, the clothing for their families. And that's the reason why this female age group was the most against it. That's the reason why, Mr. Speaker, this is a social problem, a very serious social problem.

(1530)

And then I'm going to go one step further and say this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What kind of example is being shown by that home when that opportunity is presented and said, I'm going to gamble. And what kind of home life is that going to present to the individual who is a teenager and says, my father can go gamble, my mother can on occasion go gamble, and yet in high school when I'm going to bet on a ball game, that's illegal because I'm a minor.

That is a social-economic problem that is not only going to be inherited by us as individuals across this province, but it's going to be inherited by the society that we live in today. And that's where the problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, exists in the United States, in the high schools. And we are one step away from doing exactly the same thing. And states in the United States are seriously considering the impact that this is going to have.

Those people are worried about the Mafia involvement in those high schools, and they are. It was on television; as I saw it, people were talking about that Mafia involvement, about bookies, about breaking kneecaps, about breaking legs — all of that. For high school kids. And where do they learn it, Mr. Deputy Speaker? In these cases more is caught than is taught, and it's caught by what the parents do and the parents decide to do.

Now you ask me why females between 20 and 35 are most against this, and I have just explained the reason why. Because they will see it as an intrusion in their home and they don't want to have it. They don't want that standard to be developed as a part of the reason why a government should take that money away.

And as was pointed out in Mr. Eisler's article, and I believe he's right on the money, the addiction comes twice: once by the individuals and the other time by the government who have to live off of that.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why I am going to support this motion as it exists here today. I believe that it is the right thing to do. It's time for this government to take a serious look at what the problems are and the problems they're going to create.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, there are numerous issues that really need to be addressed on this and I would dearly love to expound for quite some time on it, but I do believe that there has been an agreement between the House leaders to go on to government business at this time. So I would move adjournment of debate on this motion.

Debate adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker: — The orders of the day that I am provided suggest that members may want to proceed to certain second readings. If that is the case, then there will need to be a statement made to that effect and there will need to be agreement of the House to do so.

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would move, with leave, that the House proceed to item no. 1, Bill 1, An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Legislative Utilities Review Committee).

Leave granted.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 1 — An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Legislative Utilities Review Committee)

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and thank you to all members of the House for granting leave today to debate what I consider to

be a very important item that is on the minds of Saskatchewan people. And I would say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the official opposition was very proud to enter this particular Bill as the first Bill put before the Legislative Assembly this spring session of 1994, to debate it. And in fact it was the first Bill in a number of reform initiatives put forward by the Assembly for discussion in this House during this session, Mr. Speaker.

This is the outcome of a long consultation process with Saskatchewan people, with members of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan, with a lot of various interest groups around the province who view the whole issue of how we manage the utilities, our Crown corporations in the province, and how they affect the average taxpayer, the average home-owner, businesses, schools, hospitals, that type of thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One thing that's become very apparent to everyone in the province of Saskatchewan in the 1990s is that we have to join the rest of Canada and indeed North America in talking about these issues and managing these issues. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan is the only jurisdiction I believe left in North America that does not have some type of public process when utility rates and rates that all of us are mandated to use because we are dealing with monopoly situations or quasi monopolies . . . and the rates that they charge back to us.

And I think Saskatchewan needs to rejoin that bigger picture, Mr. Speaker, because people today expect government and the appendages of government to be as cost-effective as possible in delivering services.

As you are aware, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the early 1980s, the former Conservative administration brought forward a Public Utilities Review Commission. And that particular commission was in place in this province for a couple of years. Its mandate was to review things like the rates of SaskPower, SaskTel, SaskEnergy, SGI, those types of things that every one of us use in our everyday lives.

That experience, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was one of some good and some bad. What it did was it made these particular agencies more transparent to the public. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we see today, this growing demand by the public to have these issues addressed is an outgrowth of what they experienced when PURC (Public Utilities Review Commission) was in place.

Unfortunately the problem with the PURC exercise was that it proved to be very expensive to the taxpayer. And the reason it was very expensive is that as people came before that utilities commission to make their arguments, there were a lot of legal costs incurred; the witness procedure was very expensive. And at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, it became apparent that it perhaps wasn't the most cost-effective means for these issues to be handled in.

Certainly the deregulation of the natural gas business

in the mid-1980s, Mr. Deputy Speaker, meant that a lot more people became aware of things like tariff and polling. The delivery costs attached to the pipelines, the construction of pipelines, how much that cost, accrued back to the taxpayer of the province.

And with that deregulation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it meant that, for instance, hospitals, large public buildings, universities, large industrial concerns such as IPSCO, the potash mines, and others were able to go directly to well-head and access their gas.

At the same time, the issues surrounding the transportation costs remained in the purview of the Crown corporation. And even though they were in a deregulated market, the transparency that people would like with that transportation was not apparent.

What we have seen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the last few years, is the at least perception by a large segment of the public that the current administration uses the Crown corporations as a means of back-door taxation. And the minister has stood many times in here and said no, that's not the case. And he makes some valid argument as to what happens inside the Crown corporations.

And I think recently with the changes occurring in even the Crown Corporations Committee, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we see this need for the public to understand and know being brought forward. And clearly the government members recognize that because the member from Saskatoon, as chair of the Crown Corporations Committee, said as much in her speech to the House last week, that the public is demanding to know more about rate-setting processes, capital expenditures, and how those capital expenditures are amortized out over a period of time; how the corporation remains viable and at the same time, how it plays a role in society.

The big question is, Mr. Deputy Speaker: are utilities in place to provide a service? Because they are monopolies, is that service on a break-even basis, or are Crown corporations designed to indeed raise revenue which then goes through CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan), and from CIC back into the Consolidated Fund?

There are some philosophical discussions and questions that have to be answered there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'm not sure that those philosophical questions have to be answered before this Legislative Assembly can move forward on its own into a new realm.

What Bill 1 proposes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that a committee of this House, a committee of the House have the ability to review the rate-setting mechanisms of the Crown corporations before utility rates are increased. And it clearly sets out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the existing ratios of the House must not be disturbed. In other words, that the government, who are elected by majority, should have the majority on the committee.

The costs of the committee must be watched very closely, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because what is envisioned in the Bill is that the committee would have the full powers that other committees of this House do. In other words, that they could call before them witnesses, either from the Crown corporation or members of the public, who then would give verbatim testimony, and I would hope perhaps also do that in full view of the television cameras, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And by doing so, open up the rate-setting process to the public.

And I don't think it's anything that we should be fearful of, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as legislators. It would certainly give the private members of this Assembly the opportunity to be very, very involved in the lives of the people that they represent. Because as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in a province like Saskatchewan, you don't have any option about turning off the heat on January 15. If you're going to stay warm, you pretty well have to use electricity or natural gas in order to heat your home.

So each and every one of us have no options, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in regards to something like natural gas. We have to have it in order to stay warm.

And I would think that private members in this Assembly would value the opportunity to be part of that process, in front of a utility rate increase rather at the back end, recognizing that the majority on the committee would probably also have the ability to exercise majority opinion. Mr. Speaker, that truly I think would be a precedent-setting move for this House to make.

The public today are demanding that we in this Assembly change the way that we do things. All members of this House talk about democratic reform. They talk about giving power back to individual members. Every one of the political parties represented in this House — whether they be Conservative, NDP, or Liberal — have talked about, either prior to the last election or since the last election, about packages of democratic reform that democratize this institution, redemocratize this institution beyond where it is today.

And those are laudable goals, Mr. Speaker. They are very laudable goals. But if all we do, Mr. Speaker, is talk about them, if we promised this to the public before election and we fail to deliver afterwards, then our credibility as an institution, Mr. Speaker, is diminished.

(1545)

And that's why today I thank the government members for allowing this opportunity to occur. This is a historic opportunity, Mr. Speaker, that an issue such as this, for the very first time to my knowledge, has been brought forward by a private member to be discussed in this House. For the very first time at least in my memory, Mr. Speaker, that is the case. And I applaud the government members today for allowing that to occur.

And I applaud them also for having the courage to allow this particular Bill, Bill No. 1, to be talked about. And I think if all members took the opportunity to stand up and talk about this issue and debate this issue, some of the fear that has been attached to the mystique, if you will, of the Crown corporations and how they do their business, would be removed. Because quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, they belong to each and every one of us. At the same time, they have the ability to make each and every one of us pay. And I think for us to manage the taxpayers' money properly, to be responsible legislators, these kind of issues should hold no fear for us. None at all. And whether they be brought forward by executive government, by cabinet, or they be brought forward by any member of this House, there should be no fear.

Earlier today, Mr. Speaker, I asked the members of the Legislative Assembly, the representative assembly in the state of North Dakota, how this issue was handled in their state. And they said there was a state commissioner for utilities who was elected but who had to appear before a committee of the House. And at the time of appearing before the committee of the House, any member in the House could bring forward and ask some questions. Any member of the public could come forward and ask questions.

Now I say to you, Mr. Speaker, are the utilities, which in many cases are monopolistic in the state of North Dakota, any different than they are in the province of Saskatchewan? Are we really any different at the end of the day than most other jurisdictions in western Canada? And I say to you, we're not, Mr. Speaker, except in one regard. The members of this House have never had the freedom or the ability to question the policy setters, the bureaucrats, the people that are in the structure the same as other jurisdictions have.

And I think the legislators in Saskatchewan are as capable and bright and articulate and capable of arriving at logical decisions as they are in any other province in Canada or any state in the United States. And I think that if we were granted the privilege, Mr. Speaker, of talking about these issues in a committee, then we would also take the responsibility to do it right.

And the want, the want, Mr. Speaker, to be only political, to only play silly games would soon disappear. Because the public, Mr. Speaker, would not put up with it. They simply would not put up with it, because this issue is too close to the pocketbooks and the hearts of every person in this province. They are too close, Mr. Speaker. And if anyone played fast and loose with that type of a committee, they would soon suffer public indignation. And I believe the repercussions would be there at the polls, come the next election.

So what we're asking for, Mr. Speaker, in this particular Bill is simply that members of this Assembly be trusted, that members of this Assembly assume the responsibility that they have been elected to perform on behalf of their constituents.

And I think all members take that responsibility very seriously — very, very seriously. Because I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, when you go through the numbers and you see the magnitude of the dollars, when you see the rate increases coming every six months, when you understand that we are all absolutely dependent on these Crown corporations and these utilities for our everyday life, then you know that you have to take those responsibilities seriously.

Mr. Speaker, when the lights were out in the building in the Assembly last week, all of us very quickly realized how dependent we are on electricity. Our entire caucus operation virtually came to a standstill because you couldn't use a computer. There was not even, Mr. Speaker, a mechanical typewriter in our caucus operation. So there we were, down preparing for our day with writing in longhand, Mr. Speaker.

I mean we in this society are dependent on electricity, on our telephones and our communication system, on our natural gas, on our auto insurance — all of the things that protect us, and at the same time we rely upon to make our society what it is today.

So, Mr. Speaker, what I ask the members of this Assembly is to don't discount the Bill today, don't simply pass it off as an exercise that has to be gone through because we need to placate members of the opposition and we need to placate members of the public. But look at it as an opportunity to amend, if you will, to expand, and make a Bill come forward from this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that will satisfy the public's need to do this.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the government themselves are very close to bringing forward some type of a similar initiative. I know those initiatives were in the Department of Energy when I was Energy minister, and I know that the Energy minister today has had discussions with people in the natural gas business that . . . people, the industrial gas users in the province, have put forward a proposal to him and to cabinet to review; that there are initiatives going on.

And what I would say to members of the Assembly, and particularly to the private members of the Assembly, don't be satisfied with some watered-down version that takes away the ability of this House to honestly look at the issues and help manage the issues.

It would not be worthwhile, Mr. Speaker, to have some type of a public utilities review process that did not allow members of this House the ability for input before rates were set. I think anything less than that simply would be seen as a sham by the public and they would view it with a great deal of cynicism. They would view it with a great deal of cynicism, Mr. Speaker.

What they want is for their representatives to be part and parcel of the process. And they also want us to be as cost-effective as possible, Mr. Speaker. As cost-effective as possible.

The members of this Assembly are already paid a salary. And particularly when this House is in session, which is normally in the spring months, when budgets are being brought forward, when Crown corporations are doing a lot of their work, I don't think, Mr. Speaker, it would hurt for one minute for members of this Assembly to have that committee in place and working.

And certainly during the course of the year, Mr. Speaker, when the House wasn't in session, there would be the ability to call that committee together and solicit input from the public to be able to call witnesses forward, to have witnesses under oath, which is the right of members of this Assembly, to give testimony and talk about the issue at hand.

And that is not a fearful thing, Mr. Speaker, because it is done in so many other places in the world as a matter of course. It is something that members of the public don't bat an eye at.

In fact, I understand in a lot of jurisdictions that the schedule of the committee meetings is published in the newspaper. And if anybody wishes, when they pick up their newspaper they say, oh yes, that particular committee on utilities is meeting today, and it meets. And the public come and make presentations. And it isn't a scary thing at all. And it goes on as a matter of course.

Mr. Speaker, members of this Assembly are quite capable of doing that. And at the end of the day, the recommendations that they make will still have to go through the process; they will still have to go to the board of directors of the particular Crown; they will have to go to executive government. And executive government may decide to do something entirely different. But they will know, Mr. Speaker, when they do something different, that they may be going against the will of the people.

Mr. Speaker, there is no one in the public in this province that wants to see SaskTel, SaskPower, SaskEnergy or SGI destroyed. They might like to see their format changed, they might like to see different options, but I don't think any of us living in a widely dispersed population as we are in a large land area want to see them destroyed.

What the public wants is cost-effectiveness, they want to be included, and they want to know that there is accountability at the end of the day. That's all they ask for. And it would be the responsibility of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to give them that in a format that is cost-effective and is accountable.

Mr. Speaker, over the last few months I have received correspondence from many institutions around the province supporting this particular initiative. I have letters from SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) to both the Minister of Energy and myself supporting the initiative. And I'll only read the last line here, Mr. Speaker. It says:

Therefore be it resolved that the Saskatchewan

Urban Municipalities Association requests that the province of Saskatchewan establish a regulatory agency to monitor the operations and rate charged by Saskatchewan's publicly owned utilities.

That's from SUMA, Mr. Speaker.

The city of Weyburn, supporting the formation of the same entity; the city of Prince Albert, supporting the same initiative; the Regina Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Speaker, and the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, entities well-known to many members of the government who currently work with them on a daily basis as ministers of the Crown; the city of Yorkton, signed by Mayor Ben Weber — council is suggesting that the responsibility for development of a structure and any necessary legislation be left to the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly:

We therefore do support your efforts to bring about a structure and a process that is effective.

Mr. Speaker, people all across the province strongly desire to have a mechanism in place. And I would hope that if this particular mechanism in some way has a major flaw to it, that members of the government, and particularly private members, would wish to speak on it; that they would wish to amend it, that they would wish to see the initiative carried forward to the point that they know when they go home when this legislature rises sometime probably later this month, that their constituents will be satisfied with the work that the Assembly has done.

And I would like, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill be spoken on in second reading and come to a vote and that it then be allowed to proceed to committee, and during the committee stage, have some good discussion about what would be the proper mechanism.

And if it were not passed, Mr. Speaker, perhaps in the next session that initiative could be picked up and that the members of this Assembly, not just executive government, but the members of this Assembly would take the initiative and put their stamp on something that the public undoubtedly would support 100 per cent. And they would see all members, regardless of political stripe, working together on such an institution.

And I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, after a very short period of time, that a committee of this House would develop the kind of rapport that was necessary, as they do in Public Accounts, as they do most of the time in Crown Corporations, as they have done in other committees, to make the proper, responsible decisions for this entity to be a proper tool of the public that this institution is supposed to serve.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all members of this Assembly to vote yes on second reading of Bill No. 1, a Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Legislative Utilities Review Committee).

(1600)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I heard the impassioned plea of the Leader of the Opposition telling us why he thought that his replacement for PURC, LURC (legislative utilities review committee), son of PURC, would be a good idea. And I agree with some of the things he said in that it is very clear that the public of today is demanding a greater level of accountability than they ever have in the past. They are clearly asking that legislators ensure that they are getting the best bang for their buck, that finances and accounts are examined very carefully by the legislature and by committees of the legislature.

However, I have to, while agreeing with the Leader of the Opposition that accountability is paramount and extremely important, I have to take issue with a few of the things he said. I wonder where he was in the '80s when members of my party, members of the current government, were saying, excuse me, but we do need greater accountability from the government of the day represented by the party that the Leader of the Opposition represents.

I also wonder if the strategy that he's picking for this greater accountability, that is, LURC, son of PURC, is necessarily a good idea. I would point to him that when PURC was disbanded, it was costing the public purse \$3.2 million. And it seems to me that since we are facing a \$15 billion debt, a legacy of the spending spree of the '80s by the members opposite, that we need to be very leery about bringing in another permutation of the same strategy.

The member from Saskatoon Wakamow points out that perhaps its . . . Moose Jaw Wakamow . . . points out that perhaps LURC is the illegitimate son of PURC. I'm not certain about that, but I do know that there are many problems with Bill 1 as presented by the Leader of the Opposition.

As I view it, it seems to me to be a grossly flawed Bill. There is no provision, for instance, in that Bill to hire or remunerate staff. It would amount to legislators simply shooting from the hip in terms of setting rates. And the Leader of the Opposition needs to be aware that the process for setting up utility rates is already spelled out in The Crown Corporations Act.

I want to also pick up on a couple of things that he said, because it is important for us to recognize, as he does, the Crown corporations are extremely important to the economic well-being of this province. Thank heavens they weren't all privatized during the 1980s; thank heavens we still have things like SaskPower around. If SaskPower had been privatized, there would be no question of a utility rate review commission. We would have a private situation where the people of Saskatchewan wouldn't even be able to debate this kind of strategy.

I would like to point out to the Leader of the Opposition that just last week this House did vote on

several reforms that will be dealt with through the Crown Corporations Committee. We have already made major steps in the direction of improving accountability through the Crown Corporations. We will now be receiving an annual statement outlining Crown Investment Corporation's mandate, goals, objectives, and performance indicators. All members of the Crown Corporations Committee or members of the legislature that choose to attend those committee meetings will be able to ask questions about the Crown corporations' challenges and the strategies that are being planned to deal with those challenges.

That will enable us as legislators to put the whole question of rates in a much larger context and to look at the whole question of the finances of those Crown corporations. I think that taking that more holistic point of view is a much better approach than simply dealing with the proposal under the proposed Bill for LURC which, as I say, I believe is a grossly flawed Bill.

Now the Leader of the Opposition says that we need meaningful review. I totally agree with him and I ask him to join with us, join with members of the Crown Corporations Committee, in making sure that the reforms that we've already voted on in this House for the functioning of the Crown Corporations Committee can be meaningful reforms and can accomplish the same kinds of purposes that he appears to be wanting to accomplish through his Bill.

And what he seems to be saying is that there are three criteria — that we have to ensure that there's a mechanism to make Crown corporations more accountable. I'm suggesting that the reforms that we brought in already, both in Crown Corporations Committee functioning and with Bill 42 last year, will do that.

He says that it has to be cost effective. What is more cost effective than raising some of these issues through an already existing standing committee of the legislature?

He also says that he feels that the people of Saskatchewan have to feel included in the process. I would remind him that one of the reforms we brought in was to allow the electronic media the ability to come in and make audio or audiovisual recordings of the proceedings so that they can get the message out to the people of Saskatchewan.

It seems to me we've already made a great deal of reforms. I would remind the Leader of the Opposition that these were reforms supported by all members of this House; so there is action already occurring. And I believe it is important for us now to get on to other government business, to deal with other matters that are also equally important facing this legislature, so having said that I would now move adjournment of debate on Bill 1.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 4 — An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Four Year Term)

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to members of the House for the opportunity to rise today and put forward Bill No. 4 which deals with the issue of a four-year term.

This also, Mr. Speaker, is part of the legislative reform package that the official opposition brought forward in the early days of this House sitting. And indeed this was the fourth Bill put before the Assembly this session, Mr. Speaker, to amend an existing Act of this House, that would allow the term of office of this Assembly to be legislated at a mandatory four-year term. And you'd probably ask, Mr. Speaker, why we would deem this to be a reform of the democratic process and why something that the Saskatchewan public would agree with.

I think a lot of the cynicism surrounding the electoral process in Canada today, Mr. Speaker, surrounds the fact that under our British parliamentary system the Prime Minister or premier is allowed the discretion of calling a general election any time during the mandate. Normally that is done around four years but it has varied anywhere from about three to five, Mr. Speaker. And I don't believe people think that that is the proper mechanism to allow elections to occur.

And I know, Mr. Speaker, from being a member of the previous government, that when we went to the polls in October of 1991 there was a lot of criticism, not only levelled by the opposition of the day, but I took criticism from many members of the public who said that you had gone too long, that you should not be able to go to the last day.

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, if you don't learn anything else while you have the opportunity to govern, you should learn that when you obviously have made an error, that you do everything you can to correct it. And unlike some of the members of the New Democratic Party government over here, who seem very intent on repeating some of the mistakes that they were defeated for in 1982, I like to think that the mistakes that we made in government, that we're doing our best, Mr. Speaker, to put forward measures that will correct them.

And the members of the government can justifiably criticize the fact that that term went too long, as I think members of the public criticized the Blakeney administration for going in the fall of 1978 when they didn't have to, but they had the opportunity with the medicare issue and were able to take that and run it through even though that was well short of even the normal four years.

The public today, Mr. Speaker, don't like that type of politicking or electioneering. Many people in our province are exposed to American television. I find a lot of empathy from the public with the American model where they elect their presidents every four years at a set time. They find that system better

because it doesn't allow as much manipulation of the political system. I think, Mr. Speaker, that we would not be Americanizing our system; we would simply be putting in place the wants of the public that we serve.

The entire thrust, Mr. Speaker, of all of the Bills that we brought forward this session — and I believe there's eight of them; the first time in the history of our province that an opposition party has brought forward a concerted legislative package of Bills to the House — that the entire intent of that legislative package, Mr. Speaker, is to put in place regimes that the public feel more comfortable with, that allows them greater access to debate in this House, that does things that put power back in the hands of individual members.

Because I think, Mr. Speaker, if there is one overriding criticism of our parliamentary system that I hear from the public, and I think that all members hear, is that the shift of power from the private member to executive government has increased far beyond what it was ever intended in the British parliamentary system.

It was interesting having the opportunity to visit with the High Commissioner from Great Britain the other day, and talking about the House in Westminster, where we sent the member from Humboldt this session, to observe. All of the checks and balances that are in Westminster with the different types of votes there, that allow private members far more flexibility in issues such as this.

Private members in Westminster would have no problem voting against their own government on certain issues because they are viewed by the public as issues that should not have the mandate of Executive Council, the whip, in place. In our Legislative Assembly here, nearly every vote is considered a confidence vote and members don't have the latitude to discuss issues the same way that they do in many other parliamentary democracies.

(1615)

Our entire legislative package, Mr. Speaker, is aimed at enhancing the rights and privileges and responsibility of individual members. And I think individual members would take the issue surrounding four-year fixed terms very seriously. Because all of us come to this House as an individual member and then are selected afterwards to serving cabinet or to serve as Speaker, or serve in some capacity beyond that. But we're all private members, who come to this House to be sworn in because we have gained the confidence of the public.

Mr. Speaker, any initiatives that come before this House that enhance those responsibilities for private members are something that we should take seriously, very, very seriously. Because that is the want of the public. That is why the public today have a lot of cynicism with our system, because private members have either abdicated that responsibility or simply have been led to believe, Mr. Speaker, that there are

other ways, i.e., caucus, party, to express those opinions.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, in the paramountcy of this institution. I honestly do. After serving here for nine years, I believe in this institution. And I think it is incumbent upon us to put back in place measures and systems, Mr. Speaker, that will make the public feel comfortable with that concept, feel comfortable with that concept of the primacy and the accountability of this institution.

The four-year term, Mr. Speaker, is not something new to all of the political parties in this House. It was in the platform of the Liberal Party prior to the 1991 election. It was in the platform of the New Democratic Party prior to the 1991 election. It has been talked about by the Reform Party of Canada. It is not new, Mr. Speaker, to political thought in this country.

But it was absolutely time, Mr. Speaker, that the issues come before the proper forum for discussion and that is this House. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, it was included in the package.

This particular Bill does not take away the power of the Premier to set the date of the next election. The Premier was elected prior to this Bill being brought before the House and the Premier should have the privilege and the opportunity to call an election based on the old rules.

And it would be the election thereafter, Mr. Speaker, that would be the mandated four-year term. So there's nothing in this Bill that takes away anything from the existing government — nothing.

And I would think, Mr. Speaker, that members of the government would feel quite comfortable in discussing and debating this issue because it takes away nothing from the mandate which they received in October, 1991 — nothing at all.

And the date, Mr. Speaker, that was picked may not be the best date. I admit that there is a little bit of bias in the Bill on my behalf because I've always felt that June is probably one of the nicest and best months in this entire province.

It's when this province, which is an agricultural province, is at its greenest, usually. It is when people feel very optimistic about the future of this province is usually in the month of June. And I have always thought that we as politicians, who are supposed to have the best interests of the people of this province at heart, who are here to serve the population of this province, could probably present ourselves in the best way possible if we were campaigning in the month of June, every four years, for an election.

But maybe that's not the most practical date, Mr. Speaker, and maybe other members of this Assembly have got other suggestions that would make more sense. And I would be pleased to listen to those suggestions, Mr. Speaker; pleased that this Bill could move through second reading and into committee

stage. And at that time, do the proper amending, by all members of this House, to set in place a date that makes sense to Saskatchewan's people.

And if necessary, take the time to hold a hearing process. This Bill perhaps doesn't have to be passed this session; that that hearing process be put in place and let the public speak out on it. And if October is the preference, then October it will be.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is something that is on the minds of people. It would be seen as very progressive and democratic, I think, and something that most of the people who we represent as legislators would be saying, well done, I can agree with that; you have moved the democratic process forward, and you have done it in such a way that you have not bickered this thing about in a partisan way.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that as I take my seat that other members would get up and bring the views of their constituents forward on this issue, bring forward their ideas perhaps on date changes, and bring forward ideas that would make the electoral process in the province of Saskatchewan more open, democratic, and accountable.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move second reading of Bill No. 4, An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Four Year Term).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate on this private members' Bill that's before us.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I listened carefully to the words of the Leader of the Opposition, the phrase kept going through my mind that the road to Damascus is a wonderful thing. It is ironic indeed that it would be the Leader of the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan that would be moving this piece of legislation for this House.

Mr. Speaker, let me just remind the Assembly and put into a context here the purpose that people who are supportive of the notion that the Leader of the Opposition presents, the purpose that they would like to achieve. I was just speaking a few moments ago with the member from Saskatoon Eastview-Haultain who reminded me that when he was elected in a by-election into this Assembly in 1988, in the last term of the Conservative government, that when his seat was filled in this Assembly, it had been vacant for the longest time of a provincial legislature in the history of Canada — for 10 months — when it was finally filled.

And, Mr. Speaker, that was an annoying contradiction of democracy and democratic principle that this government remedied within days of coming to office — passed in this Assembly in December of 1991 a Bill that requires within six months of a vacancy that an election will be held in order to ensure representation of the people of the province of Saskatchewan. That's

democratic reform.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, what I found interesting is that after the member from Saskatoon Eastview-Haultain had come to this House to represent the people of Saskatoon, his riding, after a 10-month vacancy, that that same Conservative government when we finally had an election call in the fall of 1991 had four vacancies and, Mr. Speaker, two of those vacancies were in excess of two years, a period of time half of a term as proposed by the entire length of the term by the Leader of the Opposition today.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I listened, the road to Damascus is a wonderful thing indeed. We have seen reform taking place in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition, who more than anything else recognizes that his party at this stage, in order to regain just a crumb of credibility in the eyes of Saskatchewan people, is going to have to wear sackcloth and ashes, Mr. Speaker, and this is their way of doing it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there must be a little more serious thought and reason; there must be a little more serious thought and reason in dealing with the issue of the timing of elections. Mr. Speaker, we live in a nation which has a constitution. Let me remind the Assembly, in this country in which we live, by the Canadian constitution there must be an election at any jurisdiction, whether that be federal or provincial, within five years.

Let me remind the House, Mr. Speaker, that in 1986 the election called by the Conservative government of the day was held on October 20, 1986, and then the election in 1991, called again by the Conservative government of the day, was held on October 21, 1991 — five years and a day, one day longer than permissible by the Canadian constitution. Thank you to the denial of the democratic process by the Conservative government of the day.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is hard to take seriously the arguments of the Leader of the Conservative Party today.

An Hon. Member: — Ask the people, Glenn.

Mr. Hagel: — He says, ask the people. He says, ask the people. Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — Walk down your riding for a change.

Mr. Hagel: — I walked down. The Leader of the Opposition says, walk down the street. Mr. Speaker, I walked down the street through an election in which people were saying for months, in fact for years, before 1991, that there should be a four-year term.

You know why they were saying that, Mr. Speaker? They were saying that because they had two kinds of governments to compare in the history of

Saskatchewan. They had the Conservative government, which pushed it to the limit and then a day, and they compared that, in the history of Saskatchewan, to the Tommy Douglas, New Democrat, CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) New Democrat government, from 1944 to 1964, which called an election every four years. Not because it had to, but because it had made a commitment to the people of the province to do that as a matter of responsible government.

Mr. Speaker, what the people of Saskatchewan are saying is, we're happy with the Canadian constitution that requires it within five years, but what we want in the province of Saskatchewan is responsible government. And, Mr. Speaker, that is what they have today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And all of the wearing of sackcloth and ashes in public, in this Legislative Assembly, as proposed by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, does not do away, does not do away with that sentiment of the people of Saskatchewan who found it to be a day of victory and freedom on October 21, 1991 because they no longer, they no longer had a government in the province of Saskatchewan that blatantly denied the principles of democracy and representation.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has clamoured for weeks about having the opportunity to bring his thoughts and his repentance and his proposal for what would be the new-found Tory resolution for a representative democracy for this Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, he has had an opportunity to put his words on record on two Bills here today, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased, I am very pleased to have witnessed, to have witnessed these words of repentance on the part . . . by the Leader of the Opposition. Now, Mr. Speaker, there's only one thing that would have made it perfect, and that would have been had it been by Gregorian chant. But, Mr. Speaker, that was not permissible in this Assembly.

And so, Mr. Speaker, having had the opportunity to enjoy the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, remind the Assembly of the history of Saskatchewan and that what people really want is responsible government. We do have a country which has a constitution. I will move adjournment of debate.

Debate adjourned.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move, by leave, that we move to motions for return (debatable).

Leave granted.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 1

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Regina North West, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 1 as follows:

Regarding the Department of Agriculture's Farm Support Review Committee: (1) the amount the department has paid to each member for an indemnity, travel, lodging, meals and communications for their participation on the committee; (2) the amount the department has allocated to pay for the public meetings to be held by the committee in Melfort, Wadena, Spiritwood, Biggar, Swift Current, and Grenfell; and (3) the amount of that proposed expenditure that will be allocated to travel, lodging, meals, and communications for members of the committee.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

(1630)

Return No. 2

Mr. Martens: — I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing, seconded by the member from Thunder Creek:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation: being this corporation recorded a loss of \$150,494,000 in 1992 (*Public Accounts*, Volume 1); a profit of \$200,537,000 in 1993; and had overestimated the final payment in 1991 by \$85 million (Standing Committee of Public Accounts), I'd like to ask the question: (1) the reason the 1992-93 summary financial statement does not reflect an additional \$85 million profit to account for the previous year's overestimation; (2) when the \$85 million correction will be recorded in *Public Accounts*; and (3) where the \$85 million correction will be recorded in those *Public Accounts*.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 3

Mr. McPherson: — I move, seconded by the member from Regina North West, to move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 3 showing:

Regarding SaskPower Corporation's decision to purchase 25 megawatts of electricity from non-utility sources: (1) whether SaskPower has selected a firm to supply the SaskPower Corporation with co-generated power; (2) the name of that firm and the criteria by which the firm was selected; (3) whether SaskPower did demand a deposit from any of the firms competing to supply SPC, Saskatchewan

Power Corporation, with this co-generated power; (4) if a deposit was required, the value of the deposit; (5) were the criteria for choosing the successful supplier clearly laid out for all the bidders before opening the competition.

I so move.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, if I could, by leave, introduce guests before I give a response.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce two special people who are seated in the west gallery, my son Matthew, and my son Travis. Travis, you have to stand up too if you want to. No. And I just want to say that Matthew is in grade 3 and Travis is in grade 1 and they're with us to watch the proceedings for the next few minutes. I appreciate that opportunity.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 3 (continued)

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — I want to say on the return no. 3 that we will be providing, Mr. Speaker, this response in our answer to question no. 23, so we will be defeating this motion on the understanding that the answer to this will actually be provided in question no. 23. And in order for this to show on the record, we will also be calling for a standing vote on this issue.

Motion negatived.

The Speaker: — Standing vote. Call in the members.

I'm sorry. There was only one member standing and I apologize to the House. There will be no standing vote.

Return No. 5

Mr. McPherson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina North West that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 5 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation (SPMC): (1) the number of air conditioner units that were purchased for use in provincially owned office buildings in the past year; (2) whether those purchases were made after public tender; (3) the value of such purchases; (4) the policy of the provincial government, specifically SPMC, regarding open tendering practices; and (5) the recourse in situations where open tendering practices have been violated.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 7

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, to move that an order of the Assembly do issue a return no. 7 showing:

Regarding the department of Executive Council: (1) the total expense incurred from expanding the cabinet from 16 to 18 members; (2) the number of additional ministerial assistants or other staff that were hired; (3) whether there was any form of open competition for those positions, and if not, how were these staff enlisted and hired; (4) the total expense of those hired; (5) the total value of additional salaries provided to the MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) promoted to cabinet; and (6) the total value of additional benefits and allowances provided to MLAs promoted to cabinet.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 8

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 8 showing that:

Regarding the Public Service Commission: (1) provide the number of individuals employed by the PSC that receive subsidized parking stalls; (2) the total amount monthly spent on providing parking stalls for these individuals.

I so move, seconded by the member from Souris-Cannington.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 9

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina North West, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 9 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Gaming Commission's purchase of surveys and studies: (1) whether a survey done by Fox Consulting of Reno, Nevada purchased; (2) the total amount paid for the services provided by Fox Consulting; (3) the amount that was to provide for travel, lodging, communications, and entertainment expenses for the consultant, Ms. Candace Fox; (4) whether this contract was awarded following an open tender; (5) whether Fox Consulting was instructed to consult with people directly or indirectly affected by casino gambling, including licensed bingo charities, aboriginal peoples, the horse-racing industry and exhibition associations; (6) with whom did the Fox firm consult and at what length during

the course of its survey into the feasibility of casino gambling; (7) whether there were any other surveys or studies commissioned by the Saskatchewan Gaming Commission from any other consultants; (8) if the answer to no. 7 is yes, who is performing those surveys or studies, at what cost, and are the surveys or studies available to the public.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 10

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 10 showing:

Regarding Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI): (1) the total amount of additional revenue that was generated by all increases in registration, licence fees, and vehicle insurance since November 1, 1991; (2) the percentage increases in registration, licence renewals, and vehicle insurance since November 1, 1991; (3) the average dollar amount increase per individual paid by Saskatchewan vehicle owners as a result of all SGI increases combined since November 1, 1991.

I so move, seconded by the member from Morse.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 12

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 12 showing:

Regarding the Workers' Compensation Board: (1) after moving from its past location, the value of the furnishings disposed of and whether those furnishings were sold according to SPMC, Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, guidelines; (2) the amount of the money that was paid to Brown & Associates in the past year and for what purpose was this payment made; (3) the cost of the electronic security system purchased by the Workers' Compensation Board; (4) the cost of the contract with Information Systems Management and the number of consultants that were hired as a result; (5) the contracts referred to in questions (2), (3), and (4) that were awarded after an open tender.

I so move.

The Speaker: — Did the member say who her seconder was?

An Hon. Member: — Shaunavon.

The Speaker: — Shaunavon. All right.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 13

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Moosomin, that an order of the Assembly do issue a return for no. 13 showing:

Regarding the Department of Health: dental health educators, classification no. 605210, have recently been reclassified to health educator 2, classification no. 108082 positions. Please provide details on this reclassification including: (1) the reasons for this reclassification; (2) the qualifications and educational requirements for both the dental health educators and the health educator 2 positions; (3) the pay range for each classification; (4) the number of individuals affected by this reclassification; (5) the total increased cost to the taxpayer by this reclassification in one fiscal year; (6) the total spent on dental health educators for the last fiscal year itemizing salary and expenses; and (7) who authorized the reclassification.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 14

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Regina North West, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 14 showing:

Regarding the Department of Education: (1) the number of student loans that were issued in the last year to Saskatchewan residents enrolled in educational programs in Saskatchewan; (2) the number of student loans that were issued in the last year to Saskatchewan residents enrolled in educational programs outside of Saskatchewan; (3) the number of those loans in (1) and (2) above that are in arrears; (4) the total dollar value of the loans now in arrears.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

(1645)

Return No. 15

Mrs. Bergman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 15 showing:

Regarding the Department of Social Services: (1) the number of children that were forced to the government sponsored or supported child hunger programs in the last year; (2) the number of meals that were served; (3) the amount the government paid to support these

child hunger projects; (4) the number of non-governmental agencies that are involved and the level of funding they receive from the government as a percentage of their entire budgets.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 16

Mrs. Bergman: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 16 showing:

Regarding the Department of Health and the prescription drug plan: (1) the amount that was paid by users of the plan in premiums in the last year; (2) the number of persons that received benefits from the plan during the last year; (3) the value of the benefits received; (4) the number of those receiving benefits that were seniors, on social assistance, or considered chronically ill; (5) the total value of prescription drugs purchased by the province of Saskatchewan from drug manufacturers and suppliers; (6) the number of prescriptions in total that have been ordered by Saskatchewan physicians for the past year, and how many of these prescriptions were actually filled.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 17

Mrs. Bergman: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 17 showing:

Regarding the Department of Health: (1) the number of Saskatchewan residents that have gone out of province for eye surgery in the past year; (2) the cost of those surgeries; (3) the amount of the total cost that was reimbursed by the Saskatchewan government towards the cost of those procedures; (4) the number of Saskatchewan residents that have had eye surgery in the province of Saskatchewan in the past year; (5) the number of Saskatchewan residents that are on waiting-lists to have eye surgery performed in Saskatchewan and the anticipated time frame for having those operations performed.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 18

Mrs. Bergman: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 18 showing:

Regarding the Department of Health: (1) the current policy of the Department of Health regarding health care coverage for foreign students; (2) the actual cost to the Department of Health for coverage under this policy in the past; (3) the nature of the policy review that is currently taking place, i.e., the mandate, the policy that is driving this review; (4) when will the review be completed, and when will the affected students be notified of any proposed change to the existing policy.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 19

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 19 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation, please provide information on special warrant no. 63/94 authorizing an additional expenditure of 14,776,000 for a write-off in the corporation including: (1) why the write-off occurred; (2) what the write-off was for; (3) where this figure will be documented in **Public Accounts**; and (4) when this figure will be documented in **Public Accounts**.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 21

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Regina North West, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 21 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation: (1) the number of farmers that have dropped out of the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance program during the past year; (2) the number of acres that have been taken out of the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance program during the past year that are no longer insured.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 23

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Kindersley, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 23 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's request to communities, agencies and other organizations to submit proposals for co-generation projects: whether a

decision has been reached on any projects and if not, the reason for the delay and when will a decision be reached.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 24

Mr. Goohsen: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Wilkie, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 24 showing:

Regarding Saskatchewan Energy Corporation, SaskEnergy, please provide: (1) a list of all fees and charges levied by SaskEnergy; (2) the amount of increase in each fee and charge in the last fiscal year; (3) total revenue raised by fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (4) additional revenue raised by increases in fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (5) total revenue raised by fees and charges, to date, in the fiscal year of 1994; (6) the projected revenue for the fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (7) the projected revenue for the fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1994.

I so move.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I would move a small amendment to the motion in order to make it conform with what we have provided in the past, in fact what has been provided for many, many years in the House.

I would move, seconded by the member for Rosetown, that in return no. 24:

To add the words "and decrease" in question no. (2), after the word "increase";

and further, to delete the words in no. (5) "total raised by fees and charges, to date, in the fiscal year of '94", and the words in (7) "the projected revenue for fees and charges in the fiscal year of '94";

and renumber no. (6) as no. (5).

I so move.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 25

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 25 showing:

Regarding SaskTel, please provide: (1) a list of all fees and charges levied by SaskTel; (2) the amount of increase in each fee and charge in the last fiscal year; (3) total revenue raised by fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (4) additional revenue raised by increase in fees

and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (5) total revenue raised by fees and charges to date, in the fiscal year of 1994; (6) the projected revenue of all fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (7) the projected revenue of all fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1994.

I so move, seconded by the member from Maple Creek.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, for the same reasons as mentioned in the previous motion, I would move, seconded by the member from Melfort, that:

To add the words “and decrease” in question (2) after the word “increase”;

and further to delete the words in (5) “total raised by fees and charges to date, in the fiscal year of ’94”; and the words in (7) “the projected revenue and fees and charges in the fiscal year ’94”;

and renumber (6) as (5).

Mr. Speaker, as well on this motion, in terms of providing the material asked for, I would ask leave that the Assembly receive only one copy of this information.

SaskTel is telling us that each answer, because of the vast volume of material involved, costs about a thousand dollars per set. And we would ask that rather than making seven copies, we provide one copy for the Assembly, and those who actually need a copy would come and make their own.

I can provide it, but they cost about a thousand dollars per set for the information that we’re talking about here. Just to give you an idea of the absolute cost — this is just in the printing and providing — but these questions do come with a fair price tag; and in this one, because of the extent of the cost, I would ask that by leave we provide only one copy.

Leave granted.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 26

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 26 showing:

Regarding Saskatchewan Power Corporation, SPC, please provide: (1) a list of all fees and charges levied by SPC; (2) the amount of increase in each fee and charge in the last fiscal year; (3) total revenue raised by fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (4) additional revenue raised by increases in fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (5) total revenue raised by fees and charges to date in the fiscal

year of 1994; (6) the projected revenue for the fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1993; (7) the projected revenue for the fees and charges in the fiscal year of 1994.

I so move, seconded by the member for Moosomin.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as with the previous two motions, I would move an amendment, seconded by the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow:

To add the words “and decrease” in question 2 after the word “increase”.

And further to delete the words in (5) “total raised by fees and charges to date in the fiscal year ’94”; and the words in (7) “the projected revenue for the fees and charges in the fiscal year ’94”.

And renumber (6) as (5).

I so move.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 27

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Moosomin, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 27 showing:

Regarding the Department of Finance, please provide: (1) total revenue raised by taxation, excluding corporations, in the last fiscal year; (2) a detailed breakdown, by tax, of revenue raised; the projected revenue, by tax, for the last fiscal year; (4) the projected revenue, by tax, for the fiscal year of ’94; (5) a list of studies conducted analysing the impact these taxes have on the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 29

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return No. 29 showing:

Regarding the Department of Health, of the 1,884 abortions covered by the Saskatchewan medical care insurance branch in 1992-93, the number conducted on individuals who had previously been covered for this procedure.

I so move, seconded by the member for Moosomin.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 30

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That an order of the Assembly do issue for returns no. 30, no. 31, no. 32, no. 33, no. 34, and no. 35 showing.

Seconded by the member from Wilkie.

The Speaker: — I believe the member should ask leave to do this, just in case there may be an amendment or two on any one of these. Are there amendments? Does the member ask for leave . . . (inaudible) . . . Does the member have leave?

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 36

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue a return for no. 36 showing:

Regarding SaskPower: The minister responsible has stated that Mr. David Dombowsky has “literally to this time saved us tens of millions of dollars” — *Hansard*, March 11, 1994, page 816: (1) the detailed information regarding the tens of millions of dollars that Mr. Dombowsky has saved the provincial government; (2) the full details of the number of contracts that Mr. Dombowsky has had with SaskPower since November 1, 1991; (3) copies of each contract with Mr. Dombowsky since November 1, 1991 and the details including expenses, fees, length of contract, purpose of contract, and how each contract has benefited the people of Saskatchewan.

I so move, seconded by the member from Moosomin.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I suggest a small amendment to return no. 36:

to delete:

(3) copies of each contract with Mr. Dombowsky since November of '91 and the details including expenses, fees, length of contract, purpose of contract and how each contract has benefited the people of Saskatchewan.

and substitute therefor:

(3) the details of Mr. Dombowsky's contract with SaskPower including expenses, fees, length of contract, and purpose of contract.

I so move, seconded by the member for Rosetown.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 40

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 40 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority: for all Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority's full-time equivalents: (1) the number of those FTEs in Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority that are temporary, part-time, labour service or summer students; (2) the payroll cost for all those employees in (1); (3) the number of those positions that will be affected by the proposed changes to The Labour Standards Act as contained in Bill 32; (4) the projected cost to the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority for (3) above; (5) whether the cost stated in (4) has been factored into the expenditure estimates for Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority.

I so move.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be making one small amendment which basically takes into account the fact that the regulations for The Labour Standards Act are not in place yet and will be developed by the sectoral committees. And therefore part (3), (4), and (5) we won't be able to give to you at this time because of the fact that they're just not there.

And so I would move, seconded by the member for Rosetown:

to delete parts (3), (4), and (5), in return no. 40.

And I would so move.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 41

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Greystone, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 41 showing:

Regarding the Public Service Commission: for all provincial government full-time equivalents covered by The Public Service Act: (1) the number of those full-time equivalents government-wide that are temporary, part time, labour service or summer students; and (2) the departments that those above-named categories of employees are located and in what numbers; (3) the payroll cost for those employees on a department basis; (4) the number of those positions that will be affected by the proposed changes to The Labour Standards Act as contained in Bill 32; (5) the projected cost for the government as a whole

and on a department basis for (4) above; (6) whether the cost stated in (5) has been factored into the expenditure estimates for the government as a whole and each government department.

I so move.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as with the previous motion, because we can't provide the specific amount that this will cost because of the development of the regulations, I would move, seconded by the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow:

That in return no. 41 to delete parts (3), (4), and (5).

I would so move.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 42

Mrs. Bergman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 42 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Water Corporation: for all Saskatchewan Water Corporation's full-time equivalents: (1) the number of these FTEs in Saskatchewan Water Corporation that are temporary, part time, labour service, or summer students; (2) the payroll cost for all those employees in no. (1); (3) the number of those positions that will be affected by the proposed changes to The Labour Standards Act as contained in Bill 32; (4) the projected cost to Saskatchewan Water Corporation for (3) above; (5) whether the cost stated in (4) has been factored into the expenditure estimates for Saskatchewan Water Corporation.

I so move.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, for the same reasons, I would move, seconded by the member for Rosetown:

That in return no. 42, to delete parts (3), (4), and (5).

I so move.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 43

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Regina North West,

that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 43 showing:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, SPMC: for all SPMC full-time equivalents not covered by the The Public Service Act: (1) the number of full-time equivalents in SPMC that are temporary, part time, labour service, or summer students; (2) the payroll cost for all those employees in (1); (3) the number of those positions that will be affected by the proposed changes to The Labour Standards Act contained in Bill 32; (4) the projected cost to SPMC for (3) above; and (5) whether the cost stated in (4) has been factored into the expenditure estimates for SPMC.

I so move.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, for the same reasons elaborated on in the last two motions, I would move, seconded by the member from Melfort:

That in return no. 43, to delete parts 3, 4, and 5.

I so move.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 45

Mrs. Bergman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 45 showing:

Regarding the Department of Justice: (1) the benefits that Provincial Court judges receive in addition to their base salary; (2) the value of benefits payments detailed in (1) above last year; (3) the transportation allowance paid to Provincial Court judges; (4) the value of all payments detailed in (3) above last year; (5) the per diem paid to Provincial Court judges while travelling or hearing cases; (6) the value of all payments detailed in (5) above last year.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Chair: — It being past 5 o'clock, the committee stands recessed until 7 o'clock p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.