

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions once again on behalf of responsible firearms owners. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly will be pleased to challenge Bill C-68 in court, refuse to allow the federal government to take over enforcement in Saskatchewan, and not allow the implementation of Bill C-68 in Saskatchewan while the Bill is being challenged in court.

And the names on this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from Lemberg, Ituna, Kelliher, Norquay, Neudorf, Churchbridge, Willowbrook, Esterhazy, virtually all over east-central and central Saskatchewan.

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present petitions of names from throughout Saskatchewan regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed these petitions are from all throughout Saskatchewan: Melville, Willow Bunch, Assiniboia, a number from the riding of Wood River, Canora, Lemberg; and I see that there are some, Mr. Speaker, from Regina Elphinstone constituency and Regina Albert South, of course, because they would like to have their members deal with these also. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions of names from throughout Saskatchewan regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

The people that have signed the petitions, Mr. Speaker, are from various communities: Yorkton, Regina, Meadow Lake — from all throughout Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to present to the Assembly today.

Ms. Julé: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions of names from throughout Saskatchewan regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

The people that signed the petitions, Mr. Speaker, are from Balcarres, Lebret, Regina, Goodeve, and throughout Saskatchewan.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present petitions of names from throughout Saskatchewan regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

People that have signed the petition, Mr. Speaker, are primarily from Guernsey, but also Lanigan, Humboldt, Nokomis, and others.

Mr. Gantfoer: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions of names from throughout Saskatchewan regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

The people that have signed the petitions, Mr. Speaker, are from Leroy, Lanigan, and Watrous area of the province.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions of names from throughout Saskatchewan regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

The people that have signed this petition are from Regina. They're from Balcarres, from Simpson, from Lipton, Fort Qu'Appelle.

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise too to present petitions of many, many, many names of people, regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

People that have signed the petition, Mr. Speaker, once again, are from all over Saskatchewan; many, many of them from Regina, Estevan, Alameda — all over the province.

Mr. Aldridge: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions of names from throughout Saskatchewan regarding the Plains Health Centre. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reconsider closure of the Plains Health Centre.

The people that have signed the petitions, Mr. Speaker, are from Estevan, Lampman, Frobisher, Bienfait. And I'll table these.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have petitions today dealing with SaskPower, and I'll just quickly read the prayer for you:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reverse the decision to raise SaskPower rates and freeze any further utility rates until an all-party utility review committee is in place in order to debate, review, and revise any utility rate increases in the future in order to restore fairness to the utility rate process in the province of Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitioners, Mr. Speaker, come from Broadview, all of them from the Broadview area of Saskatchewan. I'm pleased to present on their behalf.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to present today. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reverse the decision to raise SaskPower rates and freeze any further utility rates until a three-party utility review committee is in place in order to debate, review, and revise any utility rate increases in the future in order to restore fairness to the utility rate process in the province of Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitions, Mr. Speaker, come from the people of Carievale, Unity, and Blaine Lake, across the province, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have petitions to present to the Assembly:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to reverse the decision to raise SaskPower rates and freeze any further utility rates until a three-party utility review committee is in place in order to debate, review, and revise any utility rate increases in the future in order to restore fairness to the utility rate process in the province of Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, the petitions I am presenting have been signed by individuals from Dysart, Kelliher, Lestock, Regina, Yorkton, Ituna, Wishart, and many other communities in this province. I so present them.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a number of petitions relating to SaskPower, and I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon.

Assembly may be pleased to reverse the decision to raise SaskPower rates and freeze any further utility rates until a three-party utility review committee is in place in order to debate, review, and revise any utility rate increases in the future in order to restore fairness to the utility rate process in the province of Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And these all come from Rocanville. Thank you.

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy this morning to present petitions on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to revise the decision to raise SaskPower rates and freeze any further utility rates until a three-party review committee is in place in order to debate, review, and revise any utility rate increases in the future in order to restore fairness to the utility rate process in the province of Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These all come from the beautiful town of Unity, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 12(7) they are hereby read and received.

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to challenge Bill C-68 in court; and

The citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to reverse the decision to raise SaskPower rates; and

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to repeal the Crown Construction Tendering Agreement; and

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to reconsider the closure of the Plains Health Centre.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 12, ask the government the following questions. To the Minister of Highways and Transportation:

Firstly, regarding the fuel tax: what percentage of the projected revenue generated from the fuel tax for the fiscal year 1995-96 will be used for the construction, upkeep, and maintenance of the province's highways?

Secondly, regarding the total projected expenditures on provincial highway construction, upkeep, and maintenance programs for fiscal '95-96: what percentage of the total is projected to be spent on projects that are in the northern

part of the province, which we shall define as being north of the 54th parallel.

And thirdly: what is the present status of the benefit/cost analysis priority ranking of provincial highway upgrading projects, commonly known as the BCA (benefit cost analysis) project ranking, which ranks the priority which his department assigns to upgrading projects for highways across the province; and ask if he will table a copy of the most recent BCA project ranking.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Tuesday next ask the government the following question.

To the minister responsible for SaskPower: (1) How much has SaskPower collected in additional revenue from Saskatchewan home-owners since the 12 per cent rate increase took effect January 1, 1996; (2) how much has SaskPower collected in additional revenue from Saskatchewan farm customers since the almost 13 per cent increase took place in effect January 1, 1996; (3) what is the total amount of additional revenues collected from SaskPower rate increases since January 1, 1992, to date?

Mr. Speaker, I also give notice that I shall on Tuesday next ask the government the following question regarding SaskPower Commercial:

(1) What investments have been made by this company both inside and outside the province; (2) what projects have been undertaken by this company both inside and outside the province; (3) with regards to these projects and investments, which have received financing or investment from additional sources besides the company itself, and what are the names of these sources; (4) could you provide details of the amounts invested in SaskPower Commercial projects by outside sources; (5) could you provide details of additional investments in SaskPower Commercial projects made by other government departments, agencies, or Crown corporations.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a member of Regina City Council who is seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vic McDougall, who is accompanied today by his wife, Dawn, and a friend, Tom. And unfortunately I wasn't able to hear the last name, but he assures me he's only related to Vic through Adam. I'd ask them to rise and be acknowledged, and ask members to join in welcoming them here this morning.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure as well to add my greeting to Dawn and Victor McDougall who also are from the Elphinstone riding. But more importantly I think, all members will be interested to know that they are also the mother and father of our page, Leasa McDougall, who is

present here in the Assembly.

Tom Shkwarek, I believe the name is, also with them, a friend. Welcome to the Assembly and I look forward to seeing and working with you in the levels of endeavour that you're involved in.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's always gratifying to have young people to introduce in this Assembly and it's particularly so today to have in your gallery seven young women who are here to visit. And it's particularly wonderful to have them here on International Women's Day.

Now I know that they're planning a tour of the building later on, and if I have a moment to meet with them, I look forward to doing that. I'm delighted to see them here, thank them for their interest, and I'm going to introduce them and ask them to stand.

They are Ana Maria Fuentes, Ella McIntyre, Michelle Sanchez, Raelynn Strand, Tenille Thompson, Mariel Cabrera, and Barbara Cabrera. I will ask all members to give them a warm welcome. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly my very good friend seated in the west gallery — Fred Kress.

Fred worked with me for three years and once we got it sorted out — Fred was my constituency assistant who's recently moved on — once we got it sorted out where if it was good stuff done it was my responsibility and if there was an error it was Fred's, once we got that sorted out, we got along just great.

Anyway, I ask all members to join me in welcoming my good friend, Fred Kress.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — Mr. Speaker, I also rise to introduce to you and through you, Councillor McDougall. A large part of his ward for which he's responsible is in my area of Regina Sherwood, and I recognize his wife Dawn and Tom Shkwarek, if I'm not mistaken, because Tom and Vic and I served together years ago on the planning committee for the North West Arena in Regina, and I just want to acknowledge their presence here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

International Women's Day

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in recognition of this very important day which is Women's Day. Elizabeth Kady Stanton was born in

Jamestown, New York, in 1815 and isn't too well known in our time, but few women have had a greater influence on women's issues.

She was one of the earliest feminist leaders and author of the historic declaration of settlements at the first women's rights convention in 1848 and also spearheaded the successful efforts to give women in New York State joint guardianship of their children, the right to own property, and the right to sue in court.

Just listing the rights she did so much to win is an indication of how bad things were for women before she came along. Unfortunately she did not live long enough to see women win the right to vote, but on days such as International Women's Day she deserves to be saluted for the way she fought for equality and justice.

Several years later in 1869, the territory of Wyoming became the first government virtually anywhere to adopt women's suffrage and give women the right to vote. Wyoming, Mr. Speaker, was considered way out west, Mr. Speaker, where the men were men — yet they were half a century ahead of the rest of the world in rights for women. That was well over a hundred years ago, and although women have made great strides over the past century there are still much more to be done — problems such as equal work for equal pay. And we are also quite well aware of the physical abuse of women and children that need to be corrected.

Mr. Speaker, it certainly is a pleasure to stand in this Assembly today in recognition of International Women's Day. I would like to congratulate all of the men and women who have worked diligently over the many years to address the needs of women, to strive for equality and fairness, and in the end to make the world a better place to live. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: — Mr. Speaker, today is International Women's Day, formally proclaimed by the United Nations in 1975. This is the day set aside for people around the world to commemorate the struggle of women and to celebrate our achievements.

And, Mr. Speaker, after 21 years of commemoration, perhaps this would be a good time to take a moment to clarify our terms. This is so the member for Moosomin will clearly understand women's roles.

Today we do not celebrate how far we've come away from our traditional and biological role — far from it. We have gained confidence in our feminine identity. Rather today we celebrate how far we've come in addition to our traditional place as protectors and nurturers. And as the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley said last year, great progress has been made in the 66 years since we were legally declared persons in Canada, which in turn reminds us that much remains to be done.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to celebrate by thanking the women that have gone before us: women legislators, women

farmers, women professionals, and women that are our mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and friends. They have our undying gratitude and respect. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mary Batten

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As part of today's celebrations for International Women's Day, I would like to call the members' attention to the remarkable accomplishments of one of the first women of this Assembly.

Forty years ago, in 1956, Mary John Batten was the first woman elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly for the constituency of Humboldt. She was already an established lawyer and soon brought her own sense of style and grit to this Assembly. In one of her maiden debates in this Assembly, Batten told the Speaker of the day: Mr. Speaker, my people in Humboldt are not too impressed with the standard of debate in this House. My people feel that wit is not a good substitute for wisdom. They do not feel that to be clever is necessarily to be wise.

Mary Batten was an hon. member of this Assembly from 1956 to 1964. She was then appointed as a District Court judge in Saskatoon, and she was eventually named as the Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan in 1983. She served on a wide range of provincial committees and was always the champion of justice for all.

I rise today to commemorate Mary John Batten, one of Saskatchewan's finest women. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Souris Valley Child Care Corporation

Ms. Bradley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On International Women's Day, I also want to speak on an important event that happened in my constituency. And there have been many comments in the Assembly about cooperation and partnership. I want to point out another example of how people and organizations work together to improve the quality of life and provide necessary services to the community.

I was happy to attend the official opening this week of the Souris Valley Child Care Corporation, the first 24-hour day care centre in Weyburn. The centre, a non-profit corporation, is situated in a previously unused space at the Souris Valley Regional Care Centre and has 41 child care spaces. Mr. Speaker, it would be nice if we all could work from eight to five and then go home. But the reality of the modern work week is that many people work night shifts, split shifts, or both, and these people need child care as much or more than other parents. This day care will also offer very flexible arrangements for farm families as well.

The genesis and development of this project is the responsibility of many people and organizations: Sara Irwin of the Souris Valley Centre, who recognized her staff's need for a

safe place for working parents to bring their children; the volunteers who sit on the day care board; the city of Weyburn; the Department of Social Services; SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation); the board of the South Central Health District; Salvation Army; Wesley United Church; and many more local businesses and individuals.

Under the direction of director Terri Stocker, the child care centre will employ 6 full-time and 6 casual workers.

We have jobs, we have cooperation, we have affordable, quality day care for the families, the children, and the community of Weyburn and area. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

International Women's Day

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in Saskatchewan and around the globe we acknowledge International Women's Day, a time to commemorate the struggles and applaud the achievements of women in attaining a more fair and equitable place in society.

Although our province, our nation, and our planet have come a long way in addressing this issue over the past century, much work remains to be done by both women and men regarding gender equality. This is a cause to which the Saskatchewan Liberal Party is committed.

As we sit today in the Assembly, I am very proud of the fact that the first woman ever elected to the Saskatchewan legislature was chosen by the citizens of the old Pelly constituency, part of which is now included in the Canora-Pelly riding that I represent. On July 29, 1919, Sarah K. Ramsland entered the history books in the province when she became an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly).

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the Assembly join me in paying tribute to the accomplishments of this pioneer in the movement for equality in Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Farmer of the Year Award Presented

Mr. Ward: — Mr. Speaker, there was a special award presentation yesterday in Estevan to recognize the contributions of a farmer from my area. The Hon. Minister of Economic Development was on hand to present the Farmer of the Year award to Ernest Tedford. The presentation took place during Estevan Farmers' Day, which was organized by the Estevan Chamber of Commerce and the Estevan Agricultural Society, a perfect example of urban-rural cooperation, Mr. Speaker.

The purpose of this award is to recognize excellence in farming achievement by considering the contributions to agriculture and to community life. When I look at Ernest Tedford's background, it is easy to see that he has made a significant contribution to all of these areas and more.

He was born and raised on his father's farm and has farmed all of his life. Today the Tedford farm is 3,200 acres and their cattle operation consists of 250 head of pure-bred cattle. They have sold breeding stock to nine provinces in Canada, six U.S. (United States) states, as well as Australia, England, Brazil, and Columbia, putting Saskatchewan on the world map, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Tedford's other achievements are too many to mention, but I would like these members here and my constituents to congratulate Mr. Ernest Tedford and his family for the contribution to the agricultural industry and to our community. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Northern Housing

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to commend the residents of Cumberland House on the new housing program — 11 families built their own new homes in Cumberland House under the remote housing program. While this is a progressive program, much more needs to be done.

The people of northern Saskatchewan are still facing incredible difficulties when it comes to housing, Mr. Speaker. It's estimated that there's a shortage of 600 housing units. This is putting a tremendous strain on housing that already does exist in northern Saskatchewan.

To compensate for the shortage, hundreds of northern families are crowded into existing homes, many of them which are built with substandard materials. So the problem grows worse.

While I commend the families at Cumberland House, I would like to say that more of these types of self-help programs are direly needed to help the thousands of others currently living in substandard housing in northern Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Northern Lights Casino Opens in Prince Albert

Mr. Kowalsky: — This week in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, there are 120 people with jobs who one week ago were among the unemployed. This week, Mr. Speaker, there was a significant business opening in Prince Albert, one that involves a partnership and collaboration between the city of Prince Albert, the Prince Albert exhibition society, the provincial government, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, and the Prince Albert Grand Council.

Those 120 jobs, Mr. Speaker, came with the opening of the Northern Lights Casino; 85 per cent of those jobs, Mr. Speaker, are filled by first nations employees, and with the 120 jobs comes an annual payroll of more than \$2.5 million to boost the Prince Albert economy. The spin-off benefits will help our community through the multiplier effect which the member from Weyburn mentioned yesterday.

At the opening, our mayor Don Cody of Prince Albert

emphasized that this business is a positive step towards economic development. It is also a positive bridge to the racial divide which exists in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased that this partnership was forged with . . . which will help us confront the racial issue. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Chief Blaine Flavel, Chief Alphonse Bird of the P.A. (Prince Albert) Grand Council, Mayor Don Cody, and the minister of Gaming, who have all brought this project to completion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

School Board Amalgamation

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is again to the Minister of Education. She is out floating trial balloons asking school boards to pick a buddy to amalgamate with. Well, Mr. Speaker, this is not kindergarten and the buddy system is too simple.

I would hope the Minister of Education is willing to understand that school board amalgamation is a very complex issue which requires strong leadership. Trustees, teachers, parents, and communities are looking to the minister for that leadership. And to sit back and say pick a buddy just doesn't cut it. These affected parties want leadership, but they must be allowed to be very active in the consultation process.

Mr. Speaker, my question is: will the minister commit to consulting with teachers, trustees, parents, and communities before she even considers school board amalgamation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that very important question. The Minister of Education is, as the member has observed, out going to various communities discussing some options with respect to the K to 12 system and the regional college system. And these must be regarded as very preliminary consultations to sort of obtain the preliminary views of people involved. And I understand these meetings are being attended by school trustees and municipal leaders and interested people.

That will, in due course, lead to a more formal consultation process, probably based upon some documents that set out options or alternatives that the minister is hearing about as she goes about her consultations now.

But I can say to the member that this process, we're aware, this process will require extensive consultation and great sensitivity and a lot of work. And we fully intend that that will happen, and at the end of the day we will have a system that everyone is relatively satisfied with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, trustees and teachers, directors

of educations and secretary-treasurers are anxiously awaiting a firm direction from the minister. School boards may be entering into agreements with school bus operators, financial institutions, and many other service providers for two- or three-year contracts. These stakeholders are forced to rely heavily on government decisions. These stakeholders are forced to sit back on pins and needles and wait for the minister to provide some leadership. One day she alludes to forced amalgamation. The next day she says she will consult with affected parties.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister. Does she have a set of criteria that she intends to use as guidelines for amalgamation, and if so, will she table that criteria today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, the minister and the government are trying to deal with this important matter in a sensitive a way as possible, and we have not seen that as being that the government would provide the kind of firm direction the member seems to be referring to. We don't want this to be purely a top-down exercise. I don't think it should. It should be as much as possible a bottom-up exercise, and that's what the minister's out there trying to do now.

We believe that some leadership is going to be required in this situation, but I don't know whether we would go as far as the member's question seems to be implying. Perhaps, if necessary at the end of the day, some kind of a leadership role like the member is suggesting may be necessary, but at the present time, we think that there are a lot of people out there with a great interest: trustees, parents, teachers, a lot of other people who have to be heard on this. And out of all those consultations will hopefully come a solution that we can all live with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Education has on occasion indicated that September 1, 1996 was the deadline for school boards to submit a proposal for amalgamation. After that date the minister may decide on amalgamation for all the boards regardless of their input. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education said in this Assembly on April 25, 1991 when in opposition, and I quote:

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

Mr. Speaker, this government is leading the people of Saskatchewan down the road to school closure and teacher lay-offs. The one which resulted . . . Mr. Speaker, I am asking the minister if the health map, the one which resulted in massive hospital closures and lay-offs of health care professionals, is going to be the one used for school divisions, as unknown government criteria will mean that school board initiatives will be a waste of time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, it is certainly not the government that will be determining whether there should be any school closures or what action should be taken at the level of the school division.

The member himself has said on at least one occasion, if not many occasions, that school closures are inevitable. I take the member's point. I think that that will happen. The member says as a result of enrolment; I think that that will happen. But we're not about to start directing that.

What we're trying to do is to provide leadership, as the member has suggested, in a public consultation where everyone will be heard and where we will try to arrive at the best quality K to 12 education system that we're capable of sustaining in this province. We all have an interest in that. I do, the member does, the citizens of this province do. We want this to come out the best we can for our kids.

That requires a lot of cooperation, a great deal of discussion, a lot of exchange of ideas, and a resolution to the problem within a fairly tight time frame because of some of the matters that the member has mentioned in his questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Farm Fuel Tax Rebate

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, today has been designated International Women's Day, and as the minister responsible for Agriculture knows, women work as equals on many of the Saskatchewan farms. Not only do they help on the day-to-day management of the farms, but oftentimes women are shareholders in the farms and do at least 50 per cent of the work required to keep a family farm viable.

The treatment of women, and specifically married women, under the farm fuel tax rebate program is anything but fair and equal. In order to be eligible for a rebate under this program, an individual must control and be responsible for a farm, the individual must own or lease his or her own land, an individual must contribute to the growth of the farm, and the individual must hold a permit book issued by the Canadian Wheat Board or raise farm products generating an annual gross revenue of at least \$10,000.

Under this program, if two farmers live under the same roof and fulfil the qualifications, they each are eligible for a rebate. They could be a father and son, brothers, or sister and brother. The only exception is married couples or common law couples.

My question is: will the minister responsible for Agriculture stand up and admit the farm fuel tax rebate program is discriminatory, and will he assure all women of this province, rural and urban, that he will eliminate these exceptions for married couples?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — I thank the member opposite for the question. We're currently looking at this issue with the Human

Rights Commission. What I would say to the member opposite is that the people, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, provide to farmers more than \$100 million in tax exemptions for fuel of various kinds. And we base one of the exemptions on family income.

And I would remind the member opposite that my counterpart in Ottawa, Mr. Martin, just a few days ago announced that family income will also be the basis for making decisions about pensions in Canada. So there are many governments across Canada that say the most fair way to deal with taxpayer money going to a particular group of people is to look at the income of the whole family. She may want to raise this concern with Mr. Martin in Ottawa.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, this NDP (New Democratic Party) government has time and time again ignored the plight of women in this province as well as the plight of small business. It ignores an issue as blatant as farm fuel tax rebate programs and the discrimination against women.

My question to this minister is, if a married woman meets all the qualifications of owning or leasing land, contributing to the growth of the farm, and holds a valid permit book, why is she not eligible for the farm fuel tax rebate?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Well, Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, what I would say is this. I would say, first of all, we are working with the Human Rights Commission to see if there is a problem here. But I would also say that it is a fundamental principle of many governments, including her counterparts in Ottawa, to look at family income when determining taxpayer benefits to a particular group of people. There is a fairness to looking at the income, the status, of the whole family, rather than just one member of the family.

So it's not a principle exclusive to this government. What this government is committed to is to using taxpayers' money as fairly as possible and we will continue to apply that principle.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Job Creation

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Economic Development. Mr. Minister, the latest report card on your government's job strategy is out and once again you get a big, fat F. From February '95 to February of '96, Saskatchewan has lost 4,000 jobs. That means for the first two months of '96 Saskatchewan is averaging 4,500 less jobs, not the 4,000 new jobs you've been predicting.

Mr. Minister, will you admit today that you are not going to reach your target of 4,000 new jobs this year? Will you admit that your job strategy is failing and start taking some action to get these dismal job figures turned around?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I know the member expects quick turnaround but the job strategy was announced last week and of course these numbers are for the first two months of '96. But seriously, Mr. Speaker, obviously the strategy *Partnership for Renewal* which was announced in 1992 led . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well you can say it's failed, but you're doing a grave disservice to those business people and the people who have created 10,000 jobs since *Partnership for Renewal* was announced.

Now you may want to look at the statistics and see where the job numbers have actually gone up 1,000 jobs since January to February. You can take your negative side all you want, preach gloom and doom, attack Crown Life, attack Husky Oil, attack the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and create an atmosphere that's negative for job creation. Or you can join the thousands of business people, hundreds of them who came out to meetings to plan the strategy *Partnership for Growth*, planning for the next century, or you can continue to bury your head in the sand and think of those good old days of give her snooze in the Devine government, loss of thousands of people from this province. The population continues to grow with the support of the business community.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you've announced job numbers time after time. Your *Partnership for Renewal* talked about 30,000 jobs. The next year it was 16,000. Now it's just down to 4,000 jobs.

Over the last few weeks, Mr. Minister, we've seen hundreds of Saskatchewan people lose their jobs. At Crop Insurance, at the newspapers here in Saskatchewan, at Agrifoods International. These people need some hope that other jobs are there to go for. There are no new jobs being created in Saskatchewan presently.

Mr. Minister, since you introduced your *Partnership for Renewal*, Saskatchewan has created about 3,000 jobs since 1992. In Alberta there's been 110,000 jobs created in that same time frame. Your economic strategy is creating jobs. Unfortunately, Mr. Minister, it's in Alberta is where they're being created. And that's probably where many of the displaced people in the last few weeks will be having to go.

Mr. Minister, when are you going to admit that your economic strategy is failing and failing miserably? Why don't you take a lesson from Alberta and develop some policies that gets government off the backs of Saskatchewan people and really create some jobs here.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talks about all of the jobs that are lost, refusing to realize that CIBC (Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce) has just announced in the very months that you're talking about, the sod-turning for a call centre here in Regina. The member from Weyburn announced in the House yesterday the expansion of Alcatel in Weyburn. You remember, if you can remember back this far, Shuttlecraft's announcement a week ago.

But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, we had an election in June,

1995 which was the report card on *Partnership for Renewal* and this government's job creation and governance policy. And what they said to that member opposite is that you deserve five seats in the legislature because of the actions and the over-exaggeration that you carried out while you were sitting in the official opposition. So talking about credibility, I'd have a look in the mirror to see whether or not it's credible what you're seeing here today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Firearms Legislation

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday we heard the Liberal members almost gushing over the federal budget, and I wonder if that praise extends to the \$14 million of new money that's being budgeted this year to implement the new gun control law, Bill C-68.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice. Mr. Minister, it's clear that this legislation is tremendously unfair to Saskatchewan's responsible firearms owners. It will do nothing to reduce crime, and it will not make our streets any safer. And we now see the evidence that this is also going to be a colossal waste of taxpayers' money.

Mr. Minister, will you be following up on the commitment made by the previous minister, who understood this issue, to challenge the legislation in court, and when can we expect this process to begin, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the hon. member for that question. The situation is, with this government, our position has not changed, and I think that the hon. member actually knows that. The federal government has . . . the federal Liberals have provided us with a wait-and-see position because the regulations that were supposed to be in effect by January 1 of this year have not been prepared. We're waiting to see what happens with these regulations. We're also very concerned about some of the budgetary questions that are involved.

The discussion with the ministers from Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and the Territories are continuing as we monitor this situation. And it's very clear that a constitutional challenge is a strong possibility, but we are not going to make any clear decision on that until the regulations have been released.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I'm glad to hear that the minister says there's going to be no change, but unfortunately there's also no action.

Mr. Minister, the PC (Progressive Conservative) caucus believes that we must take every step possible to fight this ill-conceived piece of legislation, and that includes a legal challenge, and that includes provincial legislation that will protect the rights of Saskatchewan firearms owners.

In a few minutes I will be introducing a piece of legislation

designed to protect Saskatchewan firearms owners from confiscation without compensation under Bill C-68. Will you support this legislation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for the second question. I also very much appreciate his support for our initiatives. We will be dealing with this matter in a very straightforward and a clear manner and we look forward to the support of the hon. member.

It's very clear in this whole situation that our counterparts, the Liberals in Ottawa, have caused a great deal of difficulty for people in Saskatchewan and people in western Canada. It appears they've also caused a great deal of difficulty for their own Members of Parliament . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the MLAs, that's true. And we are in a position whereby we will be reviewing all options as we look at this whole situation. And it's a possibility that we would look at the option that the member has provided for this House, but we will not be making any commitment about that until we have reviewed all of the regulations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Child Protection Services

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Social Services. Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Judge Thomas G. Gove recently released the report of the Gove inquiry. The Gove inquiry dealt with the neglect, abuse, and death of five-and-a-half-year-old Matthew Vaudreuil of British Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, Matthew was failed by the system in British Columbia. Throughout his life, Matthew was under the care of the Department of Social Services, yet his life was lost at the hands of his abusive mother.

I would like to read an excerpt from volume 1, page 123 of the Gove Report. This excerpt is from a woman who visited the Vaudreuil home a week before Matthew was suffocated to death by his mother:

I said, "Where's little Matthew?" and Vaudreuil said, "He's in the bedroom." . . . So I went in there (and) he was underneath a pile of blankets. I took it off of him, I wasn't sure if he was okay — and he sat up. He was — all sweaty and scared-looking and that's when he said, "Help me," and called me grandma.

Mr. Speaker, in order to protect our children, would it not be responsible to review the recommendations of the Gove . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order. I'll ask the member to put her question directly if she would, please. The hon. member for Humboldt, put the question directly.

Ms. Julé: — Mr. Minister, Matthew asked for help and no one was there to protect him. Could you tell me, Mr. Minister, have

there been in this province deaths of children who are part of Saskatchewan's Social Services child protection case-loads, children whose deaths were similar to Matthew's?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the member raises a very, very important issue. I think . . . I don't think; I know the Department of Social Services has been very cognizant of the Gove inquiry in British Columbia and some of the recommendations and the issues which led to that. We are very cognizant of those issues in our own province.

Mr. Speaker, this government, as you well know, since being elected in 1991, has set the needs of children in our province as one of the highest priorities of this government. And as a result, Mr. Speaker, we have pioneered in all of Canada the Saskatchewan action plan for children, pioneered and led by my colleague, the former Minister of Social Services.

There are today across Saskatchewan hundreds, literally hundreds, of programs and projects devoted to the needs of children. To that member, Mr. Speaker, I say we are very cognizant of the Gove and we are very sensitive to these issues.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Mr. Minister, it is your responsibility to know the facts about the numbers of abused and neglected children that have died in this province under your ministry. Do you have, Mr. Minister, those numbers?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I will provide to that member the information if it is . . . I believe in her question she is making some accusations that children may have died under protection. Mr. Speaker, we will provide that information if there is that information to be provided.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about this line of questioning. If the member would come to me, as I have invited her to do on a number of occasions if she has concerns about individual cases in this province. I have invited her to come to me directly and we'll be very open with information. This, in my view, Mr. Speaker, is not the kind of forum where we should be bantering through politics this kind of issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, I have been notified by a number of people who have gone through the ministry and have of course been disappointed with the results.

Mr. Speaker, in British Columbia the present case-load for children protection workers is 33 to 35 cases per worker. This is compared to the recommended 12 cases per worker. Could the minister responsible for Social Services please tell me what the average case-load would be for a Saskatchewan child protection worker?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, it is a difficult circumstance when this member wants to play politics with this kind of issue. I think we should be dealing with fact in this House, not innuendo and accusation.

Mr. Speaker, that member would be better served, and so would her whole caucus, if they would direct their attention to their Liberal friends in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker.

Do you know the fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker, in this current budget of the federal government? Seventy-three per cent of the cuts in this federal budget are to health, social services and education — 73 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, here the tale of the whole budget is told and the Liberal Party in this province should be bearing some responsibility to explain it.

I have here, Mr. Speaker, right from the pie chart right from the *Leader-Post*, Mr. Speaker, the total revenues to the federal government, total revenues to the federal government from corporate income tax, Mr. Speaker, represent 11.2 per cent. Total revenues to the federal government from unemployment insurance premiums, 13.9 per cent.

These are the people that they would stand in this House and defend. I think, Mr. Speaker, they should direct their attention where it should be directed, that being their cousins in Ottawa.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the Minister of Social Services whether he would be prepared within the next two days to give me the statistics so that I can answer to the people out there who have been prompting me to come and find out about these things.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I assured that member moments ago we would provide whatever information is required and is of fact. I ask again, why didn't that member come to me and ask, because I've made her that offer — I've made her that offer in person. She will not take advantage of it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the public of Saskatchewan will remember how this party in past has voted around issues affecting women and children in our province.

They have voted against every positive and progressive initiative advanced by this government since 1991. They voted against the children's action plan. They refused to speak up on behalf of Saskatchewan children and women to their federal cousins in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, we are endeavouring to utilize the resources that we have at our disposal to provide the very best of life for children in our province.

Each time we bring forward a progressive idea, that group of people vote against it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 2 — An Act respecting the Property Rights of the People of Saskatchewan

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Property Rights of the People of Saskatchewan.

The division bells rang from 10:55 a.m. to 11:05 a.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 47

Romanow	Van Mulligen	Mitchell
Wiens	MacKinnon	Lingenfelter
Shillington	Anguish	Tchorzewski
Johnson	Lautermilch	Upshall
Kowalsky	Crofford	Renaud
Calvert	Koenker	Trew
Bradley	Lorje	Nilson
Serby	Stanger	Hamilton
Murray	Langford	Kasperski
Ward	Jess	Flavel
Murrell	Thomson	Osika
Aldridge	McLane	Draude
McPherson	Belanger	Julé
Krawetz	Gantefoer	Boyd
D'Autremont	Toth	Hepner
Goohsen	Haverstock	

Nays — Nil

The Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

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

Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask leave of this Assembly to bring forward a matter of the utmost importance to me and a matter that should be of great concern to all members in this House.

The Speaker: — Would the member just briefly indicate the subject matter that he wants to introduce to the House.

Mr. Osika: — It has come to my attention, Mr. Speaker, that as a result of some intimidation tactics by the Hollinger Corporation, threatens 13 weekly newspapers in north-eastern Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — It's not clear to the Speaker. Is the member requesting leave to introduce a motion under rule 46? The hon. member has requested leave to make a statement. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Intimidation tactics by Hollinger

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night I received a call from the publisher of the *Melville Advance*, and what he told me disturbed me a great deal. Newspapers in east-central Saskatchewan are in the midst of setting up a mass market community newspaper to compete with a similar mass market advertising publication the Yorkton paper has been distributing for years. Mr. Speaker, this is what I call fair competition and free enterprise.

But, Mr. Speaker, *Yorkton This Week's* new owner, the Hollinger Corporation, obviously doesn't believe in fair competition because yesterday representatives of the corporation threatened the futures of newspapers in Melville, Wynyard, Canora, Kamsack, Preeceville, Norquay, Watson, Moosomin, Carlyle, Carnduff, Kelvington, Langenburg, and Watrous.

As I said, for the last 15 years, *Yorkton This Week & Enterprise* has been publishing a free distribution mass market publication that robbed much of the advertising from many of the communities surrounding Yorkton with cut-rate costs. The other newspapers in the region have grown tired of fighting this Goliath alone so they combined their forces to create this new regional newspaper in an attempt to keep more of their advertising revenue in their communities.

However, the publishers of these newspapers did not count on the cutthroat, unfair, monopolistic approach adopted by the Hollinger Corporation and Conrad Black. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, representatives of Hollinger told the publisher of the *Melville Advance* if plans for this new newspaper aren't dropped immediately, Hollinger will open an office in Melville, distribute free Yorkton newspapers in the community, and undercut the *Melville Advance* ad rates by 50 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, this is a blatant attempt to put the *Melville Advance* out of business and it won't stop there, I can assure you. Publishers in the other communities involved are living under a similar threat.

Mr. Speaker, Hollinger has been a corporate citizen in our province for exactly one week. In that time it has not only put a quarter of its own workforce on the streets, it now threatens the very futures of the very weekly newspapers in our province — papers that have been around for six, seven, or eight decades. Clearly we as provincial legislators cannot let this situation go on unnoticed.

We in this party are in favour of free enterprise and fair competition. But, Mr. Speaker, what Hollinger is attempting to do is far from fair. It is trying to choke the life out of these weekly community newspapers as it tries to extend its monopoly in this province.

It already owns all the dailies and now is setting its killer corporate sights on the weekly newspapers. Mr. Speaker, this situation is absolutely unacceptable to me and it should be for every member of this House. Weekly newspapers employ hundreds of people across this province.

For someone like Hollinger to waltz in and threaten to shut down these very community papers that we all rely on for fair and unbiased reporting, as the Minister of Agriculture had noticed in a newspaper article from the *Fort Qu'Appelle Times* last week . . . I've worked with these newspapers. I know how hard they try to serve the communities and I feel this is totally unfair. And I wanted the members of this House to be aware of this.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — With leave, for a brief response.

Leave granted.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Yes, I'll be quite brief in responding to the member. In listening to the member's comments, we expressed the same concern ourselves, the concern about the concentration of corporate power in this particular area, the area of information in newspapers.

The incident, if accurate . . . And I have only the press release from the community newspapers to go on. I assume it's accurate. But assuming the information to be accurate, it does indeed suggest predatory pricing and should be a matter of concern. And so I rise, in large part, to echo the concerns expressed by the Leader of the Opposition.

We are concerned about community newspapers. They are indeed the lifeblood of small communities. The member from Moosomin may recall a publisher in Moosomin, Bert McKay, who was fond of saying that you never found the community newspaper in the garbage pail; it was always read. You might find flyers, but not community newspapers. They're not only the lifeblood, they're relevant.

I just want to say to members opposite though, that as disturbing as this is, combines . . . and lack of competition in Canada is constitutionally squarely within the jurisdiction of the federal government. There's really not much we can do except bring the matter to the attention of the federal government. We have our means of doing that, and we are in fact considering a formal letter which might go out to the Hon. John Manley.

You people, I think, have some fairly effective links with the current federal government, and you might want to bring your concerns to the concern of your party brethren who are in office in Ottawa. So I advise the members opposite, while the statement's certainly of interest, the only government which can effectively deal with this problem is the federal government.

(1115)

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

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I'd like to ask leave, Mr. Speaker, for a

statement of interest to all members.

The Speaker: — Will you please advise the House of the subject matter.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Pertaining to International Women's Day.

Leave granted.

International Women's Day

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the other members of the House for giving me this opportunity.

March 8, International Women's Day, is recognized around the world as a day to commemorate women's struggles and all of our achievements. Since women first got the vote in 1916, I believe we've made unprecedented gains. We strove for and won important legal rights and protections. And, working together, achieved tremendous improvements in wages and conditions of work. And when women's conditions improve, often the conditions of all people in society improve. It tends to have quite a spin-off effect on the rest of the social network.

Unique services have been created, such as shelters for battered women, sexual assault centres — establishing hard work and commitment of many community members. Wages for working full-time, full-year, have gradually increased for women over the past decade, and many more women today are graduating from universities and technical schools. I was interested to note a statistic, that there's many more masters' program graduates and many more doctoral graduates than there were some years ago. And of course higher wages for men and women . . . or higher education commands higher income in the labour market.

More women are participating in public life. Fifty-two per cent of the people elected to health boards this year were women. And in the House, Mr. Speaker, there are 13 able women who are now here. And it's interesting to note that when the legislature was built was prior to when women were even considered persons in the eyes of the law. In fact our personhood was in such question that they never even installed bathrooms for the women members of the legislature. So I'm pleased to see that we're here today. We still don't have our bathrooms, but I'm thinking of changing the sign on the men's washroom, so we may get around to that yet.

In Saskatchewan today, women from many backgrounds work together to raise awareness. Because of course we do have farm women; we do have immigrant women, aboriginal women. And although we share many bonds in being the centre, quite often, of family life and supports for extended care of family members, we also have many differences, depending on our circumstance and our opportunities that are available to us.

The 1990s does present new challenges, but women are firmly entrenched in the labour force now. Sixty per cent today work for pay. And one item that's very interesting is women in

child-bearing years; 80 per cent of Saskatchewan women between the ages of 25 and 34 are in the workforce. And that really stresses the importance of employers to be sensitive to family-friendly workplaces, to policies that give the flexibility for the workplace to benefit from the contribution of able people but also to look after family responsibilities. And I will note that many parents these days are taking the opportunity to decide that one or the other parent might be the main support in the home, and that's not just a role relegated to women any more.

There's sometimes harassment in the workplace, and women are passed over for promotion. Their work is too often undervalued. So I'll just note that we're committed to continuing to work together — men and women — on achieving full equity for everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Members' Statements

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I would like to draw attention of the members of the House to one of the rules regarding members' statements. I'd like to remind the House of rule 10(4) which says, and I quote:

Statements are not debatable and are not responded to by any other Member.

And I will ask that all members will take note of that and cooperate with that rule of the House regarding members' statements in the future.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Murrell, seconded by Mr. Thomson, and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Boyd.

Mr. Kasperski: — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour and privilege for me to address the Legislative Assembly here today as a member of the new constituency of Regina Sherwood. I wish to extend my congratulations to all members on their election or re-election to this Assembly. As previous members for both sides of the legislature have acknowledged, it is a very humbling yet gratifying experience to be elected here as a member from the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of congratulatory acknowledgements that are now in order. First of all, allow me to congratulate yourself on your election of Speaker of the Assembly. In our close association since last June, I can attest

to the fact that you will do your utmost to preside judiciously over the deliberations of this Assembly.

I also wish to congratulate the hon. member for Regina Victoria on his candidacy. As a new member it was an exciting process to go through in the election, and we had two excellent candidates.

Congratulations to the hon. member for Last Mountain-Touchwood on his election as Deputy Speaker. And also to the hon. member for Moosomin for his candidacy.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the Clerk and assistant Clerks of the Legislative Assembly, the new Sergeant-at-Arms, and the new pages. On a personal note, it is a pleasure to become reacquainted with the Clerk of the Assembly, Gwenn Ronyk, who was a fellow history student of mine at the University of Regina.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate my rookie colleagues, the members for the Battlefords-Cut Knife and Regina South, the respective mover and seconder of the throne speech, for their excellent presentations here at the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, bear with me. I just lost my page here for a minute. I had so much good to say that I misplaced it.

Mr. Speaker, I first of all wanted to talk a little bit about my constituency of Regina Sherwood. Regina Sherwood consists of a number of wonderful communities and areas. These areas are, respectively, from north to south the communities of Walsh Acres, Normanview West, Prairieview, Normanview, Dieppe, Rosemont, Mount Royal.

The community of Walsh Acres, Mr. Speaker, I would like maybe to talk a little bit about some of these communities in more detail, but I've lost the notes, so I'll maybe just continue on and say that, Mr. Speaker, the people of Regina Sherwood have a tradition of being a sincere and hard-working class area.

Mr. Speaker, the tradition of this area . . . this area has also been an area of important political . . . has also had important political representation. Except for the time period of 1986 — or sorry, '82 to '86 — this constituency has always been governed by New Democrats.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — My predecessors have included, Mr. Speaker, Ed Whelan, Bill Allen, John Solomon, and Bob Lyons. I intend to do my utmost to continue that excellent tradition of the constituency service that has been provided by these people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge other elected representatives from my area of the city of Regina. Parts of three city of Regina wards have components in Regina Sherwood. Wards 8, 9, and 10 are respectively represented by Councillors Vic McDougall,

Darlene Hincks, and Bill Wells. In addition, two Regina Health District wards are included in Regina Sherwood. Wards 3 and 4 are represented by Pat Danforth and Steve Paul.

My service to the constituents of Regina Sherwood, Mr. Speaker, will also include close consultation and cooperation with these elected officials and with the officials of Regina's Public School Board and Separate School Board.

I would like to note, Mr. Speaker, as well, that His Worship Mayor Doug Archer is a constituent of Regina Sherwood, residing in the Prairieview community.

And last but by no means least, I would also like to point out that the current president of the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan, Mr. Bill Allen, and former member of this Assembly for Rosemont, is also a constituent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — Mr. Speaker, most of all I would like to thank the voters of Regina Sherwood constituency for their support and trust. Having received 63 per cent of the vote in the last election — the most of any first-time MLA on either side of the House — I will do my utmost to reciprocate and work hard on behalf of all constituents.

Mr. Minister, this is a proud moment for me and my immediate family — my wife Barbara and my sons Dan and Jay; also for my parents Mike and Sheila of Regina, my sisters Diane in Saskatoon, Janet in Wilkie, and Susan in Regina, and their families.

In my immediate family I also include my in-laws, notably my brother and sister-in-law, Glenn and Betty Coleman of Regina and their family, and my father and mother-in-law, William and Mary Reilley of Meadow Lake, who are now deceased.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their support, their understanding, and their patience over the years, especially as I've become involved in active politics over this last year.

Mr. Speaker, this is also a proud moment for my extended family and my forebears. My paternal grandfather, Wojciech Kasperski, emigrated from the province of Tarnopol in eastern Poland to Weyburn, Saskatchewan in the spring of 1927. My grandmother, the former Kunegunda Wityk, followed a year later with three young children, which included my father.

Mr. Speaker, I learned only recently that the parents of the hon. member for Saskatoon Riversdale, Michael and Tekla Romanow, also came from this same province in the very same year. The only major difference in our family histories is that the Premier's family history will say his family came from western Ukraine whereas my family history says he came from eastern Poland.

After re-establishing the family in Weyburn in 1928, the Kasperski family produced nine more children. I am proud to point out that during this same time period a young Baptist

minister, namely T.C. Douglas, was also a prominent Weyburn resident who impacted our family greatly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — My grandfather worked for the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway) for over 30 years and then for the city of Weyburn before retiring. Both grandparents passed away in the late 1970s. And as our family historian and genealogist, I wish to acknowledge my family on this side, my surviving 10 aunts and uncles and 31 cousins.

Mr. Speaker, my maternal grandfather was Archibald Campbell, who came from Argyll, Scotland and homesteaded in the Lake Alma district, where he was the founding councillor and the reeve of the Rural Municipality of Lorraine.

My maternal grandmother, Gladys, was born in North Dakota, of Norwegian and English parentage, and moved to Saskatchewan and homesteaded in the Amulet area near Pangman. My mother was the second of seven children, most of whom were raised in Lake Alma and Weyburn.

My grandfather is deceased, but my grandmother, Gladys Campbell of Regina, I am proud to say was here in attendance for the reading of the Speech from the Throne here last week. To her, to my aunts and uncles and cousins on that side of the family, I wish to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation.

Mr. Speaker, my father started a 47-year career with the Canadian Pacific Railway in Weyburn during the Second World War, a career which took him to Regina, Moose Jaw, Wilkie, and then back to Regina. He retired on January 16, 1991, immediately after completing a trip as the engineer of the last VIA Rail train to travel from Moose Jaw to Swift Current, which was the last trip that was made by the old southern transcontinental route. I was equally proud that my parents were also in attendance last week for the reading of the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, I was raised in Moose Jaw and graduated from Central Collegiate. And I am pleased to point out that your good wife Karen was a contemporary of mine and one of my contemporaries at that high school. I went on to attend the University of Saskatchewan, Regina campus, where I received a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and French in the year 1970. From '70 to '72 I completed the course requirements to a master's degree in history. It was during this time while working as a summer student at the provincial archives of Saskatchewan that I first became acquainted with this great Assembly.

In June of that year the NDP came to power under the leadership of Premier Allan Blakeney. I was one of the two employees sent over by the Provincial Archivist of the time, Mr. Allan Turner, to collect the ministerial papers of members of the Ross Thatcher cabinet. Mr. Speaker, those were interesting and memorable times.

In early 1973, Mr. Speaker, I obtained the position as multicultural program coordinator in the old Department of

Culture and Youth. This was a new department whose first minister is today one of my colleagues here in the legislature, the hon. member for Regina Dewdney.

(1130)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — As subsequent minister is the hon. member from Regina Northeast. It was interesting to note at the time the deputy minister of our department is the current deputy minister of the Premier, Mr. Frank Bogdasavich.

In that position I was part of all the major multicultural initiatives in those years and I am pleased to say that many of these initiatives still survive today. Major multicultural festivals in all Saskatchewan centres, notably Regina's Mosaic, Saskatoon's Folkfest, and immigrant settlement and orientation groups, like the Regina Open Door Society, and similar organizations in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, and Yorkton are all thriving today.

After seven years in provincial civil service, Mr. Speaker, I left government to enter private business in 1979. And since 1984 I have worked as a economic development and small-business consultant, having worked on a variety of projects throughout and across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as a newly elected MLA, I have taken this opportunity to demonstrate the depth and breadth of my commitment to this great province and my sincere wish to work to make this a better place for all of us to live.

Mr. Speaker, as a new member of the Legislative Assembly, I'm excited because Saskatchewan is again on the threshold of substantial improvement of its economic and fiscal situation. We stood on this same threshold in the early 1980s. Unfortunately, adverse economic conditions coupled with nine years of Conservative government fiscal mismanagement brought us to the edge of complete ruin.

Yet during the first term of this NDP government, Saskatchewan has experienced a drastic and substantial turnaround. Our government, with the support and sacrifice of the people of Saskatchewan — all of the people of Saskatchewan — has once again achieved for our province a degree of financial independence which should allow us to rebuild our province in a way that was unthinkable just four short years ago.

Mr. Speaker, during 1995 it became evident that the Saskatchewan economy is growing significantly. We are creating jobs by diversifying into new products and new technologies. The provincial economy continued its robust growth in 1995 bolstered by healthy commodity prices and a good year in agriculture. Retail sales climbed 5.1 per cent in the first nine months of 1995 reaching a total of \$4.7 billion.

Mr. Speaker, over the first seven months of 1995, production of oil rose 8.4 per cent; production of gas rose 9.3 per cent; potash by 17.7 per cent. The value of the province's 15.5 million

shares in Cameco Corporation also rose significantly in 1995.

In agriculture, Mr. Speaker, 23.2 million tonnes of major grains, oilseeds and speciality crops were harvested, 6 per cent above the 10-year average. Over 85 per cent of the spring wheat crop of 1995 is expected to grade in the top two levels. Prices are buoyant and this winter's severe weather across much of the American winter-wheat-growing area have put upper pressure on prices. Just recently the Canadian Grain Commission predicted a steady increase in Canada's share in the world wheat market over the next five years.

Here in the city of Regina the tourism sector was one of the main driving forces of the local economy in 1995. Out of a total of 1 billion spent by tourists in Saskatchewan almost a quarter of that or 250 million are made in Regina. This supports almost 10,000 full- and part-time jobs.

The most successful Grey Cup ever generated profits for the CFL (Canadian Football League), the Saskatchewan Roughrider Football Club and large numbers of local businesses.

The opening of the Casino Regina a little over a month ago marks another important component in Regina's tourism infrastructure, as early indications are that Casino Regina will be a success having considerable positive impact on the local economy.

Building upon the establishment of the Saskatchewan Tourism Authority, Mr. Speaker, — a product of the *Partnership for Renewal* economic development strategy of the first term — the *Partnership for Growth* outlines continued cooperation between the Tourism Authority and Department of Economic Development to develop strategies in tourism growth areas such as aboriginal tourism, eco-tourism and agri-tourism. This partnership will work together to develop a provincial tourism strategy to outline tourism growth for the future.

The government's participation will involve plan consultations, legislative changes to reduce business regulations over the next 10 years. Because most tourism businesses are small businesses, these regulatory changes are needed to improve the business climate and will have a definite impact on our tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker, on the point of public consultation, it is important that our government strive to consult with as many of our citizens as possible as important decisions are being made as Saskatchewan prepares for the 21st century.

The consultation process — Making Choices, Preparing for the New Century — was extensive and a good example of how successful the consultation process can be. It is through this kind of cooperation that Saskatchewan residents are working together in helping to make difficult choices which will build stronger homes, neighbourhoods, and communities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kasperski: — Our government, Mr. Speaker, is committed

to this process, a process based upon the basic principles of community, cooperation, and compassion which have been the basic principles of New Democratic Party governments which have governed here in this province.

This same consultative process is also under way or is being announced in the following areas: the *Redesigning Social Assistance* initiative launched by the Minister of Social Services before Christmas last year; public consultations for the new crop insurance program launched by the Minister of Agriculture in February; and the Crown corporation review announced by the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation last week.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne sets a realistic, practical course for Saskatchewan as it prepares for the 21st century when it addressed jobs and economic growth, agriculture, forestry, and development of the North. It also addressed the priorities of the people of Saskatchewan in the areas of health, training and education, and social programs.

Finally, it talked about other areas of concern for Saskatchewan, namely justice and good, efficient government.

Most important of all, Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne reflects what could be realistically and practically attained under the present economic and fiscal realities.

As I have listened to the contributions of the hon. opposition members in the debate of these last few days, I am not sure that they have understood, let alone made any meaningful contribution to, our province's fiscal and economic challenges. I am disturbed somewhat at the tenor of the debate of the hon. members opposite which pits elements of our society against each other.

It attempts to drive a wedge between rural Saskatchewan and urban Saskatchewan, between our aboriginal and our non-aboriginal communities. Mr. Speaker, I find this approach to be shameful and I am confident that the citizens of Saskatchewan are in agreement with us.

Mr. Speaker, this government has demonstrated that it can govern on behalf of all the people of Saskatchewan and for that reason I am pleased, on behalf of all the residents of Regina Sherwood, to support wholeheartedly the Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you on being the first elected Speaker of this Assembly. Significant Saskatchewan history was made by this election, and democracy has been advanced to a new level within our system. Our caucus is confident that your impartiality will provide a level of order and a new type of decorum in the Assembly. With your guidance, this legislature will be elevated to a new level of respect in the eyes of our constituents.

I would also like to add my congratulations to the newly elected Deputy Speaker as well as to the elected members on both sides

of this House. I look forward to the dealings that lie ahead in the next few years, and I appreciate all the help from the dedicated staff working in the various departments, offices, and hallways in this legislature.

I would also like to thank the team that worked in our caucus office. With all the help my colleagues and I are receiving, we are confident it will not take long before we will live up to the expectations of the people who have entrusted us with the great responsibility of being their elected member in the legislature.

It is with great pride that I stand here today representing a new constituency of Kelvington-Wadena. My area is an amalgamation of parts of five constituencies. I have listened to a lot of the members refer to their areas as being unique in this province. I too believe that I have the honour of representing a unique area, not only in the varied landscapes but in the culture, heritage, and interest of its people.

The farmers in the western section of my constituencies are part of the area known as the sharecrop district when I was young. In north-east area I have the Porcupine provincial forest. In between the two are farmers involved in extensive cattle operations as well as hog operations. Tourism industries and manufacturing and processing plants employ more people per capita than any other place in the province.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I represent people with the basic values and integrity that makes Saskatchewan the best place in the world to live. Kelvington-Wadena is the best of both worlds: the world of rural people committed to a way of life and to each other to ensure a quality of living envied by people in every walk of life; the other is the world of progress and business that ties to the fast-paced global economy through our industries and technology.

I am honoured to represent the people whose most common bond is their diversity from each other. The German immigrants of St. Peter's Abbey settled in 1903 in that area, bringing with them work ethics and cultural responsibility for establishing many of the industries in this area. The French immigrants from Brittany, France, who settled in St. Brieux still retain their language; in fact they have a French television network.

The Wadena area was settled in 1904 and was named after Wadena, Minnesota, by the Tolen family. The drive and determination of the people in this area is obvious when you see their accomplishments in constructing the north-east grain terminal. Wadena is also the home of the North American water fowl management plan. It is one of only two places in Canada to achieve recognition as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network.

The Endeavour area was settled by immigrants from the Ukraine and many of these residents are involved in the logging industry as well as mixed farming. Rose Valley, besides having one of the nicest museums in the area, is the home of country singer Gary Fjellgaard. Naicam area was settled by immigrants from Norway, and the Porcupine Plain area was settled by the English. The Kelvington-Wadena constituency has three Indian reservations.

The needs and the dreams of the people of this area, the area where I was born and lived my whole life, is the reason I ran in the election last June. This election was the first time in over 45 years that a member from the opposition party has won a seat. The last time a Liberal was elected in the Kelvington area was 52 years ago.

I would like to acknowledge the very large number of people who made it possible for me to be standing here today. My husband, my children, my son-in-law and granddaughter and sisters and brothers — I thank you for your understanding and your love and for being there. To my old friends and some special new friends I have made during the election as well as to my constituents, I say thank you. The only way I can possibly repay your support and loyalty is to be the very best MLA you've ever had. And today I pledge to do that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — People from Kelvington-Wadena have sent me to the legislature to bring the government a message. That message is clear and it is simple. The people have lost confidence in the NDP government; the people have been betrayed by the very people they have elected. The policies and message the NDP government have given the people of this great province since '91 are killing the rights and ability of people to set goals and to achieve them. Government policies are depriving people of the dignity to reach for a dream. The people's faith in the future is being massacred, and either the government is failing to see this death or they've chosen not to care.

Mr. Speaker, governments that use their power to deprive their citizens of the right to dream and plan take away their heart, and life becomes meaningless. Where there is no hope, there is no confidence. I may be a rookie, Mr. Speaker, but I do know what happens when people have no confidence in their government. The terrible voter turn-out in the June election should be seen as a warning flag from the people of Saskatchewan. The no-show vote was not a sign of confidence; it was a sign of apathy, a sign of disgust, a sign of cynicism. People will not trust a government who does not trust them.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Premier obviously does not trust the people of this province. If he did, he would allow them to control their own lives. This government has decided it will control every aspect of people's lives, especially their money. Control of every dollar in the pocket of every working person, every dollar in the hand of every senior, and every dollar in the hand of every business person. And the government flaunted its control by choosing to close hospitals, choosing to ignore agriculture, and choosing to raise taxes. And then they chose to allow our highway system to fall into a disgusting state of disrepair.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask leave of the Assembly to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the member for interrupting her presentation. In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Mr. Andy Iwanchuk of Saskatoon. Andy is the president of my constituency association. He is a staff representative of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, in Regina to attend a convention. And I'd like to introduce him to you and through you to my colleagues in the legislature, and make him feel welcome here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1145)

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

Ms. Draude: — The NDP government chose to sacrifice rural Saskatchewan and offered up their Minister of Agriculture as the sacrificial lamb to remain in power in June.

The NDP government used the farmers' GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) money and gouged every citizen with stifling tax increases and utility rate increases. These actions resulted in an apparently balanced budget. I say apparently because, using these methods, anyone could balance an overdrawn account. The previous government tried to borrow enough money to buy the province out of debt, and this province is trying to tax the province out of debt. But, Mr. Speaker, neither scheme works.

The Liberal Party knows, as do the citizens of Saskatchewan, that the only lasting solution is to allow the citizens the opportunity and freedom to produce themselves out of debt. The element that is missing before this can happen is the NDP government's commitment to share in the belief that people have in themselves. What I mean by this is the mere rhetoric that was provided in last week's throne speech was not enough.

As we begin a new session, Mr. Speaker, this government has to deal in a concrete and positive way with the single and most important issue facing the people of this province. That crucial concern is economic development and job creation; the two go hand in hand. Without economic development, there can be no sustainable jobs for the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — The Speech from the Throne — I'm sorry to say — gives me no confidence that this government knows how to address this difficulty. This government talks about economic development, and they talk about jobs, but they don't see it as the same thing. They don't see that their past four years has created an environment of pessimism and distrust, and there is no foundation to start the building process.

The Minister of Economic Development proved that he is lost and wandering in the wilderness on this issue by tabling his latest so-called strategy for economic development. The minister promised the government to create 20,000 jobs in the next four years. In his last strategy, tabled in November '92, he promised to create 30,000 jobs. My mother always told me not to make a promise I couldn't keep, Mr. Speaker. It's too bad someone didn't tell the government that that is a good ideal to live by.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — Broken promises for this government is a way of life. Mr. Speaker, we are going to examine the record, the real record for job creation. And in doing this we will see how the Premier, his ministers, and the NDP government break one promise after another, on and on. Maybe it is easier to break promises if you have no respect for the people to whom you make the promises. This government is driven purely by political expediency.

The *Partnership for Renewal* — as they called it — promised to the people of this province in the 1991 election, was finally presented to them in November of '92. In that paper, mixed with lots of grandiose rhetoric, was a promise to create 30,000 jobs by the end of the decade. That was four years ago and you would expect that halfway through we'd have 15,000 jobs in the bag. Right?

Mr. Speaker, in November of 1992, based on the Bureau of Statistics and Canada Statistics reports, there was 443,000 people working in this province. Similar reports with figures from January 1996 this year, there were 445,000 people working. A little quick math by any grade 2 student will tell you that's not 15,000. And it's not 10,000 and it's not even 5,000. The real number is 2,000. There is really only 2,000 more people working in this province than there was in November of '92. Mr. Minister, that means you have 28,000 more jobs to go.

And if the hon. minister wanted to use a real measuring stick he'd compare it to our neighbouring province, that of Alberta. Do you know how many more people are working in that province? — 103,000.

This party would like to challenge your government to work in a real world and compare your goals with other provinces. Don't just pick a pie-in-the-sky number. This government has set a goal of 6.7 per cent increase over eight years. Any business person in the world would be at a loss if they went to their banker and said they were only going to increase that much in eight years. The banker would be breathing down our neck before the ink was dry on the paper.

In other words, the government is stagnated and in fact knows they are stagnated. This government knows it has stifled the provincial economy to the point where the only way it can create a few jobs is by selectively retracting the repressive taxation policies.

A case in point stated by the Minister of Economic

Development in his *Partnership for Growth*, is the fact that to entice CIBC call centre to Saskatchewan they not only approved a grant of \$3.4 million but they also eliminated the provincial sales tax on 800-number accounts. Does that mean the minister is actually admitting there can be no economic development or job creation under the stifling taxation policies of this government without tax elimination?

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite would like to challenge us on our job numbers. They say our numbers show that there are thousands more jobs created in that time. Of course there were, but they are not sustainable jobs. Jobs fluctuate with seasons. And seasonal jobs are just that, here today and gone tomorrow. Not the kind of job people can build a future on.

And that brings us even more up to date, Mr. Speaker. The latest unemployment figures serve to underline how far off target this government's job creation is. There are 5,000 fewer people working in this province in January of '96 than in January of '95. And you don't have to take my word for it — ask StatsCanada.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite should be ashamed for trying to deceive the people of this province into believing that the difficult time we have lived through will continue because of circumstances beyond their control. It's time the hon. members took responsibilities for their actions, from the Premier on down.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — Just look what the Premier did in his recent television address, which incidentally we have to pay for. Our Premier used a kind of Grecian Formula approach to confuse people and colour the issue to suit his taste. In review of the fiscal situation the Premier talked about, with the help of the people of this province, he said, he managed to wrestle the deficit to the ground, saving the province from bankruptcy. Mr. Speaker, our Premier gave nothing. The people of this province gave it all.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — The deficit was fought solely on the backs and in the pocketbooks of the real people of this province. We are taxed and taxed and taxed some more; then we lost our hospitals and our highways and our farms and our businesses, and on top of it all, our children, as they left to search for work in a province where there is real hope and real growth.

Continuing his remarks, Mr. Premier, the Premier went on to line us up for even more cuts. He said, and I quote:

We were the first to present a balanced budget in the '90s with your help. And just as we thought we had turned the corner, just as we were ready to breath a little easier, wouldn't you know it, the federal government has come along with huge cuts to transfer payments.

Good heavens, Mr. Premier, wouldn't you know it. What terrible luck. That nasty old federal government is doing awful

things to us again. And now you're going to have to stay on our backs and get into our pocketbooks again. Again you're asking for the people to make up for cuts, not the government.

The NDP government can continue to speculate on the stock exchange with Cameco shares and sell them after they've dropped \$100 million. Obviously the government still hasn't learned a lesson. The government is still playing slot machines with the Crown corporations.

The government prefers to sit on potash shares so they can pretend they're real business people. They can hold on to the ownership of SaskPower and SaskTel after it has benefited the province. With the record of this NDP government in their stock market speculation, we'll probably hold on to them until after the competition comes in to ensure they have . . . the value has declined sufficiently.

People in this province are wondering, Mr. Speaker, if the province is broke, why the government added four new cabinet ministers — one a duplication in the education area when in fact this is one area where we hear over and over again is being cut federally. It doesn't make sense to the real people of this province.

Why did we waste \$650,000 on a SaskPower review which really only delayed the original plan? Why did we waste \$50,000 on a public review to see if people wanted a decrease in SaskEnergy rates? That was questionable, all right. And why did the government waste \$100,000 for a smoke-and-mirrors road show for public input on the budget when they knew that it was just a manipulation? The turn-out was very low. Mr. Premier, and Mr. Ministers, please give the people of this province more credit for intelligence.

Even more frustrating is the fact that people know your government was well aware of the fiscal situation a long time ago. The transfer payment formula was determined years ago. The fact that the province's revenues were up was known last fall, just as your budget was.

The game you are playing with the people of this province is a dangerous one. Misrepresentation and deceit is costing the hon. members in the third party dearly. The only way they can get attention is by grandstanding.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier added insult to injury after his television address by stating, "I really say we've got to get off this business of concentrating on small costs." I'm talking about \$30,000 for the cost of the broadcast.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier should ask the people on the street if they think \$30,000 is a small amount of money. They probably won't agree with you. Better yet, ask any farmer who received a GRIP bill. If \$30,000 is a small amount of money in the province's budget, then let's just forget the GRIP bills. We've been asking for that for weeks now. In fact most bills are much smaller than that.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency the decline of health is very evident. Hospitals are closing in Rose Valley, and there are

further cut-backs in Spalding, Porcupine Plain, and others. Families live in fear of losing their livelihood. My parents had to move out of the province after spending 50 years here helping to build this province. They had to leave, Mr. Speaker, to get the level of health care required to make their life bearable.

The cut-backs are being done by the same people opposite who, a few years ago, were accusing others of having an agenda of hospital closures. It was politically expedient at that time, so it was okay for them to say whatever they wanted.

And what do these very same people talk about today in trying to justify their actions? Well they say we're closing hospitals all right, but we shouldn't worry. We should trust them because they're establishing wellness centres, whatever that is. Somehow they want us to think that wellness centres are almost as good as the hospitals they've closed.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the NDP love to take credit for medicare. Well the standards of health care are being eroded at an alarming rate, day after day, by this government. This NDP government can take credit — credit for killing the care in health.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — There's no compassion here. There's no caring. Their own buzz words don't apply any more. There's just cold, calculated chopping, and some day this government is going to pay the price for their actions.

Mr. Speaker, this government tries to project an image of being fiscally responsible. Nothing could be further from the truth. All you have to do is look at the election campaign of 1986. They were trying to out-Tory the Tories, and you know how far you'd have to go to do that.

Just look what they offered. They offered a housing program to Saskatchewan residents that made the Tories' mortgage protection program look like a drop in the bucket.

Our fiscally responsible Premier knows that. The Premier helped devise this ludicrous plan, or at least he didn't object to it because he was eagerly selling it during the campaign. It was the 7-7-7 program — sounds familiar doesn't it? — 7 per cent mortgages up to a maximum of \$70,000 over at least a seven-year period. Add to that a \$7,500 matching grant for home renovations.

Heaven forbid if they'd been elected. Their lavish and extravagant spending would have put the province even deeper in debt than the Tories did. Estimates at that time put the cost at \$1.4 billion. And these same people sit across from us today telling us how fiscally responsible they are, and they do it with a straight face.

They were prepared to spend like drunken sailors just to gain power, and they were prepared to put our province deeply in debt. But of course they don't like to talk about that today; today they're fiscally responsible managers of our province.

That's what they would like us to believe. In reality though, it's hard to know exactly what they are because they go back on their promises so often. Take the '91 election campaign. To gain power, they said there would be no tax increases, that we should be able to live within the budget parameters of the day. Did they remain true to their word? No. In the 1995 campaign, they said that the farmers wouldn't have to give back their GRIP overpayments. Did they keep their word? No. They broke another promise.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne doesn't enunciate any vision for Saskatchewan. And without vision what is there to look forward to? Mr. Speaker, we're losing the best of what we have. Our brightest young people are going elsewhere to fulfil their dreams. Our youth, the leaders of tomorrow, are leaving Saskatchewan at the rate of 27 per week. We're second only to Newfoundland in this area.

Mr. Speaker, I said a moment ago this government lacks a vision for the future and a vision for developing this province to its full potential, but we in the official opposition have a vision for Saskatchewan, and we do care about the future. Our vision is based in part on what people have been telling us. Our business community, for example, has some very good advice for this government if they would listen. They just want government out of the way. Quit meddling, they say. Cut back on the red tape. Get rid of silly regulations, and allow us to move on to develop the economy.

Mr. Speaker, can anyone make this government listen? Governments can't create jobs, particularly this government. That's been proven by their own sorry efforts over the last few years. Only the business community can create jobs, but they'll have to be given the opportunity. And they have to know that government will get out of their way so that an atmosphere of optimism can return.

(1200)

Right now business people are very pessimistic, and there's a feeling out there in the business community of frustration. The government's union-first tendering policy which adds millions upon millions of dollars in premiums to capital projects, meddling with workmen's compensation rates, the constant efforts to increase minimum wage levels, environmental regulations that make no sense, high taxes, and exorbitantly high costs of power and other utilities are a few of the things bothering businesses.

Mr. Speaker, anyone that had known me for longer for a couple of years would state that I was a positive, up-beat person. I've been in business for over 25 years, and I have a strong belief in the potential of people and opportunity. I share this belief with a number of businesses in my community who are successful: Bourgault, Doepker, Schulte, Koenders, Michel, Dyna Fab, and Hogeman, and many more. These are successful businesses contributing much to the economy. But they elected me, Mr. Speaker. They elected a Liberal to tell this NDP government that there is a better way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — They've asked me to tell the ministers and the Premier that the businesses have given all they can give. Businesses cannot create the jobs the Premier is promising unless he truly listens to the people and gets out of the way.

I believe wholeheartedly that success stories are possible in many parts of rural Saskatchewan if people were encouraged to use their ingenuity and their talents and were given the opportunity to move ahead. I believe we could revitalize much of our rural landscape if we would let our people do it.

The role for government would be to help identify opportunities and perhaps help with research and development, but that's it. Governments always talk about diversifying our agricultural base. Well we've diversified a little, mostly under previous governments, but we can do more, a lot more. We could add value to our agricultural products by doing more of the processing and packaging right here in Saskatchewan. We could increase the number of meat packing plants operating in the province. We could open up markets, so we can produce more, process more, and add more value right here in Saskatchewan. We can and we will if the government will step out of the way and let our people make it happen.

Rural Saskatchewan has a lot to offer if given a chance. It has a particular lifestyle that you cannot find in cities. The lower cost of housing is a tremendous advantage and . . . is a strong community bond among the people who live in our towns and villages. Our crime rate is lower. Our environment is cleaner, and our people in communities make life worth living. But this government is doing virtually nothing for rural Saskatchewan and farm families. In fact it appears to be determined to eliminate our kind.

In 1979 in his first speech to this Assembly, the current Minister of Economic Development, then representing Shaunavon, had to say this about the farm sector. Mr. Speaker. He said, agriculture is the single most important segment of the Saskatchewan economy. It seems to me that when farmers have needed help from the provincial government in recent years, that help was there.

He also said — best of all, Mr. Speaker — the policies and programs of this New Democratic government have always been designed to fit the needs of the family farm. I believe my party believes that the family farm is the foundation of the social fabric. My, what a difference a passage of time makes. This same member now represents an urban riding. He travels the world in important government missions and talks a lot about wonderful things he's doing. He still talks a lot now, but it isn't talk about the family farm any more . . . neither does his government because that's not important to them.

And it's not just rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that needs a lift. The whole province is suffering because the entire economic picture is out of focus for this government. Anytime this government talks about a partnership approach to economy, business is sceptical. They look to the past and see the real face of the NDP. The NDP are the people who expropriated half of the potash industry out of the province in the '70s. And they virtually forced the oil industry out of Saskatchewan by their

excessively high royalties. They're the people who believe in control not partnership.

The Premier has no clue how to work with business because, aside from a brief moment in '82 when he was defeated, he's been nothing but a professional politician. He can't know about jobs or economic development.

The government thinks that economic development is building gambling casinos all over this place. You see lots of money rolling in, but where is it coming from? Probably in the end just from the local economies and they will pay the price.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is blessed with an abundance of natural resources. It has potash, uranium, oil, natural gas and coal. We also have renewable resources such as our northern forests. I believe that the potential for this province is limited only by the people in whose hands the power lies, but that potential will never be realized under this government.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP government wants the people of this beautiful province of ours to believe that its party is going to change. Premier Romanow says there's an evolution happening. His party intends to be what it should have been five years ago. The Premier says that his government is suddenly going to acquire a social conscience. It's going to suddenly acquire the ability and the knowledge to run this province's economy in a sensible business-like way.

Private entrepreneurs are the social conscience. Does that sound familiar Mr. Speaker? What would the Premier have us believe? Would he have us believe that he and his ministers and party will evolve into a Liberal-thinking party? I think not. I am a Liberal, Mr. Speaker, and I care about people's potential. I believe there are people who have unlimited energy and talents and will shine in the business world but are willing to help those who are not as fortunate.

I will work diligently with the government when they are creating an environment where all people will be proud to call this province home. I will work with a government who believes in ability of people to perform and to outperform the rest of the world. I don't see this belief in the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, and accordingly I cannot support it. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ward: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a new member I want to tell those members present, and especially the Leader of the Third Party who was concerned the other day about the costs and the time that this exercise takes, and I want to assure him that I won't be as costly or time-consuming as he was in his reply.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you and the Deputy Speaker on your election on behalf of my constituents and myself. And the members of this Assembly, I believe, will be well served by you in your new positions as will the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the members from Battleford-Cut Knife and Regina South for the fine and eloquent way in which they moved and seconded the throne speech, and I especially want to thank them for doing this job. I realize it is an honour to be asked to do this, but as a new member I did feel some relief it wasn't me.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ward: — I also want to thank the constituents of Estevan for giving me the honour to represent them on the government side of this House. We are very proud of our constituency, Mr. Speaker, for I believe it is one of the most diversified in the province.

The agricultural sector produces some of the finest and highest protein wheat in the province. The people of the oil sector have given their industry new and innovative ideas used throughout the world. The mining operations produce some of the best lignite in Saskatchewan, and it is exported across the country. And the business community, Mr. Speaker, that has never been afraid to compete with cross-border shopping; in fact it is a way of life. And, Mr. Speaker, we have a Crown sector that generates and distributes the majority of Saskatchewan's electricity run by employees who are not afraid to speak out when they feel something is wrong but in the end are reasonable and receptive to change.

Just as diversified as the economy is the political profile of this constituency. Over the past number of years we have been represented by all parties in this House, and the people are very astute, Mr. Speaker. The member elected is usually on the government side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to respond, on behalf of my party and my constituents, to the throne speech today. Our government is offering promise and hope for the future of Saskatchewan, and the throne speech provides a framework for new opportunities, and province-wide, including the constituency of Estevan.

For the last several years the Saskatchewan economy has been improving because we have been building on our strengths, but we must plan for the future, Mr. Speaker, to meet the challenges of a global economy. There are many challenges we face which include new directions in education and local governance. We recognize that the very system that has served us well in the past must continue to serve us well for future generations. And to do that, we must meet the needs of a changing society.

Saskatchewan has some of the finest educational institutions in the country, Mr. Speaker, but if we don't keep up with increased demands on the system, we will be left behind. Post-secondary education and training are under pressure to adapt to a rapidly changing economy. Today people must learn to work with new technologies, and they must constantly upgrade their knowledge and skills. Federal funding reductions limit our capacity to offer an abundance of quality programs in Saskatchewan. Despite these reductions, we must always ensure that post-secondary education remains accessible if we are to meet the demand for a highly skilled workforce in the years ahead.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ward: — Our challenge is to chart a new course and make improvements while reducing costs. We must look at cost savings which can be achieved through more cooperation among institutions, such things as joint administrative services, improved credit transfers, and shared information systems. This concept is already taking place in some sectors and is having positive results.

In many ways, Mr. Speaker, our education system is responding to the needs of today and tomorrow. We have training programs that are tailored to the workplace, and we are using long distance computer and video education to bring selected courses into the communities where students live, saving students and parents in rural Saskatchewan thousands in housing costs for first-year university courses.

Just recently we announced the *Partnership for Growth* program which is in the second phase of our long-term strategy for the Saskatchewan economy. *Partnership for Growth* recognizes the importance education and training have in our new economy. One of the initiatives outlined in the program, Mr. Speaker, is to match training to job opportunities through a flexible learning system.

We will be enhancing the province's skills, training, and employment system by undertaking pilot projects with the federal government to test innovative approaches to regional labour-market information, community-based career services, and work-study partnerships. In 1997 we will propose to develop training based on regional and sectorial needs, provide better services to improve the link between training and jobs, and provide flexible learning approaches to training. Mr. Speaker, over the next three years we will be working with industry and training institutions to develop new strategies for work-based training in Saskatchewan. The people of Saskatchewan have said they want these types of initiatives to help people get into the workforce, and the government has responded.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ward: — Mr. Speaker, just as education faces new challenges, so do many local governments in Saskatchewan. We have an opportunity to make changes to a system of local governance which has not seen significant change since our province was settled about 90 years ago. It is a fact of life that our communities are changing, and the rural population is declining. As people move to larger centres, this trend is expected to continue well into the future.

Our province, Mr. Speaker, has a higher proportion of local governments than any other province in Canada. There are 847 municipal governments and 119 school boards in Saskatchewan, and in some of our smaller communities we have one elected official for every two or three families. Mr. Speaker, people are saying that it is time to review government structures and make some changes — changes such as reducing local administration costs and forming partnerships.

Recently our government consulted the public about the future direction of the province, and they responded. The results of the consultation demonstrate the need for change. Mr. Speaker, 79 per cent of respondents said the number of local governments we have is too high, and 73 per cent felt that the rolls and structure of our governments should be reviewed. During our town hall meetings, some people said that equipment, services, and maintenance should be shared by neighbouring municipalities and school divisions. And, Mr. Speaker, our government is responding by starting discussions with local governments on the best way to reduce administrative costs so that more money is available to provide needed public services.

Mr. Speaker, only five years ago we faced a deficit that had financial markets closing doors. But through hard work and with the help of the people of Saskatchewan, we were the first province in the '90s to present a balanced budget. Now we face new challenges which call for innovative solutions, solutions which have been outlined in the throne speech. Like our forefathers who emerged from the drought of the '30s, we too face a new set of pressures. But we can build on our strengths, and we are well prepared to seek out new relationships and new ways of doing business.

Mr. Speaker, many of the things I have said here today refer to changes. Change, Mr. Speaker, is not something to be afraid of, for change is all around us. Change is in the economy. Change is in programs. Change is in society and, Mr. Speaker, even political change. And political change is quite evident, Mr. Speaker, even in this House for, as I look across this floor, I see Conservatives that want to be Reformers. I see a Liberal, Mr. Speaker, that was a Reformer, and, Mr. Speaker, we even have a Liberal who the Liberals want to be a Liberal but is an independent.

(1215)

But change, Mr. Speaker, is not new to this government, for this government was originally formed over 50 years to create change and will probably continue to do so for the next 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion for the throne speech, and I will not be supporting the motion of amendment. For as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, change is not something to be afraid of but simply a vehicle to get us from the past to the future and into the 21st century.

And in closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a quote which came into my house the other day on my church bulletin — by Isaiah the prophet, which I think is very appropriate for this term and this government and the members of this House. And he said:

Cease to dwell on days gone by and to brood over past history. Here and now I will do a new thing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize that applause was all for me, and I want to enter this debate, this session, Mr. Speaker, by saying that we are very happy to have you elected as the Speaker and we look forward to many, many hours of intelligent debate with yourself keeping the order of the Assembly.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have contemplated the Speech from the Throne and the contents of it for the past several days, as we anticipated the direction that the government was going to take. We obviously realized that that had a lot to do with the direction that the federal government budget would take; and as the two came together this week it is interesting to note how the direction will go in the province. And we found ourselves rather amazed that as the week progressed we find the government members still saying things like, well we're going to be short of money and we'll have to keep tax rates high because the federal government has downloaded on us and is going to continue to do so many things.

Well according to the reports we hear, the federal budget really isn't going to do all that much that the provincial government hasn't known about for a long time. So we're really distressed and confused as to where this whole direction of the government is going. If we're simply going to continue to blame Ottawa and continue to tax high and destroy business opportunities, then where are the opportunities for this province to really start to expand and grow?

I think we've got to get back to the basic fundamentals of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in a Saskatchewan legislature, and start to talk about what will turn our province around rather than what will we do for the country or how will the country do for us. Let's get back to some fundamental reasons why we are in the disastrous shape we're in.

Basically it started — and I was interested earlier today to listen to the name of Tommy Douglas come up again. And certainly I have the highest respect for this gentlemen; he did a lot of good things for our province. And I would be the last one ever to cast aspersions on the memory of someone who has passed before us.

However, to continuously rattle the poor old man's bones and to give him credit for things that have happened that didn't happen, that too, Mr. Speaker, is not fair and not right. And I don't believe that the man, with the character he had, would want to have that happen. He would never want to be given credit for things that he really didn't do.

And the truth of the matter is though, that he did lead this province into a left-wing direction at a time when our neighbours to the west found themselves electing governments that decided that a more moderate approach to reality and life, a life of freedom, that most of the pioneers of this western part of Canada escaped as they escaped the tyrannies of Europe. Most of these people, Mr. Speaker, came to Saskatchewan and Alberta basically running away from tyranny.

In Alberta, they decided that freedom was good and we will continue to go along the lines of freedom and democracy and

build a capitalistic structure. And in 1930 with a population significantly less than Saskatchewan, they began on a road towards a right-wing approach to government.

In Saskatchewan, of course, the war came along and we found Mr. Douglas in the chains of command. The chains of command in Saskatchewan, he decided, would be to provide everything to everyone. It seemed natural when people were in terrible straits, economic conditions were bad. However, there is the contrast between the two provinces — one took the fork down the road to the right; the other took the fork down the road to the left. And where are we at now?

We've got a million people and Alberta's got 3 million. Saskatchewan produces 3,000 jobs; Alberta produces 103,000 jobs. Well, do we need any more proof than that to see that we went the wrong direction? Is it perhaps not time to take a sharp swerve to the right and try and get back on the right road.

Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne I see no evidence of that happening. Quite frankly, I want to give credit where credit is due. We are believers in Conservative philosophy and we believe in fiscal responsibility and we see this government having done some things that are proper in that area. We have said in our caucus that we will compliment the government when they do good things and we will oppose them when we believe they're wrong.

And today I want to give credit to the Premier in the direction that he's led this province in the past year in terms of economic development. He has come up with a balanced budget. Unfortunately that was all done with taxation. And unfortunately it was not designed after the example of Alberta where they also tied it not just to balancing the budget, but to stimulating the economy. That's where the Premier missed the boat. But balancing the budget was good. We applaud him for that. That's the thing we needed to do, and maybe you could do it one way, maybe you could do it another way.

They used to tell me you could kill a cat more ways than one. You could choke it with butter or you could drive over it with a car. Well you see that's the thing; we didn't make the right choices. But the Premier did well. He did manage to get the budget balanced, and we're happy about that.

And I want to remind members opposite that if they had let me talk yesterday, I would have used the really good speech, but because I don't have time to really get into the meat of the thing, I might just as well tell you some of the facts as we see it from the perspective of how this week is unfolding.

First of all we give the Premier a C for his economic direction. That's not bad. It's report card time. I'm a father, have got lots of kids, and we try to read things that way. Well, Mr. Speaker, a C for economic direction, balancing the budget, that's not bad in terms of political things, especially coming from an opposition party.

Unfortunately though, we still look at these labour laws and we still look at the Workers' Compensation Board fiasco, if you could ever call it anything better — never. And then you take

all of the calls and all of the letters that we're receiving and you listen to folks all over the province tell us about how this person got laid off and how that person is getting a notice and how the best opportunity left yet is to go to Alberta.

Then we come up with a plan where we thought we might encourage the government to do better. And we did it of course with private members' Bills because there's not a very much better vehicle to give a message to the government than that vehicle, for a third party. So we did that, and we've introduced those things. Immediately the press comes that the Premier was upset with us. Well I can't see why. We were willing to give him credit where credit was due. We're happy that he balanced the budget. Now what he has to do is build an economic base in this province.

Unfortunately he can't do it the direction he's going, so we thought we'd try to help him and show him where to go. But instead of that, he gets upset with us and starts to throw around rhetoric about how it'll never work. Well let me tell you, there's a couple of mistakes in the things that he did and said. And we want to correct those, Mr. Speaker, because I think perhaps if the Premier really understood what we were saying and if he really knew the facts, he might reconsider. And I know that this government has done that sort of thing in the past.

Now they do get a little confused sometimes and they do neglect to research their material. The Premier says we attached our right-to-work legislation that we are proposing to an Alabama solution. Well let me point out that it probably is true that Alabama has this legislation. Twenty other states in the United States also have this kind of legislation; there are 21 examples. There are enormous amounts of variations of this kind of program that you can put into effect. You don't necessarily have to have the one that is the worst. We could perhaps pick out the one that is the best. And the best of this whole thing is that you might, you might still be able to get this government to turn the corner and head in the direction to the right road and get back onto stream with building Saskatchewan to the same way that Alberta is now. We could still catch up.

Why could we catch up? You might ask, how could we? People will say, oh, Alberta's got so much more than we've got. Alberta's so much greater. They've got mountains. Well whoop-de-do, they've got mountains. We've got prairies. We've got trees. Most important, of course, is the measurement that of wealth between our province has to be. And I know all of you folks realize this — the measurement is our resources and our people.

We're short about 2 million people of course. But we do have the resources. People will say, well Alberta's got all the oil. No, they don't have all the oil. We've got lots of oil here to.

Has Alberta got any uranium? Probably a few bucketfuls. But reality is that we've got more.

Can they grow wheat? Not nearly as good as Saskatchewan farmers can.

Cattle? We could out-produce them any day of the week if we just had good policies that would allow our beef producers to be able to compete with the things that are going on in Alberta. They don't have any more pasture land than we've got grain land that we could produce barley on and feed cattle.

The truth of the matter is that we've got everything in Saskatchewan that they've got and more. Except we've got the wrong direction, the wrong direction in all areas except the balancing of the budget.

And so now we come to the grade on job creation and economic development. Unfortunately our leader has been right when he says here, it is an F. We have failed — failed miserably. And I'm asking you, I'm asking you, on this week when you've put in your Speech from the Throne, when you've delivered the direction you want to take the province, think about the budget coming up in a couple of weeks.

You've got a second chance here. Design that budget to go along with the introduction of legislation that will change some of the fundamental ways that we do business in Saskatchewan. Design that, my friends, so that we can turn that corner and recover from the disaster that we are in.

The way to do this is quite simple. All you have to do is improve the business climate of our province. Improving the business climate of Saskatchewan would be so simple you wouldn't even have to totally offend your union friends. All you'd have to do is re-educate them and bring them back to the reality that they have a job to do which is to serve their membership, not to try to be the number two government of Saskatchewan.

Right now you've allowed the union leaders to take over the administration of this province. By threats of not supporting you as politicians, they have surely done that. And you have to stand up to them and tell them where their place is — serving their membership, not running the government.

Then you have to change the legislation necessary to make our business climate that which is in Alberta. It's as simple as that my friends. We can compete with Alberta. We've got more resources. And within five to ten years, we could have a population of 3 million people and a tax base that would support this province and give us the same kind of prosperity that Alberta people enjoy now — \$5,200 less taxes and utility bills for an average family of four. That's what you could offer the people of Saskatchewan. You could win every election from here until eternity if you only had the sense to follow some of the basic examples of business principles, those things that this government has tragically lost sight of.

My friends, you can do this. You are the government. You have the ability to make that turn. You're in the first year of your mandate. Three years from now, the NDP folks that I've talked to tell me that after three years it doesn't matter what you do; people will have forgotten. Well if they're going to forget anyway, then do something right. You might be surprised. Maybe you won't even need all of the supporters you presently have. You might get some of ours.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to take just a brief moment to say how much I appreciate the people from back home having allowed me to come back to this Assembly. I didn't know how much I enjoyed it until I stood up here this last few minutes, so I thank them . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I must inform the Assembly that under rule 14(3) it is my duty as this time to interrupt debate and put the question on the amendment which is before the House.

The division bells rang from 12:30 p.m. until 12:38 p.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 13

Osika	Aldridge	McLane
Draude	McPherson	Belanger
Julé	Krawetz	Gantefer
Boyd	D'Autremont	Hepner
Goohsen		

Nays — 30

Van Mulligen	Mitchell	Wiens
Lingenfelter	Shillington	Anguish
Tchorzewski	Johnson	Lautermilch
Kowalsky	Crofford	Renaud
Calvert	Pringle	Koenker
Trew	Bradley	Lorje
Nilson	Serby	Stanger
Hamilton	Murray	Langford
Kasperski	Ward	Jess
Flavel	Murrell	Thomson

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I have a number of remarks to make about the Speech from the Throne, but I would prefer to do that on Monday. So I do now move that debate be adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:42 p.m.