

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present a petition today concerning the fuel tax revenue. This petition was sent to Mr. Glen McPherson but since there's no Liberals, I would like to present it on his behalf:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to call on federal and provincial governments to dedicate a significantly greater portion of fuel tax revenues towards road maintenance and construction so Saskatchewan residents may have a safe highway system that meets their needs.

From the good people of Shaunavon, Tompkins, Eastend.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present petitions on behalf of Saskatchewan citizens concerned about the automobile insurance Act. The petition reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Whereas your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to repeal the provisions of the personal injury benefits contained in the automobile insurance Act and adopt a return to an add-on insurance system that would provide benefits on a no-fault basis to all victims without taking the innocent victim's right to seek compensation for the person responsible for the accident, but with appropriate modifications to reduce overall personal injury costs.

And I have petitioners from Regina, from Waldheim, and Wadena and Kelliher. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition today that was originally sent to the Liberals, but the people that have signed this petition felt that it wasn't being recognized, so I feel it's a responsibility to bring it forward to the House. The petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that the Hon. Assembly may be pleased to call on the federal and provincial governments to dedicate a significantly greater portion of the fuel tax revenues towards road maintenance and construction so Saskatchewan residents may have a safe highway system that meets their needs.

The people that have signed this petition are from Shaunavon, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too stand today to present petitions on behalf of the Saskatchewan citizens concerned about the automobile insurance Act. And it reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon.

Assembly may be pleased to repeal the provision of the personal injuries benefits contained in the automobile insurance Act and adopt a return to an add-on insurance system that would provide benefits on a no-fault basis to all victims without taking away the innocent victim's right to seek compensation from the person responsible for the accident, but with appropriate modifications to reduce overall personal injury costs.

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

The petitioners are from Regina and Yorkton.

I so present.

Mr. Wakefield: — I'm pleased to present a petition on behalf of residents of Saskatchewan concerned about the automobile insurance Act. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to repeal the provision of the personal injuries benefits contained in the automobile insurance Act and adopt a return to an add-on insurance system that would provide benefits on a no-fault basis to all victims without taking away the innocent victim's right to seek compensation from the person responsible for the accident, but with appropriate modifications to reduce overall personal injury costs.

This petition comes from the good people of Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Regina and Yorkton.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order the petition presented at the last sitting has been reviewed and found to be in order. And pursuant to rule 12(7) is hereby read and received.

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to repeal the personal injury benefits in the automobile insurance Act.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special Nominating Committee

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina Victoria:

That the first report of the special committee appointed to prepare a list of members to compose the standing committees of the Assembly be now concurred in.

I so move.

I wonder if I could have a friendly amendment to this. If I could get the member for Souris-Cannington to second this motion.

The Speaker: — Since I've heard no objection, I take it as an

approval.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, the Canadian spokesperson for both the 1998 and '99 International Labour Organization, Child Labour Committee deliberations, Sandra Morgan. And members will know that in June the 174 members of the ILO (International Labour Organization) unanimously adopted The Worst Forms of Child Labour Treaty, banning the worst forms of child labour.

And as well, Mr. Speaker, Miss Morgan is also the deputy minister of the Department of Labour. So I ask all hon. members to join with me in welcoming Miss Morgan to the Assembly. Stand up there.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — And Mr. Speaker, with Miss Morgan, I would also like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly, two special people from Saskatchewan who have taken an active part in helping to eliminate the worst forms of child labour around the world, and that's Chris Gibbs and Erin McGinnis, if I could get them to stand.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Erin and Chris were among five young people from our province who with the financial assistance of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and several of its affiliates, travelled to Calcutta, India, last year, to take part in the global march against child labour. They are excellent examples for us all and they're to be congratulated for their ongoing efforts to help the fight of the world's children.

Now Chris is accompanied by his mother Natalie today; and Erin's grandparents, Dee and Earl McGinnis, are also with her in the gallery today. So again I just ask all hon. members to join me in welcoming all to the Assembly today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Saskatchewan Party I would also like to welcome these two special people from Saskatchewan who have taken an active role in helping to eliminate the worst forms of child labour around the world, Chris Gibbs and Erin McGinnis.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all the members of the House, six individuals who are seated up in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. And they are from the Southeast Metis Development Association from Fort Qu'Appelle — Vince Folk, Bev Worsley, Tina Suru, Ms. Morin, Carmen Ocampo, and April Low. And these folks are in the House here today, Mr. Speaker, to take in the proceedings of question period and I understand

they're going to have a tour of the Legislative Assembly afterwards.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members to give them a warm welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I too would like to join the member in welcoming the Metis from the southern part of our province. As a northern Metis person I'm always very proud to see the developments. I know that Metis people were part of the building of this country and also a part of the building of this province, and it's good to see the positive contributions come to the floor as we move on into the next century, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, my cousin Jason Wall, who lives here in Regina and his son Daegan is with him. Jason and his wife Leanne have opened up their home to me while I am here and allow me to stay which I greatly appreciate. Jason not long ago moved to Regina from Medicine Hat actually. Although he's got some grave concerns and he's made it pretty clear that unless there's some substantial tax relief in the very near future, Mr. Speaker, he may have to move back. I just want to encourage him to hang in there for about two to four more years and we'll be able to give him that tax relief and he can stay here in Regina.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Two individuals seated behind the rail on our side, the former deputy premier Ed Tchorzewski and Grant Whitmore are with us today, and I just wanted all members to recognize them and welcome them to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Swearing-In

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I was fortunate enough to witness the swearing-in for Canada's newest members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Twenty-two young men and women were sworn in after completing their training as members of the world's most revered, recognized, and honoured police force.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that among those decked out proudly in their red serge was my nephew Eldon Draude, now Constable Draude, who will begin his career in Surrey, BC (British Columbia).

Mr. Speaker, all Canadians should continue to take pride in the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police). For over 100 years, these men, and now women, have kept peace in our country and were instrumental in the peaceful settlement of the West.

The RCMP mission statement spells out the force's commitment to service. It reads:

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is Canada's national police force. Proud of our traditions and confident in meeting future challenges, we commit to preserve the peace, uphold the law, and provide quality service within our communities.

Mr. Speaker, at the church service I was struck by one of the prayers read during the installation ceremonies and I'm sure all members of the legislature would like to join me in this prayer:

Endue them with loyalty and courage, and grant that wherever they may be called to duty or to danger, they may be under your protection. Amen.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

New Doctors for Broadview

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some more good news for rural Saskatchewan. Dr. Michael DeBeer has arrived in Broadview and will soon be joined by Dr. DeWitt. These two doctors will replace two who have moved on. Everyone knows, and we freely admit, that keeping doctors in rural areas anywhere in the world is difficult, but we are having some success, as these two arrivals indicate.

Another interesting part of this Broadview story is that Dr. DeBeer is quoted as saying that we have a good medical system in Canada: "Go to the United States," he said, "and see what happens to you. I think you have some of the best medical systems in the world," DeBeer said of Canada.

I'm happy to welcome Drs. DeBeer and DeWitt to Saskatchewan. And they will find their community and our province progressive, and our people friendly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Weyburn to Host the 2001 Canadian Mixed Curling Championship

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the city of Weyburn and the Weyburn curling club for being awarded the bid to host the 2001 Canadian Mixed Curling Championship which will run January 6 to 14, 2001.

A team from Weyburn won the first Canadian Mixed Curling Championship ever held, and that was in 1964. Weyburn has a great group of volunteers and we are well-known for putting on first-class events.

Again, congratulations on a job well done to the bid committee.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Metis Employment and Training Awards

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to tell

all the members about an awards ceremony I attended on Friday, December 10 and it was the first of its kind.

Myself and our Speaker had the opportunity to attend the first ever Metis Employment and Training Awards held in Fort Qu'Appelle. This was a very enjoyable evening and I would like to add my own congratulations to the groups and the individuals that won the award that evening.

These awards are long indeed . . . These awards are indeed important and overdue. The award celebrations are ongoing achievements of the accomplishments of the people enhanced employment and training in Saskatchewan Metis people. Five group awards and five individual awards were given out in all. And there are plans for the year 2000 Metis Employment and Training Awards.

I enjoyed the entire evening and I wish to congratulate not only the winners, but everyone involved in organizing the Metis Employment and Training Awards. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Swift Current Comprehensive High School's Football Team

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, on November 13 at Taylor Field, the Swift Current Comprehensive High School football team appeared in their first provincial football championship in over two decades. Their combatants that afternoon were the Martin Collegiate Monarchs. And what ensued, Mr. Speaker, was just a great football game. The game had to be settled in overtime with the Monarchs coming out on top.

I'd like to congratulate every single member of the Colts, Mr. Speaker, for a remarkable season. All season long they have demonstrated heart, and desire, and a will to win. Hats off to head coach Rod Siemens and his entire coaching staff, and to the parents and fans and family, two hundred of whom made it to the game from Swift Current in Regina at Taylor Field.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because Martin Collegiate is in the Deputy Premier's constituency, I challenged him to a gentleman's wager, with the loser having to give a member's statement, purchase a plaque for the winning team, and buy the winner supper. I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, after the events of last week I've been tempted to renege on the bet chalking it up, of course, to just political rhetoric.

But I can't bring myself to do that, Mr. Speaker, so I'm on my feet to give the member's statement; I've sent the plaque over to the Deputy Premier. The head coach of the Colts has given me two coupons for Big Macs for our supper and we'll be enjoying that.

Regardless of the bet, Mr. Speaker, the real winners of course were the provincial champion Monarchs as well as the Swift Current Comprehensive Colts football team.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member opposite, the member from Swift Current, that I

appreciate very much the honouring of what he calls a gentlemen's wager, using the word very flippantly when you refer to both of us as gentlemen.

But I do want to say that indeed having played football down in the southwest part of the province a long time ago, I know you've got some pretty rough and tough characters. But I have to say that the Martin team outshone by a small amount. And so if you're going to win in Regina, boy, you've got to work a little bit harder than you do down in Swift Current. So good luck and congratulations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Private Member's Bill on Dealer Purity

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address football of a different sort. Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech this past week employed the theme "a brand new day" anticipating a new approach to politics in this province. And I quote from the speech where I say, the people told us to work together to fight for our farm families, to better serve the people who elected us to this legislature.

I even had the member from Regina Dewdney come to my office a few days ago to make the point that a good idea, no matter from which side of the House it came, would be given credit and positive response.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House we saw an opportunity missed to see that co-operation become reality. Unless of course, as it appears, government . . . co-operation rather, is just a one-way street in the government's favour.

Mr. Speaker, late last week the official opposition introduced a private member's Bill on the issue of dealer purity. And when we made the introduction, we offered to wholeheartedly support any government initiative in that area if they had similar legislation.

Now we view this issue as immensely serious, and failure to act in the short time frame available to us could have disastrous consequences. For whom, you ask?

Well for every manufacturer of short line farm equipment in Saskatchewan, including Bourgault Industries of St. Brieux, Morris Industries of Yorkton, and Honey Bee Manufacturing. Consequences for every employee of the said companies. For every dealer which, because of lowered sales, is going to run into survival problems. And finally for the economy of the province.

We are home to one of the broadest, brightest, and most energetic farm machinery manufacturing sectors in North America. This group has contributed substantially to the economic . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order, order. Time has expired.

Significance of Synchrotron

Mr. Kasperski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the announcement that most profoundly proves that Saskatchewan

is poised to sail into the new millennium is that \$173.5 million Synchrotron being constructed in Saskatoon on the campus of the University of Saskatchewan.

When it is completed in the year 2003, Mr. Speaker, the Synchrotron will place us in the international forefront of scientific research and technological advancement for years to come. This is really a big deal, Mr. Speaker. And it is also a big deal for the whole province, not just for one university or one city.

A firm from my city of Regina, for instance, will also play a major role. Regina-based PCL Maxam will build the house in which the Synchrotron will reside. The building is scheduled to be completed by the end of next year.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Synchrotron is a big project. But unlike other megaprojects of the past and days gone by, this one will have a thousand uses for hundreds of researchers and firms who will extend our collective wisdom and expand our modern economy.

My congratulations to PCL Maxam and all those responsible for the entire Synchrotron project.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

2002 Canadian Special Olympic Summer Games

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This Thursday at the Gateway Mall in Prince Albert, there will be a community rally of which all members should be aware.

This community rally is in support of Prince Albert's bid to host the 2002 Canadian Special Olympic Summer Games.

Prince Albert has already demonstrated that we are more than able to hold such an event. The Western Canada Summer Games this summer proved that. But, Mr. Speaker, this time we're going for the national.

As committee chairperson Phil Fredette said, Prince Albert is the perfect centre for such an event. The selection committee will be in P.A. (Prince Albert) this week and I'm sure that they will see our bid in a favourable light.

All of the event locations are within easy walking distance of the games village at Carlton High School, and Mr. Fredette and his committee can point to corporate, government, and volunteer support.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our community, if we're successful in this bid, will be extraordinarily good hosts for extraordinarily incredible games and will be there to support the athletes and their families.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Plains Health Centre Closure

Mr. Hermanson: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my question is for the Premier.

Mr. Premier, later today the Provincial Auditor is expected to release the results of his special investigation into the closure of the Plains hospital.

Mr. Premier, in 1998 you stood here in the legislature, wagged your finger at the Saskatchewan Party and said this:

I want to tell you this. Don't ever forget this. When the Plains is closed in October there will not be one bed lost or closed in Regina. Not one bed lost or closed in Regina (you repeated yourself).

That's what you said, Mr. Premier. Mr. Premier, do you still stand by this statement?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the people will know, the decision was made in 1993 to consolidate the services located at the Plains hospital into the Regina General and the Pasqua. And at the time the decision was made on the basis of a number of reports that indicated, as a result of the capital construction that had taken place in the 1980s under the former administration, the Progressive Conservative Party of which some people are from that party, these two hospitals were the newest in the city of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, we agreed to consolidate those services into the Regina General and the Pasqua, and what I can report today is that people living in Regina and southern Saskatchewan have the very best mental health facility in this country. They have an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) for southern Saskatchewan, a new MRI. They have the best hemodialysis in this province. And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker.

People in Regina have the very best health services available to them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed the Premier didn't answer my question nor did the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, the original budget for closing the Plains hospital was \$83 million. The NDP (New Democratic Party) has always said that the Plains closure was on budget and on time. They said it dozens of time.

Mr. Premier, earlier this year the Saskatchewan Party said that this project may be as much as \$40 million over budget. The Health minister said those were wild allegations.

Mr. Premier, in just a few minutes we hope to find out who was right. Will you admit that the Plains closure is now grossly over budget, and that you covered it up to get yourself through the

election?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, last Friday I believe that the Aboriginal healing centre was opened at the Regina General. We now have two Aboriginal healing centres — one at the Pasqua and one at the General. Prior to the consolidation of those services, there was not an Aboriginal healing centre.

Mr. Speaker, we have a spiral CT (computerized tomography) scanner at the Pasqua Hospital. Prior to the closure of the Plains, there was not a spiral CT scanner at the Plains. We have a second cardiac cath lab. You don't wait for angioplasty in the city of Regina. That was not there prior to the consolidation.

Mr. Speaker, we have a new dialysis space — the most up-to-date space in this province. Mr. Speaker, we have a new burn unit. We have a second cardiac cath lab. We have satellite services. We have a therapy centre, Mr. Speaker. All of these services have been added. They're enhanced services, and it means that we have the very best health services for the people of Regina and southern Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm disappointed that the minister doesn't have the courtesy to actually answer the question that was asked. Mr. Speaker, though, it's kind of ironic that the Liberal leader once promised to chain himself to the Plains hospital. Now instead, he wound up chaining himself to the NDP. It's turning out to be more like a ball and chain.

The Liberal leader now sits in cabinet with the same NDP government who ignored a hundred thousand names on petitions, the same NDP government who ignored all the Plains rallies, the same NDP government that closed the Plains hospital, and the same NDP government that covered up the real cost.

My question now is for the Minister of Education. And I expect a thoughtful, honest reply. Mr. Minister, after everything you said in the past, how can you support the government that closed the Plains hospital?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1400)

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised by the member's question. The reason I'm surprised is because it was over a, I believe, a year ago, close to a year ago, that it was very clear that there were the cost overruns at the Plains, from 83 million to 95 million. In addition, it was reported that there had been enhanced services that were going to cost, well, tens of millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker. And at the time we indicated that these services were there to enhance the kinds of health care available to people living in Regina and southern Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is coming from the member who is the former Reform Member of Parliament, and, from Rosetown-Biggan and, Mr. Speaker, I've just received a flyer

from the Reform Party that indicates that they're in favour of two-care health care — private health care, Mr. Speaker. And this comes from the member that wants to freeze health care for the next five years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now we've had three non-answers and nonsensical ones as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is now clear that the closure of the Plains hospital was a huge, huge mistake. The worse thing is thousands of people told the NDP it was a huge mistake. They reasoned. They pleaded. They demonstrated. But nobody over there listened.

Mr. Premier, you have gutted health care in Regina and you have closed hundreds of beds. And now you have also wasted millions of dollars — money that could have been spent on patient care.

Today will you simply admit that what everyone else in Saskatchewan already knows — that it was a mistake — a big mistake — to close the Plains hospital?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, with the changes of services in the Regina Health District, we now have more diagnostic treatment available for people. We don't have waiting lists for angioplasties in the city of Regina. We have a new MRI. We have a hemodialysis unit that is providing services to Yorkton so that they can have services in Yorkton without those people having to travel to Regina.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand this. This is coming from the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party that comes from a federal political party that believes in two-tier health care; you know, private services for those of us who could afford it and queue up for those of us that can't. That's their position. And here we have the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party saying we shouldn't have done this at a time when he said he would freeze health spending in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the coalition government wants to get rid of waiting times for diagnostic services, and we want to reduce waiting lists, Mr. Speaker. That's our commitment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Central Plains Health District

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Madam Minister, the Central Plains Health District has had their accreditation status suspended by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation. Madam Minister, the loss of accreditation status means the district does not meet the minimum national standards for quality care.

Madam Minister, you and your department say you expect all health districts to meet minimum accreditation standards. Your own department and officials have attended almost every meeting of the Central Plains District Health Board over the last

seven years. You had knowledge and you had direct involvement in this matter. And it isn't only the blame to put on the district health board, but directly on your department.

This, Madam Minister, is confirmation that your health system has failed the people of the Central Plains Health District.

Madam Minister, will you accept your responsibility for the failure of this district to meet minimum standards as required by your department?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — For the information of the member, at no time has anyone indicated that we do not have quality health services in the Central Plains Health District which includes the town of Humboldt.

What I can tell the member is that there was an initial accreditation report from September 1998 which contained 27 recommendations, and in September 1999 they followed up to see what sort of progress had been made on 12 of those items. The items, Mr. Speaker, were around priority-setting and budgeting, resolution of medical staff issues, and risk management, Mr. Speaker. At no time did they talk about quality of care.

Now what the recommendations now talk about is the need to have a restatement of values for physicians and staff, and the member knows about that; district operational and business plan; regular performance appraisals for staff; a process to identify community needs.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are administrative issues; they are not quality of care issues.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Well, Madam Minister, in September 1998, when the accreditation council indicated that there were some outstanding issues, one of those named by the chairperson of the district was that there was no formal human resources plan.

Now, Madam Minister, that would mean to me that if there's no formal human resources plan, that there is a quality of care problem. The Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation sets these national health standards to ensure quality care is being provided across country. And it's very disturbing that in this province of Saskatchewan, we have a health district which has lost its accreditation and is not meeting the minimum standards that are needed for quality of care.

Madam Minister, the health district and the Department of Health would like us to believe the problems are all administrative in nature, but the residents of the health district think differently. They have raised 130 concerns with me that were to be put forward at a public meeting.

Madam Minister, how can you say that there has been no impact on the quality of care when the district is failing to live up to your department's own minimum standards?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — To report to the member, because I think she does . . . the health district that she is the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for a great deal of disservice.

And let me, let me, let me, let me, let me report what was said. The report says, and I quote, Mr. Speaker — if the members would listen — that:

The district offers an extensive range of services, and clients and their families who utilized these services provided entirely positive feedback about the staff and quality of care, (Mr. Speaker).

Mr. Speaker, there are some human resource relationship issues that the member is aware of. She did call a meeting, but no one was interested in coming because they didn't want to escalate some of those human resource communications issues, Mr. Speaker.

And the reason why they did not receive accreditation was because of some administrative problems that have to do with the district and some of the affiliates that they deal with, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Madam Minister, yes, I did call a public meeting. I called a public meeting because the constituents and members of that district were very concerned over the quality of services that they were reserving. I have a hundred and thirty questions, many of which point to the fact that there are concerns about services.

Now, Madam Minister, not only did your . . . the district refuse to attend, but in conjunction with the department officials, the Sask Health department officials, the meeting was blocked.

Madam Minister, we have since had Sask Health officials writing advertisements to justify the mess that this district has been in. We have public money going towards ads being put in that paper to try to cover this very serious issue.

Madam Minister, your department has been involved all along and your department has purposely sabotaged . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, please. Order. Order, please. The member has been lengthy in her preamble. Would you please repeat your question?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I think that the member does the health district a great disservice. And what do I mean by that?

Mr. Speaker, this is . . . what the member is talking about is the St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Mr. Speaker, the St. Elizabeth's Hospital is being transferred to the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation which is a creation of the Catholic Bishops of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we do not want to . . . we think it's important that all of us elected have respect for the bishops, Mr. Speaker, and it's important that we treat the bishops with respect.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the St. Elizabeth's Hospital and the corporation are working together to transfer the finalization of the hospital, and once that hospital is transferred to the corporation, there will be an interim board. And we believe that once we can work through the arrangements with the bishops, that we will be able to show the accreditation process that we can have a health district that's accredited.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Victims of Dow Corning Breast Implants

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also for the Minister of Health. Madam Minister, personal health tragedies are hard to deal with anytime. They are made more difficult to bear when the government adds to the burden.

In 1989 Sandra Laliberte underwent a double mastectomy for medical reasons and at the same time received Dow Corning breast implants. These implants caused extreme health problems, were eventually removed, but the complications continued. Ms. Laliberte has undergone 17 surgeries related to health problems caused by these implants. She is just one of many Saskatchewan women waiting for a legal settlement from Dow Corning. Now the Department of Health wants reimbursement for the costs of medical procedures she has undergone.

Madam Minister, will you confirm before the Assembly today that you are going to recover costs on the expense of Mrs. Laliberte's claim against Dow Corning?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — No I won't confirm that.

Mr. Gantefer: — Madam Minister, will you confirm that the Department of Health is attaching itself to the claim that is registered by Ms. Laliberte? Ms. Laliberte has information that was sent by yourself, Madam Minister, that says that you are seeking recovery from the victims of these Dow Corning implants.

Madam Minister, these implants were authorized by the Department of Health of Canada. They were approved by Sask Health to be used in this department and the US (United States) bankruptcy division has set aside \$1.3 billion so that provincial governments could access claims against Dow Corning.

Madam Minister, why are you attaching your claim on the back of these victims instead of seeking recompense directly from Dow Corning?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, for the information of the member, I have received a letter from the lawyers representing the victims of the Dow Corning breast implants. They asked for initial response. The lawyers have written me again, and I can assure the member that we are actively considering the request of the lawyer. And I will not confirm that we are going to attach ourselves to that claim.

Mr. Gantefer: — If you will not confirm that you're going to attach yourself to the claim, will you confirm that you will waive any attachment to any claims by Mrs. Laliberte and any other people that are involved in the Dow Corning lawsuit? Will you waive any claim so that you're off the backs of these women, Madam Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the lawyers for the victims, a lawyer in particular, Mr. Dennis Loewen, has written me asking me to waive a claim to recover the medical costs. What we have done is reviewed the number of claims. We believe the number of claims, the medical costs, range around \$1,100. This would mean about \$100 to \$2,500 per claim. There are a significant number of lawsuits around the world. We believe that this is a nuisance situation, that we don't want to add to it, and that we will be giving the lawyer information shortly, Mr. Speaker.

We're reviewing this and I will not, at all, say to the member that we're going to keep, we're going to keep the funds that they might get from their claim against Dow Corning.

(1415)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, Order, Order please. I just remind members again to pass their questions through the Chair, direct them through the Chair.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, to the Minister of Health, a very simple question that a simple answer will suffice. Will you waive any claim to any settlement of the women who are going to receive settlements from the Dow Corning implant? Yes or no, will you waive any attachment to their claim?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the member has asked me a very important question. I have said that the lawyers representing the victims have written me. I have written the lawyers back. The lawyers have written me again.

We are reviewing their request. I consider the request quite legitimate; I think it is a logical request. And I am hopeful that within the next day or two, we will be able to provide the victims' lawyer with an answer that will make the victims happy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Contract Negotiations with Smaller Retail Co-ops

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Mr. Premier, on September 16 the people of Saskatchewan sent a very clear message. They voted to get rid of the NDP. And do you know why, Mr. Premier? It's because while the NDP was busy lining its own nest, communities were suffering.

Mr. Speaker, the evidence of NDP carnage is everywhere.

Hundreds of schools and hospitals closed, highways crumbling, young people forced out of the province. Now 16 retail co-ops that serve communities outside Saskatoon and Regina are fighting for their lives because the Retail Wholesale & Department Store Union is attempting to force the smaller co-ops to accept the same contract the union negotiates for employees in our major cities.

All 16 co-ops are strongly opposed to the RWDSUs (Retail Wholesale & Department Store Union) attempt to take away local control over contract negotiation.

Mr. Premier, does the NDP support the union's attempt to take local control away from locally owned and operated retail co-ops?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that's before the Labour Relations Board and the Labour Relations Board is a quasi-judicial body that has the ability to make rulings in the province based on the province's legislation.

The board is equally made up of employers' representatives and workers' representatives. And I think it would be very presumptuous of us to prejudge the outcome of that ruling.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Speaker, my question is once again for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, the Premier has just demonstrated why the NDP is on its way out. He's good at the bob-and-weave manoeuvre, but when it comes for fighting for our struggling communities he quickly finds a dark place to crawl into.

Mr. Premier, do you support what your Minister of Labour just said? Is the NDP going to turn its back while the RWDSU attempts to steal local control away from 16 rural co-ops?

Mr. Speaker, the co-ops are fighting the union because they know that one collectively bargained labour agreement that covers all retail co-op employees would not be affordable for many small rural co-ops. The result, Mr. Speaker, job cuts and service reductions in our rural communities.

Mr. Premier, what is your NDP government doing to stop the irresponsible and self-serving action of the RWDSU from killing local jobs and shutting down co-op services in our rural communities?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member knows something about how this ruling is going to go that I don't know, and if he does he certainly could share that with us.

But it's my understanding that the Labour Relations Board, which is made up equally of employer representatives nominated by business, and working representatives nominated by workers, and the representative organizations, will make the ruling on this and when they do, then we will know whether we have a problem or not.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

International Treaty on Child Labour Abuse

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, today I'm pleased to announce the Government of Saskatchewan has ratified an International Labour Organization treaty banning the worst forms of child labour.

The International Labour Organization is the oldest agency of the United Nations. It's been working to create global standards for working people since it was founded in 1919, to give you some idea what a forward-looking organization it's been.

The ILO United Nations organization where participants, governments, employers and workers have equal representation and voting rights.

And, Mr. Speaker, the ILO defines the worst forms of child labour as follows: slavery, forced recruitment for combat, prostitution and pornography, illicit enterprises such as work in the drug trade, and work that by its nature or circumstances threatens the health, safety or morals of children.

Now in Canada children are protected by the Criminal Code. And in Saskatchewan The Labour Standards Act, The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993, The Education Act, 1995, Family and Community Services Act, and Family Maintenance Act, 1997 work together to ensure that children are not exploited and that they have an opportunity for an education and to become more self-sufficient.

The UN (United Nations) says that Canada is the best place in the world to live, and as such, we have an obligation to help the less fortunate around the world. This treaty has the potential to save lives and ease the suffering of millions of children around the world.

Mr. Speaker, there are 250 million children, ages 5 to 14, in the world's labour force. Almost half of them — 120 million — are full-time workers. Each day about 80,000 more children are added to their total. These throwaway children work as miners, indentured servants, soldiers, prostitutes, field hands, and sweatshop labourers.

They make everything from toys and designer clothing to surgical tools, glassware, rugs, sports equipment and fireworks — commodities that North Americans are demanding.

Nor is slavery dead. Authorities are aware of five major international networks selling children.

Mr. Speaker, in June the 174 member-states of the ILO and more than 1,000 delegates representing employers, workers and government unanimously adopted The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention and the approval process for this convention is now under way throughout the world. Canada hopes to be one of the first nations to ratify the new treaty.

In closing I want to recognize the contributions of Saskatchewan young people to ending the worst forms of child labour. Two of them again, Chris Gibbs and Erin McGinnis, who are with us in the Assembly and who I had the pleasure of

introducing earlier today.

And for the sake of all the world's suffering child labourers, it's our sincere hope that the governments of the world, including Canada, act on this ILO treaty very quickly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you, as well, to the minister who provided me with a copy of her remarks prior to question period today.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to salute all those individuals who have worked so hard to bring about the treaty banning all forms of child labour. While we may from time to time disagree with the government over certain labour-related policies, there's no question that efforts to ban child labour, or child slavery as some see it, are worthwhile.

Of course we should mention that this treaty covers such things as forcing children into child prostitution and working in the drug trade, two things people may not necessarily think of when they hear the term, child labour.

Mr. Speaker, we approve of any measure that keep children safe both here at home and abroad. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 7 — The Student Assistance And Student Aid Fund Amendment Act, 1999

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 7, The Student Assistance And Student Aid Fund Amendment Act, 1999 be now introduced and read the first time.

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

Bill No. 9 — The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 1999 (No. 2)

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 9, The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 1999 (No. 2) be now introduced and read the first time.

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

Bill No. 10 — The Department of Health Amendment Act, 1999

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 10, The Department of Health Amendment Act, 1999 be now introduced and read the first time.

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

(1430)

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, hon. members, I lay before the Assembly in accordance with the provisions of section 14 of The Provincial Auditor Act, I hereby table the *1999 Fall Report Volume 2*.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — Also, my hon. colleagues, before orders of the day, before 5 p.m. yesterday, the member for Cannington, the Opposition House Leader raised a point of order regarding the procedure for taking a voice vote. As requested, I reviewed the voice vote taken earlier on a superseding motion. I find that the voice vote in question was conducted in the usual manner, in keeping both with our own practice and with parliamentary tradition.

A description of that parliamentary tradition from Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, 22nd Edition, page 349 may help to clarify the issues as follows:

When debate on a question is concluded, the question must be put . . . The Speaker takes the sense of the House by asking that 'As many as are of that opinion say "aye,"' and 'As many as are of the contrary say "no."' When each party has responded the Speaker endeavours to judge from the loudness and general character of the opposing exclamations, or from a consideration of the probabilities of the case, which party has the majority. As his judgment is not final, he expresses his opinion by saying: 'I think the "ayes" (or "noes") have it'. If the House acquiesces in this decision, the question is said to be 'agreed to' or 'negatived' as the case may be, but if those declared to be the minority dispute the fact, they respond with (a request) . . . to start the process of counting the numbers on each side, which is termed as a division.

I also refer hon. members to the *Précis of Procedure*, 3rd Edition, of the Canadian House of Commons, on page 57 where the voice vote is described as follows:

Having heard both responses, the Speaker, judging not only the voices but also the probabilities, then says, "In my opinion the yeas (or nays) have it."

It is clear that the Chair makes a judgment at the time the voices are given in a vote, but does not count the votes. It is up to the members to call for a recorded division if they disagree . . . it is up to the members then to call for a recorded division if they disagree with the Chair's opinion regarding the results of the voice vote.

That is what happened in the vote yesterday.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, by leave of the Assembly, I have two regular motions that I need to move, if I could get leave, on membership of certain committees.

Leave granted.

MOTIONS

Appointment of Special Committee to Consider every Regulation filed with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld:

That members Allchurch, Bakken, Harper, Hart, Higgins, Jones, Thomson, Toth, and Yates, be constituted as Special Committee to consider every Regulation filed with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly pursuant to the provisions of The Regulations Act, 1995, with a view to determining whether the special attention of the Assembly should be drawn to any of the said regulations on any of the following grounds:

(1) that it imposes a charge on the public revenues or prescribes a payment to be made to any public authority not specifically provided for by statute; (2) that it is excluded from challenge in the court; (3) that it makes unusual or unexpected effect where the parent statute confers no express authority so to provide; (4) that it purports to have retrospective effect where the parent statute confers no express authority so to provide; (5) that it has been insufficiently promulgated; and (6) that it is not clear in meaning.

And, Mr. Speaker:

That the committee have the assistance of the Legislative Counsel and Clerk in reviewing the said regulations and that it be required, prior to the reporting that the special attention of the Assembly be drawn to any regulation, to inform the government department or authority concerned of its intention so to report;

And that the committee be empowered to invite any regulation-making authority to submit a memorandum explaining any regulation which may (be) under consideration by the committee, or to invite any regulation making authority to appear before the committee as a witness for the purpose of explaining any such regulation.

And, Mr. Speaker:

That the committee be empowered to review the bylaws of professional associations and amendments thereto to determine whether or not they are in any way prejudicial to the public interest.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Referral of Professional Associations' Bylaws to Special Committee

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Northwest, and by leave of the Assembly:

That the bylaws of the professional associations and amendments thereto tabled during the previous legislatures and not ratified by the committee and the bylaws and amendments as tabled in the present session be referred to the Special Committee on Regulations.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

Composition of Continuing Select Committee

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, finally, I move, seconded by the member for Regina Victoria, by leave of the Assembly:

That members Bakken, Boyd, D'Autremont, Kasperski, Kowalsky, Lingenfelter, Melenchuk, Trew, and Weekes be constituted a Continuing Select Committee pursuant to rule 92 with the power to call for persons, papers, records, and to examine witnesses under oath and whose duty it shall be to establish from time to time, select committees with the powers to call for persons, papers and records and to examine witnesses under oath and with the power to travel and to hear testimony away from the seat of government; and

That the continuing select committee will have the power to set the terms of reference for each select committee; and

That each select committee shall report directly to the Legislative Assembly from time to time.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

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. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Addley, and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Hermanson.

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to rise for the first time in this historic Chamber to address the Speech from the Throne. And I should say at the outset, that the constituents of Saskatoon Fairview twice this summer had the opportunity to vote in an election; and I'm pleased to say they voted for me as their member of the legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — Wise choice, wise choice.

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — And I'll come to that in a minute, Mr.

Speaker, but they indeed are very wise and they told very wise stories and developed wise analysis on the doorstep in response to some of the promises made by the Saskatchewan Party and of course rejected them out of hand, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I should also say a few words about my predecessor, the former member of the legislature from Saskatoon Fairview. Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Bob Mitchell served that constituency well for many years both in opposition and in government, and of course served this legislature as minister of Justice and in many other capacities. And it would be remiss of me if I didn't say, Mr. Speaker, how much we valued his services in Saskatoon Fairview and indeed across the province.

Mr. Speaker, this was my fourth and fifth election for most of the residents of Saskatoon Fairview. On three occasions, they elected me for good or ill, as their Member of Parliament, and then twice as the member of the legislature, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank them very much for that privilege and for the opportunity to continue to serve that part of Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, that part of Saskatoon, on the west side bordered by 33rd Street, the edge of the city, and Fairlight Drive, Mr. Speaker, is a community full of hard-working, diligent people, Mr. Speaker. I've never seen . . . in fact, as a result of the last eight years of government I've never seen that part of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, so prosperous and doing so well. And it's a credit, Mr. Speaker, to the economic and social policies of the government in the last eight years that they are doing as well as they are.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Mr. Speaker, there's no end of new cars in the driveway, no end of additions to houses, and no end of new housing being built there, Mr. Speaker. Families moving in, the schools full. Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to represent that part of Saskatoon.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I was on the doorstep, on those two occasions for a month at a time, in the summer, Mr. Speaker, I had many opportunities to speak with residents. And on every occasion, Mr. Speaker, they talked about the time when they voted for the Conservative Party.

They voted once, Mr. Speaker, for the Conservatives. They've made one mistake in 1982. Ever since then, they voted for New Democrats, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Mr. Speaker, they talked about that experience, Mr. Speaker. And they talked about the Saskatchewan Party's platform and how they'd seen it all before, Mr. Speaker.

They'd seen the promises, Mr. Speaker, to spend, spend, spend. They'd seen the commitments, Mr. Speaker, to balance budgets, Mr. Speaker. And they'd seen what had happened in those years of Grant Devine, Mr. Speaker. And they, needless to say, rejected them out of hand. They didn't believe them then, Mr. Speaker; they don't believe them now. They said they didn't add up then, Mr. Speaker, and they say don't add up now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan, of Saskatoon Fairview, are, of course, right. The Saskatchewan Party's platform doesn't add up. It won't add up no matter how they shake it around.

And, Mr. Speaker, they talked about tax cuts for example. Now these are people, Mr. Speaker, raising families, working hard. And it's not as easy as they would hope it to be. But, Mr. Speaker, many more have jobs than they did before. Many more have new homes than they had before. And, Mr. Speaker, what they said about the Saskatchewan Party's approach to tax cuts is, well where's all this money going to come from.

They knew, Mr. Speaker, even if the Saskatchewan Party didn't know, that you can't just draw this money out of thin air. You can't just make up tax cuts, Mr. Speaker. That money has to come from somewhere. The Saskatoon Fairview residents knew it had to come from somewhere, Mr. Speaker, and they didn't buy the arguments of the Saskatchewan Party across the way.

And they didn't buy either, Mr. Speaker, the divide philosophy of the Saskatchewan Party. Mr. Speaker, time and time again I heard on the doorsteps from urban residents how much they felt the need to address the concerns of rural residents, Mr. Speaker. There was a need, there was an acceptance, Mr. Speaker, of the importance of working this out together . . . that urban residents and rural residents are in this together, Mr. Speaker.

We help each other out whenever we can. That's the Saskatchewan way. That's the way of co-operation, of community, of working together. That's the New Democratic Party way, Mr. Speaker. But it's not the Saskatchewan Party way, and the Saskatoon Fairview residents knew that and rejected the Saskatchewan Party's approach.

And, Mr. Speaker, what I must say about the comments on the doorstep through the summer, Mr. Speaker, is how well those people understood what was going on in our province, what was going on in our country, and how important it was to work together, and how important it was, Mr. Speaker, to invest in Saskatchewan as has been happening in the past.

And I want to just say a few brief words, Mr. Speaker, of contrasts between the Saskatchewan Party and this government in the way it approaches things for which I'm now responsible, Mr. Speaker — matters of justice and matters of crime.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for all the talk of the Saskatchewan Party about crime in our communities . . . And in fact, Mr. Speaker, I sometimes wonder whether the Saskatchewan Party just doesn't like children. The only time they ever mention children, Mr. Speaker, is when they're talking about youth criminals.

And we have . . . the vast majority of children in our society and our province, Mr. Speaker, are good kids doing the best they can. There's a small group that is not. I don't know why the Saskatchewan Party always focuses on that small group, Mr. Speaker. We need to focus on the good kids too.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Now, Mr. Speaker, with all that talk and with all the breast-beating and the rhetoric of being tough on crime, what, Mr. Speaker, did the Saskatchewan Party promise in its election platform? What did it promise the people of Saskatchewan on September 16?

Well, Mr. Speaker, it promised them a big fat freeze on justice spending — a big fat freeze on spending on crime, a big fat freeze, Mr. Speaker, on support on initiatives for our community. That's what the Saskatchewan Party promised, Mr. Speaker. Nothing on justice; nothing on crime.

And I'd like to just contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with the commitments made by our government and by our party.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that in the election campaign, the government . . . the party, New Democratic Party, committed itself to 200 new police officers — 200 police officers, Mr. Speaker — on the beat, in the community, police officers who weren't there before. That was a commitment, Mr. Speaker, to ensuring safety and security in our communities.

What did the Saskatchewan Party promise, Mr. Speaker? A big fat zero. No more money for police officers, no more money for safety in our communities, no more money for security, Mr. Speaker. That's what the Saskatchewan Party promised. And that's the difference, Mr. Speaker.

What about, Mr. Speaker, with regards to dealing with violent offenders. Well, Mr. Speaker, the commitment was made to double our spending on SHOCAP, on the serious and habitual youth offender comprehensive action program. Mr. Speaker, this year alone, \$635,000 to deal with those worst young offenders, Mr. Speaker.

Now what does the Saskatchewan Party have to offer, Mr. Speaker? A big, fat zero. Not one thing, Mr. Speaker, to deal with those serious and habitual youth offenders in our community, that they talk so much about. Mr. Speaker, sharp contrast between the approaches of this government and of the Saskatchewan Party.

Mr. Speaker, what about serious crime? The party opposite talks about serious crime. What did they promise, Mr. Speaker, with regards to dealing with serious crime? A big fat zero, Mr. Speaker. The Premier knows it's a big fat zero, Mr. Speaker; he's saying it's a big fat zero. What about the guys opposite? Do they know it's a big fat zero? Because that's what it was, Mr. Speaker, in sharp contrast to the three-quarters of a million dollars that this government has put forward.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on and on. I could talk too about the commitment to communities to solve the problems at their core, and I will go on a little bit, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, \$1.5 million dollars for new court facilities. Mr. Speaker, \$350,000 for Aboriginal organizations to deal with the vicious cycle of family violence, Mr. Speaker. And, of course, Mr. Speaker, the children's action plan, with the major, major investments there.

(1445)

Well, Mr. Speaker, what did the Saskatchewan Party have to

offer the people of Saskatchewan? Are you ready for this, Mr. Speaker? What did they have to offer, Mr. Speaker, to deal with, to deal with the serious problems in our communities?

Well, Mr. Speaker, a big fat zero. Not one penny, Mr. Speaker; not one new penny to deal with the challenges in our community, Mr. Speaker — not one penny. Nothing, Mr. Speaker, to be tough on criminals; nothing, Mr. Speaker, to be tough on the causes of crime. That's the legacy of this party opposite, Mr. Speaker; that's the promise that they made to Saskatchewan.

The promises we made, Mr. Speaker, are to fight those issues, Mr. Speaker; to deal with crime; to deal with the safety and security in our communities; and to help families bring up their children in such a way, Mr. Speaker, that they become good, solid kids and good, solid adults.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Axworthy: — Well Mr. Speaker, I don't think I need to go on. I think I've made my point. And Mr. Speaker, I think the important thing to recognize Mr. Speaker, is the Speech from the Throne presents a forward-looking vision, a new way forward for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, 60 percent, after all, of the people of Saskatchewan voted for the government we have before us. Again they rejected, Mr. Speaker, the mean-spirited, narrow-minded approach of the most recent right wing party in this province, Mr. Speaker. We have had experiences of right wing parties in government before. The people of Saskatoon Fairview have had that experience Mr. Speaker, and they say no way, not today, not ever, we don't want that again.

What we want, Mr. Speaker, what we want, Mr. Speaker, is a government, what they want Mr. Speaker, is a government which stands up for them in a progressive, creative, collective, community way. That puts community in its right perspective, supports community as it . . . as community supports individuals and families as they make their way in the world, Mr. Speaker.

It rejects the dog-eat-dog world of the people opposite. It rejects the "me first" attitude of the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker. It puts it into context and presents a balanced approach, Mr. Speaker.

I am happy to support the Speech from the Throne. I'm happy to support the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to four more years of good government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a great privilege and real honour to stand before you at the House today to make my first, my maiden speech. What I would like to do today is cover off three main areas.

First of all, what I want to do is thank the number of people that helped me get to this point today. Secondly, I would like to express a number of the reasons why I pursued this particular honour. And third, I would like to talk about the direction I think this province needs to go in order to be a success in the quickly approaching millennium.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — I said it's a real honour and a real privilege, although with the sleepless nights I've had, I do question that at times, but anyway the thank you's.

First of all, I would like to start by thanking my wife, Cindy, very much. When I first decided I was . . . when we were first talking about whether a person should enter the field of politics, there was some hesitation. But once we finally decided that's the direction to go, I must admit she's been behind me all the way. She kept me on track at times when I was perhaps getting off track. She kept me going perhaps when times were a little tough to keep going on. But probably most of all the biggest contribution she made, or one of the most important contributions she made in my campaign, was keeping me dressed in colours that actually matched. So I'd really like to . . . I'd like to thank her for that.

I'd also like to thank my sons, Craig and Mark — Craig who turns 8 today, and Mark who just turned 6 about a week ago. I questioned as to whether they really understood the political process, but the other night I was putting Craig to bed and Craig says, dad what do you do at the legislature? Do you make laws? And I go, well I guess that's part of the job that we do. And he goes, well I think every kid should have a dog. So I guess that's the first piece of legislation I may be introducing.

My other son Mark is working on some legislation regarding Pokémon, but we don't expect that to be ready till the springtime.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — However I did look and listen very closely in the Speech from the Throne and heard neither one of the subjects mentioned, so once again I'm sure we can blame the government for that.

To my brother and sister and their husbands and especially my mother and father-in-law, I think any person that enters the political game has self doubt at times and questions whether they're made for this profession. But I really want to thank them for having faith and confidence in me when perhaps I didn't have enough myself. So I want to thank them for that.

Even more importantly, I guess, would be my mother and father. I want to thank them for being role models in my life; they truly have been. They've given me everything that I've . . . that I've got, and I don't mean materialistic things; I mean values. They're hard-working, honest, sincere, and caring — values that I hope to pass on to the great constituents of Indian Head-Milestone.

But most of all, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to thank my dad. My dad always taught me to believe in what I stand for, but more importantly stand up for what you believe in. That's what I'm doing here today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — The voters of Indian Head-Milestone. I want to thank all the voters that voted for me because perhaps they knew me personally or voted for the Saskatchewan Party

policy. And contrary to popular belief on the other side, that was almost 50 per cent of the voters of Indian Head-Milestone. But probably even more importantly than that is I want to thank all the voters that took the time to exercise their right. There are people dying today to have the right that we take so for granted. To all the voters of Indian Head-Milestone, I thank you for exercising your right.

While I'm on the Indian Head-Milestone area, I'd like to talk a little bit about the constituency that I represent, Mr. Speaker.

Indian Head-Milestone is a constituency that is made up of agriculture. And that's what it is. It has some of the highest assessed farmland in all of the province. I think back when I was in school and we used to talk about the bread basket of the world, I do believe they meant the Indian Head-Milestone constituency.

No longer though is it the bread basket of the world. We produce lentils, top-notch lentils, canola, peas, sunflowers, canary. It is a real diverse constituency, not only in grains, but also in livestock with elk ranches, buffalo, alpaca, and many others. We have taken diversification seriously.

The town of Indian Head, briefly, is a real historic town. The experimental farm was established there in 1887 and has led research to bring our agriculture to the top of the world. In 1902 the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) shelter belt was also started. It supplies millions of trees for all over Western Canada every year.

The Calling Lakes area I'd like to touch on briefly is really a true jewel. It makes up the northern border of my constituency, with lakes of Pasqua Lake, Echo Lake, Mission, and Katepwa.

The town of Fort Qu'Appelle, which is in between Echo and Mission, is an all-season resort town with lakes for fishing and water sports as well as a beautiful golf course in the summer. In the winter, snowmobiling, ice fishing, and of course Mission Ridge ski resort. Mr. Speaker, I think you do have to agree with me it's a great town.

Other towns in the area that I just briefly want to mention — too many to mention all of them — but towns like Milestone with the award-winning, international award-winning dinner theatre; Montmartre, Vibank, Edenwold, and Lewvan also.

As far as the reasons why I got — I had to get Lewvan in there — as far as the reasons why I got involved in the political life, there are many reasons why I decided to get involved, but there are four main reasons. And I'd like to share them with the Assembly today.

I believe this province has fallen far short of its potential. I'd like to compare this province to a good athlete, a very good athlete that's got speed, endurance, strength, smarts — all the ingredients that it takes to make a good athlete, but not all the ingredients that it takes to make a great athlete. A poor attitude and poor management — and that's what I think this province has been forced under, under the last eight and a half years of NDP government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, out of the last 55 years of governing, the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) have been in power for 40 of them. — CCF, which has recently changed to NDP.

But even more recently, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if you are aware of the new name change of the government over there. It's the NLDP — NLDP, that stands for the new liberal democratic party. But, Mr. Speaker, after listening to question period the last couple of weeks, it's still pronounced NDP — the L is silent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — This party's policies of government ownership, policies of land bank, control over the resources in potash have left us lagging behind the rest of the nation. Fifty years ago, Mr. Speaker, our province had a million people in it. Today, our province has a million people in it.

I have a couple of stories that I would like to share that I think really illustrates this very fact. A number of years ago — many, many years ago, in the early '70s — a cousin of mine had bought Beltone hearing aids, had worked for the company, and then bought into the company.

Well just shortly after he got into that business, which was doing quite well, Uncle Al and his pals decided that would be something that the government should own. And that's what they did. So off to BC this family moved with four young children, and now are very successful throughout the island and inner interior of British Columbia.

The government has forced people out of this province.

Another cousin who started Mid Canada Medical Supplies, offering medical supplies to hospitals throughout Western Canada. But that wasn't quite good enough. Maybe he might have been doing too well. Let's make the government take that over; let's take it over and see what we can do with it. Force them out. They're living in Sarnia, Ontario now, running a very, very successful medical supply company.

Free enterprise can no longer be a dirty word in this province. Profit is okay. We need an attitude change.

The second area I'd like to cover is the health care system. It's a mess. It truly is a mess. I believe this and I know this because I've lived on both sides of that health care issue. Cindy, my wife, is a registered nurse in the Regina Health District. She's been a nurse for about 14 years; 13 of those years was at the Plains health care centre. That was the centre that the Minister of Education was going to chain himself to — in case anyone forgets.

Well I've listened to a few replies to the speech from members opposite and they've said it's perfectly fine. I would challenge those members to spend a weekend with a health care worker in the Regina Health Care District.

Cindy, my wife, happens to be working in the operating room as an operating room nurse. And it's not uncommon for them to start a shift at 3 in the afternoon, work through the night, and be

forced back there at 3 the next day for another 18-hour shift. Because the waiting lines are so long that they're trying to catch up through the middle of the night. It is in a crisis situation.

On the patient side, I'd like to touch on a constituent of mine that was in contact with the health care system. This person had been feeling rundown and getting more and more rundown, so she relied on our health care system, our single-tier health care system.

She went to the doctors and they had found that she was anemic. She wasn't producing enough red blood cells. And so their solution was, of course, transfusions. They couldn't find any cure, but their solutions were transfusions. This person had got to the point of having a transfusion every month. You can imagine what that does to the system.

Well these people had been very hard-working and they decided to go down to the States to see if there could be something done, because the prognosis here in Saskatchewan was not good. They went to Phoenix and they went through the Mayo Clinic. And to make a long story short, after about a week of testing, they came up with a drug that they felt would help.

That person has not been for a blood transfusion for four and a half years. That person was my mother. If it wasn't for their hard work and accessibility to a second health care system, I'm not sure that she would have been here today.

We need to conduct an audit that calls of a big, fat zero are false. We need to conduct an audit to make sure the money is going to where it needs to go. To front-line workers, to patient care; not to administration.

The third topic I'd like to talk about is agriculture. And let it be known agriculture is in a crisis situation. I think we have all come to an agreement that the federal government has a large responsibility in this area. We need money to help the agriculture in the short term. But let's not forget that it's just . . . let's not just think that it's the federal government. The provincial government can do a lot when it comes to agriculture.

I get a kick out of listening to this government say, agriculture is in a crisis now. Agriculture didn't start to become a crisis on September 17 when the government lost seats like Carrot River Valley, Spiritwood-Shellbrook, Last Mountain-Touchwood, Saskatchewan Rivers, Lloydminster, Redberry Lake, Indian Head-Milestone, Weyburn-Big Muddy, Swift Current, Estevan, Rosetown-Biggar. That's when their agriculture started.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1500)

Mr. McMorris: — That's when their agriculture crisis started, Mr. Speaker, but on my farm it started long before that.

There are many things that this government can do to help relieve some of the pressure that we're facing on the dirt these days. Programs like reducing the property tax, which has been discussed but there are has been absolutely no movement over there. Dealer purity, a new day of politics, that's what we've

been hearing. We introduce a Bill that is good for the province, good for rural Saskatchewan, good for agriculture, and it was flatly denounced.

Input costs are another area that this government talked about in the Throne Speech. They're going to monitor it. Monitor it is not good enough. This Throne Speech is not bankable. There is nothing out of that Throne Speech that farmers feel they can take to the bank and continue on with.

I think probably one of the biggest issues that I would like to see changed — and this government has failed to address it; it was addressed by another member in her speech yesterday — is the area of marketing. This government stands behind the Wheat Board. I'm not against the Wheat Board but, boy, I'd sure like to market my grain where I see fit, whether it is a pasta plant in Weyburn or whether it is across the line. I grow it; I should be able to market it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — I had an opportunity at dinnertime today hearing from a farmer, a very disgruntled farmer, and I don't blame him. He said, what has happened in the last week and a half of discussing agriculture? What has this government done to help? They haven't done one thing. They've talked about it and haven't done a thing. Show some leadership.

Final area of concern that really pushed me into entering the political game, political field, is taxation. It makes me wonder when I hear the government talk of tax reductions, which I heard one of the speakers opposite talk about earlier this week, when they talk about they already have reduced taxes. It makes me wonder, when we're still the second highest taxed province in the nation. And they've reduced taxes? Well you've got a lot of work to do.

During the past election we've talked seriously about tax reductions on two fronts — on the PST (provincial sales tax) and on income tax, and it resonated well throughout the province obviously. The NDP, that is with a silent L, laughed at us. They said it couldn't be done.

Well I think we have been proven correctly. The Vicq report that came out last week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, calls for even larger tax cuts than what we said in our platform. The Throne Speech mentions tax reductions, but that's about it.

I challenge the Minister of Finance to adopt our taxation plan. I challenge the Minister of Finance to be competitive for taxpayers. I challenge the Minister of Finance to be competitive to attract businesses. And I challenge the Minister of Finance to make all people — to be inclusive — make all people pay tax. We need a change in government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — In closing, I'd like to share a vision of where I'd like to see this province go in the new millennium. I want to see a province that is not scared to strive to meet its potential. I want to see a province that is willing to say yes we can, not no we can't. I want to see a province that is a have province, not a have-not.

I want to see a province that can be compared to that world-class athlete with good management, good attitude, and the resources that we have available to us. And probably more importantly, Mr. Speaker, I want to see a province that our boys, Cindy and my boys, want to stay in, not one they want to vacate like so many other youth have done before them.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great privilege to agree with the amendment put forth by the Leader of the Official Opposition, the member from Rosetown-Biggar. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel that it's a great honour to be able to address the Assembly here today in response to the Speech from the Throne, and I welcome all the members on both sides of the House and offer them my congratulations. We should be going down the same road over the next few years and whether it be bumpy or smooth, it'll be a learning process, a building process, and a shared process of attempting to create a stronger and more vital Saskatchewan.

I would like to thank my team of colleagues and our caucus staff for all their encouragement and support. Each day my appreciation for this group of people only grows greater and I couldn't be more proud of being a part of the so-called Saskatchewan Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — They are a dedicated team who are both compassionate and passionate about the responsibilities that are bestowed upon them. I know that there are days ahead where we will work together, laugh together, and probably get a little frustrated with one another, but I'm looking forward to each and every day.

Mr. Speaker, it's with great pride that I stand here representing the constituency of Watrous. The Watrous constituency is in central Saskatchewan and it stretches from the eastern edge of Saskatoon through to the Quill Lake. The Yellowhead highway runs through the length of the Watrous constituency and it contains small stretches of Highway 6 and 2, but any other major roadways within the constituency can be more accurately described as obstacle courses that have been assigned a number.

Mr. Speaker, Watrous is a constituency of people with integrity, honesty, and ingenuity. It's a constituency of hard-working Saskatchewan families. Within its boundaries are contained four potash mines, the largest feedlot in Saskatchewan, numerous small businesses and manufacturers, Saskatchewan's only ethanol plant, and many, many farmers. There are grain farmers who grow an incredible variety of crops, including herbs and spices. There are hog operations, poultry producers, beef producers, and now due to the necessity of diversification there's a growing number of buffalo, elk, and other exotic animal producers as well.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the Watrous constituency are truly extraordinary people. They strongly believe in family and in community. Their basic values and morals make it a wonderful place to live and to raise a family. It's a constituency of rural people committed to a way of life and to each other to ensure a

quality of life that has to be envied. They are the personification of community. They know their neighbours, they help their neighbours, and they care and share with their neighbours.

I feel very privileged to be able to live in the Watrous constituency. I was raised by a farmer in the Watrous constituency. My parents farmed a section of land, and lived a humble and very proud life. They were hard-working but content people. They were content in their faith, with their family, and with their love of the land. I didn't have the luxuries that most children took for granted such as running water, and in the early years electricity, but I was raised in a secure, loving environment that encouraged me and gave me the confidence to know that I could reach for any dream and achieve it if I worked hard to get it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Education was the extreme importance to my parents and I can't thank them enough for the discipline and the example that they gave me which shaped the foundation of character that I needed to succeed in my life. When I left home I moved to Saskatoon and took the education necessary to become a laboratory technologist and was later employed at the Royal University Hospital in the microbiology department. And I worked there for a number of years. It was while I lived in Saskatoon that I met and married my husband Larry. And shortly after, I returned to the Watrous constituency where we live on our farm.

I'm the sixth generation in my family to be farming in Canada. My father's family farmed in Ontario for three generations, and then my grandfather followed the calling to go west and he homesteaded in Saskatchewan. I'm very proud of that heritage.

Every change and every challenge I have met in my life has been an enormous learning experience. For example, when I moved to Saskatoon I learned that running water was a wonderful thing and that there's no place to put wood in an electric stove. But more importantly, I learned that there's no greater pleasure than being able to do something to help a sick child get better.

When I moved back to the farm with my husband, I learned that a farmer's shop is two to three hours away from being declared a national disaster. I learned that if you put a water pump on a John Deere tractor a half a turn out, it fits fine but you have bolts left over and a very excited husband on your hands.

I learned the combine has air conditioning, the grain truck doesn't, so I know where I'd rather be. And I learned that there's nothing more important than watching the sunset on the golden crop of wheat, and there's no better place to raise my children.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — This choice in my life has also been, and will continue to be, a learning process. I was never politically active. I had never purchased a membership to any political party before, and I was quite content to raise my three daughters, work on the farm, and complain with my neighbours about how bad things were. It wasn't until I became extremely alarmed

over the neglect and negligence of the NDP government that I decided to become politically active.

Mr. Speaker, the health care system of this province did not deteriorate overnight. The farm crisis did not occur overnight. The high taxes did not drive away our Saskatchewan families and businesses overnight. Where was our government over the past eight years? If I could see the oncoming of a Saskatchewan crisis, why couldn't our government?

Mr. Speaker, the campaign was completely foreign . . . it was a foreign experience to me. I was an unknown with little experience, and I was competing against a cabinet minister.

I learned very quickly that the Watrous constituency has an incredible number of dogs, and every morning I prayed that they'd be friendly. More importantly though, I learned that my husband and my three daughters were the strongest, the most supportive, and the most valuable people I know and I'm truly blessed to have them in my life. I quickly learned that the constituents of Watrous were just as discontented, concerned, and outraged with the lack of vision by our government for Saskatchewan's future as I was.

On Monday in listening to the Speech from the Throne I heard that it's a brand new day, but I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what happened to yesterday? Well let's see. According to the Speech from the Throne, yesterday left. Too many families in Saskatchewan having a hard time making ends meet. Too many of our young people who are still concerned about their futures. Too many of our rural families as victims of a vicious trade war. Too many of our seniors and our families still worried that our health care system will not be there when they need it. And too many of our citizens alienated from our province's public life and too many of our Aboriginal citizens excluded from our social, economic, and civic life.

But now we're being told we have a brand new day. Could our government possibly be trying to whitewash the yesterday of the past eight years in the hopes that the people of Saskatchewan will forgive and forget the fact that there have just been too many mistakes made by our NDP government?

During the campaign I sat on the step and cried with a young woman who farmed with her husband. They were leaving their farm and they already spent every dime of her inheritance to try to save it. I would appreciate it very much, Mr. Speaker, if a member from our government would go and visit this devastated young woman and tell her not to worry because now it's a brand new day.

I also met an 85-year-old gentleman on the campaign trail. He met me at the door and, upon finding out who I was, he vented his anger with the NDP government because he had just lost his wife. Now that was sad in itself but the horror was that this 85-year-old gentleman had driven through the night with his dying wife to Lanigan only to be turned away because due to the cutbacks by our government, there were no beds. He drove on to Nokomis only to be turned away again.

This panicked 85-year-old gentleman drove all the way to Regina with his wife, and she was finally admitted into the hospital here where she passed away shortly after their arrival

because it was too late. Mr. Speaker, he was just one vote.

I didn't knock at any more doors that day. I held this gentleman as he cried. I sat as he showed me his wedding pictures and I stayed and listened as he told me all about his wonderful wife. And he was just one vote. I would do it again even if the time spent cost me the election because that evening that gentleman needed the assurance that he had done all that he could do for his wife. It was the NDP government that let them down.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1515)

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I would really appreciate it if someone from our NDP government could visit this gentleman and tell him not to be so angry, so frustrated, and so sad, because after all, now it's a brand new day.

Mr. Speaker, after the election, the Premier of this province stated that he had heard the voice of the Saskatchewan people. But I question that he did indeed hear it. If he did, it appears that he certainly didn't understand it. The Saskatchewan people are not so easily fooled by refreshing, regenerating optimism of the words, a brand new day.

If anything, it's an insult to them because it makes light of the past eight years that stripped them of the hope and the motivation and the incentive necessary for them to keep working in this province to try to achieve their goals.

Mr. Speaker, instead of our NDP government coming up with another lame catchphrase, they should examine their old overworked words, the ones that they very adeptly taught the Liberal leader to parrot to perfection — responsible, sensible, and sustainable.

They have not acknowledged any responsibility for the part that they have played in the Saskatchewan economic crisis that we are now experiencing, or in the total inadequacies of our health care system. They have shown little or no common sense in any of the decision or policy making. And the only thing that they seem to be able to make sustainable over the last eight years, is increased taxation and utility rates.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP government has betrayed their tax paying citizens time and time again, and they have sold out their farms just as inexcusably as our federal government.

They tore up the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) contracts, and unlike any other province in this country, they did nothing to replace it. And now they seem quite surprised that our agriculture industry is experiencing a devastating crisis.

Everyone in rural Saskatchewan could see and understand what was happening, but our government didn't seem to know. And if they are now going to say that they did know, then why weren't they doing anything about it until they see the results of the election.

Where is the long-term safety net programs that they promised our farmers a lot of years ago. Perhaps our farmers should go to their banks and their creditors and tell them not to worry about their payments because our government's assured us, it's a brand new day.

Mr. Speaker, the policies and the philosophy of the NDP government are stripping the productive people in this province of their rights and abilities to set goals and to achieve them. It has deprived the people of their confidence to have faith in the future and to reach for a dream.

When is this government going to actually hear the Saskatchewan people and realize that they have what it takes to succeed. They do not need to be controlled.

Why do businesses and individuals tend not to invest in Saskatchewan? Why is Alberta a have province and Saskatchewan a have-not province? Could it possibly be because of an NDP government?

Mr. Speaker, the philosophy of assisting the unfortunate by taking from the productive to create equality sounds so very idealistic. But this philosophy will only work with common sense and with balance.

A small child can figure out that first you must create the environment that will encourage the productive sector to flourish and grow before you can spend a great deal on social programs for the non-productive.

We've all heard the old saying that if you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day, and if you teach him how to fish, you feed him for a lifetime. But the line that should be added to the beginning of that statement is, first, you must do whatever it takes to encourage your fisherman to stay around and help you.

Mr. Speaker, our NDP government hasn't seemed to have learned this. They have clung to the idealistic philosophy that all people should be economically equal. And it's quite acceptable to them if that's equality in poverty. Unless of course they're dealing with their own hacks and flacks.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne states that our NDP government has acquired new eyes and a new vision. After eight years of their old eyes and their old vision, I question if this can possibly be true.

I thank the people of the Watrous constituency for their support and their trust in me during the past election. I pledge to do everything in my power to be worthy of this. I wish them, the members of this Assembly, and all of the Saskatchewan people, the merriest of Christmases and all the best in the year 2000.

I cannot go back to my constituency with the message, "it's a brand new day," when in fact they need to hear, we have brand new ideas.

So therefore I support the amendment put forward by the member from the Rosetown-Biggar constituency. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Peters: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me begin by congratulating all the members of the legislature who were successful in the September election. Like myself, many of the members in this legislature are brand new and I want to add an extra congratulations to them. This is not an easy place to get to. There are few who enjoy such a privilege.

For every one of us who were honoured to be elected by our constituents, there were two or three others that were not successful. But I think everyone who let his name stand in this election should be thanked for taking the challenge in running for election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Peters: — I also want to take this opportunity to thank those, all those people who were supportive of me during my election. Without them, I could not be standing here today. And that's my family, my wife Shirley, our son and daughter-in-law and three granddaughters who think it's great that grandfather is here.

And most importantly, I would like to thank the good people of my constituency for putting their faith in me and the Saskatchewan Party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Peters: — I am honoured to be standing here with a party that received the most votes in the election. We had the most votes because we had the best plan. In fact, we were the only party with a plan of any kind and I still think we are.

During the election campaign, while the NDP were running around name-calling and getting down in the mud, the Saskatchewan Party put forward a solid alternative to the people of this province. And though we came up a few seats short in the final standing, I believe the people of Saskatchewan spoke out loud and strong on September 16, 1999.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Peters: — They said they were tired of the way the NDP were doing things and they voted for change. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the decision by the current Minister of Education to ice his own party and join the NDP basically overturned the results of the election and restored the NDP majority, at least for now.

In any event, my vow to the people of Battleford-Cut Knife and to the people of Saskatchewan is to raise the issues that are of concern to them and hold this government accountable at every turn, just as the Saskatchewan Party has been doing since August 8, 1997 when that party was formed and history was made.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency I represent is Battleford-Cut Knife. It is a constituency with neither completely rural or completely urban. I am lucky enough to represent small towns and farms throughout the constituency, however, I have the urban setting of Battleford. A constituency like this allows me

to hear from people with different perspectives, and look forward to this opportunity for years to come.

Like all members of large, rural component in their constituency, the farm crisis is, of course, number one priority in my area right now. That is why I felt it was so important the other day, when we had all the farm leaders in this place, to discuss the issue. My only regret is that it did not occur two months ago when the Saskatchewan Party first suggested it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Peters: — Had such a gathering taken place prior to the trip to Ottawa, I believe it would have carried a lot more weight with the federal Liberals. But of course, politics being what they are, and the government dismissed our suggestion out of hand until just the other day. I'm glad they finally saw merit in this type of meeting. It's a shame it had to be delayed so long, so they wouldn't have to look like they actually were taking suggestions from the opposition seriously.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Premier will soon get very used to taking our suggestions very seriously indeed, if he is serious about his new co-operative approach to government. If he had taken this approach prior to September 16, the ranks on that side of the legislature might not be so thin, Mr. Speaker. Had the Premier and the government been willing to listen prior to the election, the farm crisis might not have been quite so surprising to them.

In fact, the problem we are now seeing was first raised in this legislature in May of 1998 — a year and a half ago. While it had not become clear at that point how deep the looming crisis was going to be, there were troubling signs on the horizon. But what did the government's . . . or what was the government's response at this time? Did they pick up the phone and begin to lobby the federal government? No. Did they put contingencies in place to manage, help the situation? No. Instead, they turned their back on the situation and accused the Saskatchewan Party of being alarmists.

Three months later, when all the premiers met in Saskatoon, our Premier did not even see fit to put agriculture on the agenda. Less than one year ago, the recently retired minister of Agriculture, the former member from Watrous, declared that the agricultural crisis was over, which goes far into explaining why he is the former member from Watrous.

The provincial government's lack of understanding about agricultural situation is one of the main reasons I decided to run in this election. Another reason I ran was the government's treatment of local governments in Saskatchewan.

As a long-time RM (rural municipality) councillor and as a SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) board of director for many years, I saw the contempt with which the NDP treated local government and local leaders. All the while provincial government was crying about off-loads from Ottawa, they were doing exactly the same thing to local governments. They were doing the same thing to local school divisions. As a direct result, the people have seen their property taxes rise dramatically, no more than the farmers who this government now says they're wanting to help.

Mr. Speaker, the Battleford-Cut Knife constituency is also home to much history of our province. The Battlefords played a key role in the early development of the place we now know as Saskatchewan. In fact, prior to 1883 the Territorial legislature stood in what is now my constituency. In fact, that building is still there.

Mr. Speaker, there are many in my area who say . . . are very concerned that the old Government House may not be long for this world. It has become somewhat rundown and there are those who would like to see it destroyed and a replica built.

Mr. Speaker, if we were to lose Government House to the bulldozer, it would be a tragedy. There is so much history in this building, I can't believe that we can do nothing to save it.

As Canadians and as residents of this great province, our history is a blink of an eye compared to the European or Asian countries but it doesn't give us the licence to take our past for granted. We must do all we can to preserve it.

Mr. Speaker, there are other issues in my constituency of prime importance. Like those in most areas of the province, the highways in Battleford-Cut Knife are simply not good enough for the people who have to drive on them. It's beginning to hurt us economically.

Let me give you an example. Highways 14 and 20 near Unity are in desperate need of attention. This just happens to be the centre of several large grain terminals and a salt plant. The traffic count on this highway is incredible. Unfortunately, they are little more than goat paths with no shoulders and a crumbling surface.

The old traffic count done by the Department of Highways prior to construction of these terminals said the average daily traffic count on these highways was between 900 and 1,000 vehicles. The town of Unity did its own count not that long ago and their figures are startling. In just one day, 3,615 vehicles used the highways. This included 327 semis, 313 straight trucks, 25 motorhomes, 2,950 cars and half-tons.

(1530)

Mr. Speaker, this road simply cannot sustain the amount of traffic that uses it, and I will be pressuring the government and the new Minister of Highways to do something about it. And I should warn him that three of the last four people who held the Highways portfolio were retired by their voters on September 16.

Mr. Speaker, when I talk about my constituency, I should mention it seems it has gotten much larger since the end of September. My phone suddenly started ringing off the hook from people just across the river in North Battleford. It seems many in this city and constituency were a little shocked and dismayed that their own MLA decided to join the NDP government when they had elected him to oppose that very same government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Peters: — Just the other day a group of people told me that

this government is planning to build a new liquor board store in North Battleford even though the current store is perfectly fine. These people did not like the idea that the government has money for new liquor board stores but not for farmers, not for hospitals, and not for highways.

Normally he would have taken this kind of complaint to his own MLA, the member from North Battleford, but he decided it would have absolutely no effect since that same member now sits with a party that prefers liquor board stores to highways or hospitals.

You know, Mr. Speaker, prior to the election whenever I caught a glimpse of the legislature on television, I often heard the Premier talking about backroom deals, dead-of-night deals, and how he would never be part of such an arrangement. Well, Mr. Speaker, he not only is part of the backroom deals, dead-of-the-night deal, he's cornered the market.

In this Throne Speech, when the government talks about a new start, a new approach to government, I personally don't believe it's going to happen, Mr. Speaker, not with the deal making we've seen in the legislature since September. Mr. Speaker, this government's deathbed confession is not going to hold water with the people of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, I'll be speaking up for those people in this province who spoke out for real change on September 16, not this witches' brew of coalition we see before us.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to many good debates in this legislature and I am proud to be a member of the Assembly. I am proud to be the new MLA for Battleford-Cut Knife and I will be voting in favour of the amended motion made by the MLA from Rosetown-Biggan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed a great honour and a responsibility to stand here again replying to the Speech from the Throne on behalf of the people from Kelvington-Wadena.

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since the first time I spoke to the Speech from the Throne after the 1995 election. In fact, Mr. Speaker, so much water has gone under the bridge it has caused major flood damages on the other side of the House. There's been some whole constituencies washed away and they all came over here.

And I think that the government over there realizes that there is a big problem over there. They look like they've been victims of a flood damage and they're looking around saying, I wonder what happened. I sure didn't know this was going to happen. And they're also wondering how they can prevent another flood. And they also want to know how they can rebuild after this one.

Well I have some bad news for them, Mr. Speaker. They can't prevent the next flood and they can't do any rebuilding. They tried to buy and sell some cheap help right after the coalition, but I can guarantee you that that won't even help. And I know they can't bring themselves to ask is why it's not working. So, Mr. Speaker, I'll just have to tell you.

It's not working because neither the government or their new-found allies have the tools to do the job. The tools are a plan and a vision for the future. A plan and a vision which has to be accepted by the majority of the people, not 40 per cent of the people. It has to be firm and realistic and it has to be flexible so that if conditions change the vision can be adjusted to accept the new-found realities.

In the past eight years we've watched this government stick to one idea after another even if they were misguided or downright reprehensible. We watched this government pull our beautiful and bountiful province into another dark depression during a time of economic boom for other provinces.

The provinces around us grew with breakneck speed. At the same time Statistics Canada has given us an award for having the citizens who get the most impaired driving per thousand of any place in Canada. I think you're driving us all to drink.

At the same time we hold the dubious distinction of having the highest crime rate in Canada, the second highest taxes in Canada. Regina leads the nation with the number of violent crimes and the number of murders per capita. Saskatchewan has the highest number of sexual offences per capita in Canada. And we are the only province that started giving less money to charities last year than any province in Canada, and that's not the Saskatchewan people. It's because they've been forced into having to use their money to keep themselves alive; they can't do the donations they used to do.

Saskatchewan government won't release figures on youth incarceration crimes but in the last figures that were received, we had the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of youth crime and highest rate of incarceration of young people in all of Canada.

The plan this government brought forward in 1991 didn't work. I predicted the stubbornness and arrogance of this government that's determined to stick to an unworkable plan will be its downfall. The Speech from the Throne gave cautious optimism to some of our citizens who needed some kind of thread of hope for the future. But those of us who have heard this government talk about working with and listening to people know that it's nothing more than lip service.

Mr. Speaker, there is some optimism in this room but it's on this side of the House. It's sitting with the members over here — 25 of us, soon to be 27 of us — who really do have a vision for the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the constituents of Kelvington-Wadena for placing a trust in my ability to represent them in this constituency . . . in this legislature again. But less than six months ago, many of the . . . my esteemed colleagues from across the floor spent a tremendous amount of time and energy attempting to convince me that my constituents were dissatisfied with my efforts on their behalf. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I believe the last hon. member from Watrous, as well as the last hon. member from Carrot River, were the most adamant that I would not be the representative for Kelvington-Wadena after the next election. I

believe their reasoning was that I was out of touch, and that I didn't represent their wishes, and that being part of the Saskatchewan Party was supposedly an insult to my constituents.

Well I'm here to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that they were very wrong in all aspects. The people of Kelvington-Wadena, just like the people of Watrous and Carrot River Valley and 23 other constituencies wanted a representative that knew what was happening, knew that big changes had to be made, and most importantly knew that the time for smoke and mirrors was over.

Mr. Speaker, I've listened to various members in this House describing their constituencies, and I might be just a little bit biased but I still believe my constituency is the best province . . . place in the province to live. Many of the members have heard me brag about the entrepreneurial spirits in my constituency, and they've asked me what made my area the leader of the pack when it comes to the number of industrial jobs per capita. Everyone has heard me talk about companies like Schulte and Bourgault and Doepkers and Westland that employ hundreds of people that are bucking the urbanization trend of this government.

We have heard some of the very . . . we have some of the very best farmland in this province, some of the most beautiful lakes, and some of the finest timber and saw mills in the province.

We have buffalo, and llama, and elk, and ostrich farms. We have game farms and hog farms and beef farms, and even a few dairy farms. We have outfitters and a world-renown bird habitat, the Quill plains wetland at Wadena.

The northeast terminal at Wadena was one of the very first farmer-owned inland terminals. We have the first high-put through terminals, jointly owned by the Alberta and Manitoba Wheat Pools and local farmers. And we also have a new agronomy centre for the co-ops between Spalding and Naicam.

Mr. Speaker, the list of attractions goes on and on. And I trust the members opposite realize that all of this is happening in spite of this government. In spite of high utility rates, in spite of the worst roads in the whole province, in spite of the fact this government has introduced enough regulations to choke a horse.

We have one other obstacle to overcome out in Kelvington-Wadena, and actually to overcome in most of the constituencies on this side of the House. It was a little memo sent out on August 8, 1994 by the Minister of Economic Development to their caucus with the most telling statement this government has ever made. It read, and I quote, "There was, and still is, no intention to provide a grand strategy for rural Saskatchewan."

That's the kind of information that the Minister of Economic Development sent out talking about rural Saskatchewan. Can you imagine what would have happened in 1992 if the government had included rural Saskatchewan in their plan for the future? We may even be a have province instead of a have-not province.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that the people of

Kelvington-Wadena want me to address in the next year or so. I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, but regardless of what the Throne Speech said I don't believe the next election will be in four years, I believe it's going to be a lot sooner than that. But in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, there are some huge issues that will have to be addressed if the love-in this government described in the Throne Speech is going to work.

First of all, agriculture. Farmers need help today, not in the spring budget, not when the federal government gets around to it, but right now, Mr. Speaker. Do you realize that in a recent study undertaken by the University of Saskatchewan there is . . . on farm families which have teenagers of the age ready to go into farming, there is only 5.6 per cent of the male and only .5 per cent of the females intending to go into farming. And do you know why? Because their parents are discouraging them from following in their parents' footsteps. Some of them have even told me that they consider it child abuse to allow their children to go into farming.

Mr. Speaker, taxation issue. There must be an immediate reduction of personal income tax to allow our citizens a chance to improve their own bottom line not the government's bottom line.

Education, there has to be an immediate change to the education funding to place more of the responsibility on the back of the government instead of just landowners. There has to be an immediate attention given to the special needs children, the ones that are falling through the cracks in our education system. We can't just say it's just a small problem.

More money has to be spent on roads instead of on government aircraft.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — A review of our health care system by an outside auditor, not a hand-picked flunky.

Mr. Speaker, when I moved into Regina a couple of weeks ago, I looked up to see who my MLA would be in that area and I understand it's now the member from Regina Northeast. So I listened with interest to his Throne Speech and he talked about the health care issues, and he said that he thought from his survey that there really wasn't a health care problems; that there all a figment of the imagination of the opposition members. That was his words. There is no real health care problems.

Well, maybe, maybe the member, after he had been here for more than two weeks, will get his staff to get a list, but if he would like a list from the members on this side we will be glad to give them to you.

In the meantime, I would like to tell you of a couple of my constituents have been waiting for hip replacements for two years. And another one who has been told they have to wait for two years for a psychological testing for a child with a learning disability; a constituent who has MS (multiple sclerosis) but does not meet the criteria for Betaseron; a young constituent with a family who lost her husband to cancer and received an ambulance bill for over a thousand dollars, even though she had been assured by doctors and nurses that the bills would be

covered by this government.

We have a constituent who received an ambulance bill for a thousand dollars when she had to be transferred from the local hospital to the city hospital for the birth of her child. She had Blue Cross. She thought she had no problem, but nobody told her that part of the fine print was that you have to have Blue Cross for eight months before the child is born. She was 15 days short of eight months and it cost her a thousand dollars. These are just a few of the health concerns I'm hearing from my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, since it's nearly Christmas, I want to remind you that there are other needs in this province and maybe we could put them on the Christmas list for the people of this province.

There are concerns around the issue of fetal alcohol syndrome. There has to be more money spent for education for this so that we go . . . so that people will learn about it before they get into the doctor's office — they learn about it in the school system before.

We need an independent review of the no-fault insurance system to create a system that is a combination of no-fault and tort so that we have fairness to everyone.

(1545)

We need to provide funding for midwives so women have a choice of having the delivery of their babies and something that will be covered. We need financial recognition of the problems around autism. We need help for rural women who are bearing the brunt of caring for elderly because of cutbacks to health care and lack of resources in rural Saskatchewan.

In the meantime, with all the work that has to be done, I think it's important that we just let the government take the dollars and hopefully they'll start spending them correctly.

I do want to congratulate all the members in the House for their election victory. I want to wish them and their families a very Merry Christmas. I want to wish my constituents a Merry Christmas and everyone in the province that's watching.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne has been presented and I believe it's nothing more than the political rhetoric we've been hearing for the last eight years. This government doesn't know how to fix the flood damage it caused in this province, so I will not be supporting the Speech to the Throne. But I will be supporting the amendment brought forward by our leader. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a particular pleasure and honour for me to enter into this debate and the first Speech from the Throne on the first sitting of the twenty-fourth legislature.

And I would like to begin, Mr. Speaker, by offering some words of congratulations and some words of thanks. First of all, I would like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion that is before us. The mover, the seconder, the hon.

member for Moose Jaw Wakamow, my colleague from Moose Jaw, who . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, who led the debate, I think, in fine form and with a sense of political passion and competency that I predict the House will come to see as a regular event. Most importantly, and not only has the hon. member from Moose Jaw Wakamow established herself in this House very quickly, but back home she's a political force to be reckoned with already.

And I have enjoyed 13 years serving in the city of Moose Jaw with the former member, Lorne Calvert, as the hon. member with whom I served. I enjoyed that immensely and I look forward to serving the people of Moose Jaw for some time forward, along together with the hon. member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to add my words of congratulations to the hon. member for Saskatoon Sutherland who represented his constituents proud as he also joined in the fine honour that is extended to a new member typically, in being the mover and the seconder of the Speech from the Throne. And I look forward to hearing much more from him and enjoying not only his political passion as well, but also his sense of humour in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also extend my words of congratulations to all hon. members who have taken their seats in the House, to colleagues and friends on both sides of the House who have returned, and especially to offer words of congratulations to those who are here for the first time.

All hon. members, regardless of the side of the House on which they sit, I think can anticipate that they are undertaking what'll be an exciting time in their lives, and we've heard that referred to many times here.

It is truly an honourable calling and a special privilege that democracy has extended to them, and I wish them success in their political careers although I would wish that it would be enjoyed in proportions approximately equal to what we have in the House today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to extend words of congratulations to you. Last week, on Monday morning, you participated in an age-old tradition as you participated in the tradition of dragging the Speaker or feigning dragging the Speaker to the chair. And I think it's important for all of us to note that that is something that's a tradition that has not come lightly. It has been repeated in every House in this nation since the beginning of Confederation. And it is done for good reason — to respect the responsibilities that you have undertaken.

I think many of us will know that it is a tradition that began over 600 years ago, back in the 1300s, in the Houses in Westminster. When at that time, to serve as Speaker of the House was quite literally a life-threatening occupation. As in those days, Mr. Speaker, the Speaker was chosen by the reigning monarch of the day to oversee the debate, as you still do today, but then to be the one to report to the advice of the appointed members, in those days, to the monarch.

And on occasion when reporting advice that the monarch was not too pleased to receive, the poor old Speaker, well, it was “to kill the messenger” to put it bluntly, Mr. Speaker. And all too frequently, a Speaker had his head chopped off for delivering advice that the monarch didn’t want to hear.

And it is out of respect for that proud tradition and that important role of the Speaker that you engaged in that age-old tradition. And I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that as you have taken your place in the Speaker’s Chair in this House, I think it is representative of the fact that all of us in this House do recognize you as a man of integrity, and your time in this House that has been your reputation. And I want to say to you personally, that I will be proud to have you as the representative of the full Legislative Assembly in this twenty-fourth legislature of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I’d also like to add my words of appreciation to His Honour, the Hon. Jack Wiebe, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, not only for his presentation of his speech, but more particularly than that, to His Honour and to Mrs. Wiebe for the superb five and a half years of representation of Her Majesty that they have given to the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. and Mrs. Wiebe have made it a priority, during their term as Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, to place the knowledge of our young people in particularly, but of all the citizens of Saskatchewan, to come to understand the importance of parliamentary democracy; and within that, the place of the monarch in this system of parliamentary democracy that has served us so well.

They have served us with distinction, with much personal charm, and with a great sense of humour. And I want to express my personal appreciation to His Honour and Mrs. Wiebe for their service to the province of Saskatchewan; and to wish them well in their retirement from this very important post.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I also want to extend my words of thanks to the good people of Moose Jaw North who have given me the special honour of serving for a fourth term. That has not been the tradition of that constituency, and I recognize it is a very, very special privilege that I enjoy. And I would also say, Mr. Speaker, I am one who would say this, I am proud to call myself a politician. And I am particularly proud to be a politician who represents the people of Moose Jaw North for the fourth consecutive term.

Mr. Speaker, Moose Jaw is a happening place. As I get around the province of Saskatchewan and I hear people’s comments about what’s going on in this province, they tell me that there are lots of good things happening in lots of places. And it is with special attention to the city of Moose Jaw, that I find myself frequently feeling proud.

Many will know that there is a growing tourism industry in Moose Jaw that has been spurred on by the development of the Temple Gardens Mineral Spa. And associated with that, the murals that depict not only Moose Jaw but, more importantly, Saskatchewan

history — the tunnels filled with a great deal of history and mythology entertainingly mixed together, Mr. Speaker.

And also we have in our downtown of Moose Jaw, the oldest — in fact the only intact — original Main Street in any city in Western Canada, and this is a community which has come to appreciate the significant of heritage buildings.

In fact you know, Mr. Speaker, when I first came to the city of Moose Jaw back in 1973, I heard many people at that time say, you know, one of the problems of this community is that all it’s got is, they said in those days, old buildings and old people. Well, Mr. Speaker, you know what they’ve discovered is that they discovered that those old buildings are in fact heritage buildings and those elderly people are in fact people with reliable, disposable income. And, Mr. Speaker, as a result of that, I’m proud to say, that my city has come to appreciate the heritage that it has and is celebrating that.

And I would like to add to that and to extend my appreciation to the minister responsible for Liquor and Gaming Authority. Members may have recognized recently on provincial and even national news, I’m pleased to say, that the anchor of Main Street, the downtown CP (Canadian Pacific) station has just been converted to the finest-looking liquor store in all of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

I’ve had constituents, in fact I have had two or three constituents tell me that they’ve been into the new liquor store two or three times and they don’t even approve of drinking. Mr. Speaker, it is a wonderful heritage building and we’re pleased to have that as part of our anchor on Main Street. And thanks to the province for assisting with that project.

In the city of Moose Jaw as well, Mr. Speaker, together with the hon. member for Swift Current, we will shortly be celebrating, I’m sure, another piece, a good piece, of news about the future and enhancement of the health services to the people in our constituencies as we will begin operating a new portable CAT (computerized axial tomography) scan and it will serve the people of the Moose Jaw/Thunder Creek Health District as well as the Swift Current Health District and some others in a pilot project that I anticipate and predict will serve the province of Saskatchewan well.

I want to compliment the health districts of both Moose Jaw/Thunder Creek as well as Swift Current and the other three districts for their co-operative effort that made this enhancement in analysis necessary for a good analysis of medical needs possible in making that happen.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge that along with my responsibilities has come the responsibility of minister responsible for Wakamow Valley Authority and to say that is a feature of the city of Moose Jaw about which I’m particularly proud. The Wakamow Valley Authority oversees an area in the city — it’s one of Saskatchewan’s beautiful urban parks — that celebrates an historically significant point in the travelling across the prairies of our First Nations people. It’s a beautiful part of the city, a beautiful part of the province, and I want to commend all of the large number of volunteers who are helping to build this wonderful tourist attraction and beautiful community site, and also, at the same time, to thank the hon.

member for Moose Jaw Wakamow who has agreed to assist me in participating with that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Moose Jaw is a great community to live, to grow up, to attend school, to get a higher education, to work, and to retire. It is populated by people who are, quite frankly, the salt of the earth. Hard-working, honest, caring, I think is typically a description of the people of Moose Jaw.

I'm very proud to say that about 15 years ago or so across the nation there was a measurement taken about the level of volunteerism. And in fact in communities in the 25 to 50,000 population category, it was in fact proven that in all of Canada the highest number of volunteers were from the city of Moose Jaw. It's a city where people care about one another and I think many of us will describe it as a big small town.

Well, Mr. Speaker it is with a special feeling in the most positive sense of humility that I say thank you to the people of Moose Jaw for electing me for the fourth time, and in each of those elections with a majority in excess of 50 per cent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's been something in excess of four years since I've last had the opportunity to bring remarks from the floor of the House. And as it says in the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, it is a brand new day. And so in a political sense of the word perhaps it's appropriate for me to lift the cone of silence, Mr. Speaker, and to bring some remarks reflecting my pride in what's happening on this side of the House.

And let me begin, Mr. Speaker, by saying this: I am proud to be a New Democrat; I am proud to be a part of this coalition government that I believe will significantly lead the people of Saskatchewan into the new millennium, a new day, Mr. Speaker, a day of hope and with positive optimism for the future for the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Now, Mr. Speaker, sometimes these days people are inclined to talk about marching bravely into the new millennium. In fact a friend of mine the other day phrased it this way. He got their "mords wixed" up, so to speak, and said that they thought about marching bravely into the new linoleum.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that that was necessarily relevant to the debate before us, but I do know this — I know this — that statement is about as bright as those who said after the election, and we've heard it in the debate here, that the people of Saskatchewan voted for a minority government. They are equally bright, Mr. Speaker.

As I went through, as I went through the election, I know this: not everybody in my constituency voted for me. We all know that. Not everyone in our constituencies voted for us.

But I'll tell you this. Every Saskatchewan Party supporter in my constituency I ran into said I'm voting for a Saskatchewan Party majority government. Every Liberal supporter in my riding that I talked to said I'm voting for a Liberal majority government.

Mr. Speaker, every New Democrat that I talked to in my riding said I'm voting for a New Democrat majority government.

Mr. Speaker, not a single person in my riding — and I hazard a guess that not a single person in the riding of every member of this House — stood up and said when I go out to the polls, I'm voting for a minority government. I suspect, Mr. Speaker, not a single person made that statement because that is not what the people of Saskatchewan wanted, Mr. Speaker.

(1600)

And I point out, Mr. Speaker, I point out when I look at the members on this side of the House, my colleagues on this side of the House, that we have members on this side of the House whose supporters voted for them to be part of a majority government. In fact, when I look across the way, I see members of the Saskatchewan Party whose supporters, when they voted for them, voted for them to be part of a majority government.

Mr. Speaker, what I point out is this, is that the people of Saskatchewan when they went out to the polls on September 16, 40 per cent of them said they want those folks to be part of a majority government, 60 per cent said they wanted these folks to be part of a majority government. And, Mr. Speaker, this is a majority government that will lead Saskatchewan into the new millennium.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, 100 per cent, 100 per cent of the people of Saskatchewan said they wanted a majority government; 60 per cent of them said they wanted this majority government. It's a coalition government and I'm proud to be part of it.

And why did they say that, Mr. Speaker? Why did they say that? They said that because they wanted the same thing that Saskatchewan people have wanted in every election — the 24 elections that we've had in the history of Saskatchewan — they said they wanted a government that would bring stability and progress to the province of Saskatchewan not political gains. It would bring stability and progress, and, Mr. Speaker, that's what they will get from this government is stability and progress into the new century.

And how will they . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well now, the hon. member, the hon. member on the other sides shouts, Mr. Speaker, that he has his own view of what brings stability. And I find it kind of interesting, Mr. Speaker, when I've listened to the questions and the shouts that have gone back and forth since the sitting has begun, the questions have not concentrated on — oh, we've heard the occasional reference — but they've not concentrated on the issues that the people of Saskatchewan are looking for us to respond to. What they have focused on is the fact that there are hurt feelings about the coalition government, Mr. Speaker, and that there is a coalition government that will work to bring stability and progress. That's what the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . oh no, the hon. member, the hon. member, if he was wanting to be part of bringing stability and progress would be making constructive suggestions, Mr. Speaker, and not shouting from his seat.

But what we see, Mr. Speaker, in this Speech from the Throne, is we see a plan. We see a plan to bring stability and progress into this new century, a brand new day for the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say, I think it's fair to say, I think . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . oh, Mr. Speaker, now all of a sudden the hon. members are inspired and they want to get in and express their new ideas and we hope that they will.

When I talked to the newspaper in my own constituency, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, please. Once again this is a maiden speech in the House, so I'd appreciate it.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, when I talked to the media in my own constituency the day of the Speech from the Throne, they said: you know, you know the opposition is saying that you stole some of their ideas. That's what they said. That was the accusation. I said, Mr. Speaker, if the opposition likes the idea that the government has put forward, I expect when it comes to the vote that they will be voting with the government — that's part of stability and future progress for the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I'd encourage the hon. members to come forward with as many good, positive, progressive ideas for the future of Saskatchewan and to contribute to the building of a new future.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, you know . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . now the hon. member over there says that this is the scary part. You know, Mr. Speaker, you know I thought about this for a while and there is something that is truly scary. I have heard this phrase used on occasion as I have sat and listened, and they have said that the New Democrat government had a near-death experience they said.

Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, in a political sense perhaps there's some truth to that, and what did the government do? It responded by listening and by committing itself to consulting and moving forward together with the people of Saskatchewan.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, there is something that is truly frightening. There is something that is truly frightening and that is that the members opposite, when it comes to forming government, had a near-life experience. And, Mr. Speaker, that prospect is truly frightening to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, when I look at the Speech from the Throne — and I hate to do that during this debate because this hasn't been done all that long, all that often, Mr. Speaker — but when I look at the Speech from the Throne, what does it say to me? And you know, we've often heard the presentation of budgets referred to a pocketbook budget. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? When I look at this Speech from the Throne, what it says to me is this is a pocketbook Speech from the Throne — a pocketbook Speech

from the Throne. This is a Speech from the Throne that lays out an agenda, a very, very enthusiastic agenda, Mr. Speaker; an agenda that addresses the real needs of real Saskatchewan people.

And when I look at that, Mr. Speaker, on this brand new day, a new approach to politics. What do we end up saying here, Mr. Speaker? Well, here's what we end up saying, here are some of the priorities.

Helping families make ends meet, helping families make ends meet. Mr. Speaker, how do we talk about doing that? In the Speech from the Throne it refers to two critical things in order to help make ends meet.

One is a new updated economic development strategy entitled Partnership for Prosperity that my hon. colleague, the Minister for Economic Development and Co-operation, will be talking about more over the months ahead; and an approach to the Saskatchewan economy which will grow the economy to assist Saskatchewan people to enjoy the prosperity that's available . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The rewards and employment, as my hon. colleague says, Mr. Speaker. Helping families make ends meet.

But the other thing as well, Mr. Speaker, is that this Speech from the Throne pledges to the people of Saskatchewan to keep one of the New Democrat commitments in the election and there is, in fact, as the hon. members will recognize, there is a proposal before the people of Saskatchewan just now that the government will be reviewing. I'm sure my hon. friends on the opposite side, Mr. Speaker, will look at as well.

The personal income tax review commission has put forth an agenda, which is a way, which is a way for reducing the income tax paid by Saskatchewan people, restructuring the income that the government will receive in order to deliver the programs that families need and want, Mr. Speaker.

And so it is — it is — in this very first sitting of the twenty-fourth legislature that this government comes to this House, Mr. Speaker, and pledges to keep one of its most important election commitments to reduce the income tax for Saskatchewan working people and, Mr. Speaker, this government will deliver.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — And, Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne it says that this is a government that will be fighting for rural families. And if my hon. friends opposite would like to join in that fight and be a part of that, then that is most welcome. And in fact I think one of the most encouraging signs for the people of Saskatchewan who watch what goes on in these Chambers . . . for some time, one of the most encouraging signs was to see what happened here on Tuesday, a week ago, Mr. Speaker.

As we adjusted the rules of the broadcasting of proceedings and allowed, Mr. Speaker, for the first time to happen in this room, that people of Saskatchewan focused on a very, very important issue — I suggest the single most important issue facing Saskatchewan today — to come to the floor, and to engage in

dialogue with members on both sides of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I was very, very proud that members on both sides of the House received those people well, and then in fact I think, passed unanimously a resolution calling for the only real solution to the problem that is most confronting us here in Saskatchewan. And that is to assist with our trade inequities for grains here in the province of Saskatchewan and to seek the very necessary support of our Government in Canada to put our farmers on equal footing with the farmers of the United States and Europe. And, Mr. Speaker, we will act on that together.

And, Mr. Speaker, there is . . . I've heard hon. members say opposite that there's also an important role for the provincial government to take. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that's true, that's true. And in fact, when you look into the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, hon. members will recognize that the provincial government is committing itself in this Speech from the Throne to pursue reductions in crop insurance costs, enhanced coverage, to introduce an input monitoring program, to extend provincial leasebacks by three years, and ensure that existing programs continue to be available for Saskatchewan farmers.

And so, Mr. Speaker, those are things that will take more flesh in detail as they come forward in the weeks and the months to come, and the Speech from the Throne that'll take us into the spring session of the legislature.

And also, Mr. Speaker, from my point of view, it is also important that in the Speech from the Throne the government pledges a bright future for our young people. And in that context we really talk about, with greatest emphasis, on two things, both having to do with education.

One, of course, is the support for education in the K to 12 system, and the support for the schools and the funding that's necessary to ensure the continuation of a high quality of K to 12 education, preparing our young people for their adult futures.

As well as that, Mr. Speaker, hon. members will recognize in the Speech from the Throne there was a commitment to make post-secondary education more accessible for Saskatchewan families. And, Mr. Speaker, if I may be able to take just a few minutes to refer to, in some more detail, about the post-secondary plan and the post-secondary and skills training picture as it provides opportunity and support for Saskatchewan families.

If I can put my own place in that into a bit of a context, Mr. Speaker. Many of the members will recognize that I have a painting hanging in my office — it's been in my previous office, and this one, for some time — that belonged to my grandmother. And, Mr. Speaker, my grandmother grew up in Webb, Saskatchewan, and she was one of those people who throughout her lifetime said over and over again that she considered to serve in public office to be one of the most noble and honourable callings that any of us could possibly have.

And I remember as a young lad going to visit with my grandmother and looking at the painting that hung on her wall of the . . . It's an old painting of the Parliament Buildings of Canada. Only my grandmother would have that as the feature

work of art in her living room, Mr. Speaker.

But I remember her talking about this fellow, Woody, she would speak about taking care of when she was a younger gal. And she talked with enthusiasm about Woody and what he did and he was part of a large family; and she said in fact nine boys in the family, they formed their own ball team, and they'd get out on those Saskatchewan sports days and play ball and fight and win. But she always spoke with a special reverence for Woody.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I grew older I came to understand that the Woody that my grandmother referred to was none other than the longest-serving minister of Education in the history of Saskatchewan, and later in his career, premier of Saskatchewan, Woodrow Lloyd.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I've sat in my office these last few weeks, sometimes late at night, and glanced at that painting that I have hanging in the office, I've thought how humbling it is, and how proud I am to be able to serve my province in a capacity similar to that enjoyed and brought to this province by the very, very famous Woodrow Lloyd, who was a man revered by my grandmother.

Mr. Speaker, let me say in this House, and officially on the record, something that I've said twice before. When I, in 1986, straight across the floor, gave my first speech in this House, I pledged at that time to serve as the member from Moose Jaw in a way that would make my grandmother feel proud.

Mr. Speaker, in 1996, when I had the honour extended to me by the members of the House to occupy the seat that you now have, at that time I said to the members that I committed myself to serve the members of this House and my province in a way that would make my grandmother feel proud. And, Mr. Speaker, when I . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, as I stand here in this my first speech in the twenty-fourth legislature, I commit to the members of this House and to the people of Saskatchewan that in Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, let me express my commitment in the most profound way I possibly can, and that is to say that I will serve my province in a way that I hope will make my grandmother feel proud.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, as I've come to know some of the people in the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, I've come to know that it is a good department and it is staffed with good and professional people, professionally committed to serving the good people of Saskatchewan; and to recognize that the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training more than anything else, if you want to summarize it into a single phrase, is in the future business.

(1615)

This is the arm of the provincial government, Mr. Speaker,

which has the responsibility of providing leadership and facilitating the resources that are necessary to assist our citizens in building their own futures. And we live at a time, Mr. Speaker — we all recognize this — in which it has become an absolute necessity for the large majority of our people, young people who are hoping to make careers and support families, to not only have some post-secondary education and skills training, but in fact through their careers, to retrain and retrain and retrain again.

And so it is, I think, Mr. Speaker, a very important function of the province of Saskatchewan and Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, and it's one that will continue to grow with time.

There are a number of facets that have come together and I can just list very quickly some of those, the most obvious I think, the one that'll come to everyone's mind — our two universities here in the province of Saskatchewan. And I'm proud to say, Mr. Speaker, that we have two high-quality universities in this province, universities which provide a high quality of education, and both of which are enhancing their research capacities and their relationships in an academic sense. Mr. Speaker, they have continued, they have served our province well — one for nearly a century, one for a quarter-century, Mr. Speaker — and they will continue to serve our people well, I predict.

And we have that enhanced, Mr. Speaker, with our four SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) campuses in the four largest communities in the province. And I think it's kind of indicative to know the effectiveness of the SIAST programs, Mr. Speaker, as they assist our citizens to respond to their wishes, to help them shape their careers and to support their families, and to do that in a positive kind of way.

A recent review, Mr. Speaker, of 1998 graduates from SIAST pointed out that nearly 90 per cent, Mr. Speaker, of those graduates were working. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that of those graduates who are working, those 90 per cent, 97 per cent of them were working right here in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — So I think it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that our two largest post-secondary institutions are serving our people well. They are supported in a very important way by the regional colleges, which have as their mandate to bring training in a whole number of ways, including of course the academic credit, to the rural and to the northern parts of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I have had opportunity to visit some of those campuses to meet with a good number of the board members, the citizens who are bringing leadership and direction to our regional colleges. And I think that too is in good hands.

We have, and very importantly in this province, given our demographics of our population, Mr. Speaker, we have some aboriginally administered post-secondary education institutions who continue to serve their people well and to increase the number of graduates. That is complemented by a good system of private vocational schools who are very, very responsive at responding to the marketplace and to making that link between skills that are

necessary and good training, Mr. Speaker.

That is enhanced as well by just a recently rejuvenated apprenticeship and a trade certification commission that is led, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say and they are proud to say, by the industry. And when they say the industry, they're not just talking about the employers, but they are talking about the employers and the skilled tradesmen and women themselves, Mr. Speaker.

And finally, and very, very importantly, as a result of the transfer from the federal government to provincial jurisdiction for labour market development and planning, we have 20 career and employment service offices that are scattered around, strategically around the province of Saskatchewan.

And these offices, Mr. Speaker, serve as an excellent resource for any Saskatchewan citizen who is looking for information about training opportunities or career development or career choice, and including for themselves, as well as a resource for employers who are wanting to become familiar with the training resources available and to seek skilled employees for their places of business.

And so what we have in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in those 20 career and employment services offices, are places that are one-stop shopping so to speak, for those who are looking for employment or looking for employees, who are looking for training or who are looking for people to be trained, and to provide good, solid advice to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say the department as well, that what it has done is in recent times, has been working diligently in the development of a strategic plan. And that brings me, Mr. Speaker, finally to one of the commitments in the Speech from the Throne, which is to implement comprehensive program and government accountability. And what does that mean, Mr. Speaker?

Well in the case of the Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training department, Mr. Speaker, what it means is this — is that I anticipate that we will come forward in the spring with a very detailed strategic plan as a result of a high level of consultation with all the educational partners in the province of Saskatchewan, that will let them know where is their government going, what are our goals and objectives and how do we plan to get there. And that is a very inclusive, very inclusive process.

Now the hon. member opposite, Mr. Speaker, he wants to inject a little partisan politics and he says, out. But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, when the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training is working with the partners of education in Saskatchewan, they are definitely in. They're part of the plan, and working together with them, we will be building that positive future for the people of Saskatchewan that I referred to earlier.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — So, Mr. Speaker, I expect to come forward, as I say, in the spring session, members will be hearing about the plan, and . . . the plan . . . the plan — that's right. And I am very encouraged, Mr. Speaker, by the enthusiasm I hear from

the hon. members opposite. And I will look forward to their input in the plan as well.

But there's just one final item I'd like to address before taking my place, Mr. Speaker, and . . . this is the final, final one. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the consultation that all hon. members will be familiar with, related to the matter of financial access to post-secondary education and skills training for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I look back to that election that the hon. members opposite like to moan and groan about, what I noted is that there were two — there were two parties in the election, Mr. Speaker, that made financial access to post-secondary education a priority.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that both of those partners are sitting on this side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I say we've generated a little interest here again — generated a little interest. And I'm glad to see that, because we will be looking forward to input from all the people of Saskatchewan including the hon. members opposite. Mr. Speaker, if they can come up with a good idea, I intend to use that in the interest of the people of Saskatchewan — if they do, Mr. Speaker.

But let me say this — let me say this, first of all. I think what happened in the course of the election is that the people of Saskatchewan in a very significant way said, financial access to post-secondary education has always been an important value to the people of Saskatchewan, and it continues to be that. You're right on the mark.

However, Mr. Speaker, when they looked at the particular agendas for achieving that put forward by the New Democrats and the Liberals, I think there was . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the hon. member, the hon. member, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Now, now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says he had a little difficulty understanding it. He said he had a hard time understanding it, Mr. Speaker.

But I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, what I want you to know is that in my view the proposals made by the New Democrats and the Liberals in the election met with something less than wild enthusiasm. It was something less.

Will the hon. member . . . I think the hon. member will agree with me on that point. Well he's not disagreeing, Mr. Speaker. We're making progress. In the absence of disagreement, Mr. Speaker, we will assume agreement.

Mr. Speaker, so what we have decided is this. It is much more important to do it right than to do it fast. And so we have said, Mr. Speaker, we recognize and appreciate that the people of Saskatchewan . . . we recognize that the people of Saskatchewan have said that financial access to post-secondary education and skills training is important. And we will consult with the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there will be three criteria, three criteria that I will

be looking for, together with my colleague, the Minister of Education, my coalition partner. There are three criteria in the advice that people of Saskatchewan give to us that I'll be looking for to bring to this House in the spring.

We'll be looking for a solution to improve the financial access to post-secondary education, Mr. Speaker, that number one, meets the real financial needs of the students of Saskatchewan; number two, it supports quality post-secondary education; and number three, it meets the test of fiscal prudence by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that is my commitment. And in the spring of 2000, that is the plan that this government will bring to this legislature on the matter of financial access.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — We look forward to seeing that.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, I believe the Education critic, or the former Education critic, the Deputy Leader of the Saskatchewan Party, he is already enthusiastic. He is shouting across. He wants to know details.

But, Mr. Speaker, I say to him, he's going to have to wait until we've had a chance to talk to the people of Saskatchewan, because we will take their advice, but we will take the leadership of the solution to this issue, Mr. Speaker, from the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — And I know, I know, that if he truly feels it, and I suspect he might, that he will be the first on his feet to say it was a job well done and let's hear it for the future of the people of Saskatchewan. I'm sure we can count on that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I think the time draws near to wrap it up and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . no, no, no, no. As much as the hon. members opposite would like to have more advice as to what's coming, they're just simply going to have to wait, Mr. Speaker.

And what I would like to say is that I do feel enthusiastic about being part of this brand new day for the people of Saskatchewan; about a day that is based on a commitment to the well-being of the people of this province; to building in a future, Mr. Speaker, where families in this province can look forward with optimism and enthusiasm and to feel good that this is a good place to raise a family. This is a good place to work and to retire, Mr. Speaker. That this is a good place to live.

And so with that in mind and also respecting, Mr. Speaker, the spirit of the season that is before us and that I recognize in the faces of the hon. members opposite and around, I want to, Mr. Speaker, conclude by wishing all of the members of the House, the very peaceful Christmas. I hope that for each of them in their homes and in their hearts, Mr. Speaker, peace will be a common experience not only at Christmastime, but through the new year. Mr. Speaker, I stand here confident that when we wake up on January 1, the power will still be on, the sun will

still be coming up in the East and going down in the West, and I wish for all hon. members a wonderful celebration with their families at this Christmastime.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I take my place repeating what I said when I began, that I will be voting in favour of the motion moved by the hon. member for Moose Jaw Wakamow, seconded by the hon. member for Saskatoon Sutherland. Mr. Speaker, I am enthusiastic about a brand new day, and I will be voting in favour of the motion before us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Leave to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Jones: — I wish to acknowledge the presence of a colleague of mine from Saskatoon, one whom I hope will soon take her place back in this House. Pat Lorje is here with us this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Addley, and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Hermanson.

The division bells rang from 4:30 p.m. until 4:38 p.m.

Amendment negatived on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 23

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Hermanson | Elhard | Heppner |
| Julé | Krawetz | Draude |
| Boyd | Gantefoer | Toth |
| Peters | Eagles | Bakken |
| Bjornerud | D'Autremont | McMorris |
| Weekes | Brkich | Harpauer |
| Wiberg | Hart | Allchurch |
| Stewart | Kwiatkowski | |

Nays — 29

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Romanow | Trew | Hagel |
| Van Mulligen | MacKinnon | Lingenfelter |
| Melenchuk | Cline | Atkinson |
| Goulet | Lautermilch | Thomson |
| Kasperski | Serby | Belanger |
| Nilson | Chofford | Kowalsky |
| Sonntag | Hamilton | Prebble |
| Jones | Yates | Higgins |

| | | |
|---------|----------|-------|
| Harper | Axworthy | Junor |
| Wartman | Addley | |

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, by leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, a short time ago a group of beef producers from the province came together to form the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Committee and they're with us today in your gallery. And I'd just like them to stand as I introduce them. I just say to members of the Assembly, we had an opportunity to have a very good meeting with the beef industry and I know we all wish them well.

But here today, Brian Weedon, president of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association; Dennis Lepp, president of the Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association; Brad Wilderman, the general manager of Poundmaker; Maurice Kraut, the beef coordinator/consultant with the beef committee; Myles Anderson; Bob Stewart with the Sask. Stock Growers Association; Harry Seidlitz with Heartland Livestock; as well as Myles Anderson, chairman of the Beef Industries Committee. And I think Myles probably departed before . . . oh no, there he is.

I want to say to all of them, this is a very, very important industry in our province. Thank you for all the hard work and I know members will want to welcome them here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With leave for the introduction of guests as well.

Leave granted.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Minister of Agriculture and welcome the members of the beef industry to the Assembly here this afternoon.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, it's an extremely important part of the industry. Many of us on the Saskatchewan Party side of the official opposition have tremendous representation from the ranch community and the farm community; and we certainly welcome people representing that industry to the Assembly here this afternoon and would want to join with the Minister of Agriculture in welcoming them as well.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Addley.

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, it now being near the time of 5, I would move the adjournment of the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Speaker: — I would just like to once again wish everybody a very pleasant evening.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

