

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from people who are concerned about Highway No. 49.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to repair Highway No. 49 in order to address safety concerns and to facilitate economic growth in the area.

The people that have signed this petition are from Kelvington and Nut Mountain.

Mr. Gantfoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this afternoon on behalf of citizens of the Moose Jaw area concerned about the lack of hemodialysis services. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take necessary action to provide the people of Moose Jaw and district with a hemodialysis unit for their community.

The signatures on this petition this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, are mostly from the city of Moose Jaw, but also from Caronport.

And I'm pleased to present on their behalf.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I stand on behalf of constituents of the Cypress Hills area that have concerns about the government's plans as it relates to renewal of Crown grazing leases. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take necessary steps to ensure current Crown land lessees maintain their first option to renew those leases.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by producers from the communities of Leader, Prelate, and Empress.

I so present.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with the incredibly uncaring lack of a hemodialysis unit in the city of Moose Jaw. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take necessary action to provide the people of Moose Jaw and

district with a hemodialysis unit for their community.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens all from the city of Moose Jaw.

I so present.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I rise to present a petition on behalf of citizens of my constituency with deep concerns regarding the condition of Highway 47. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 47 South in order to avoid serious injury and property damage.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by folks from Estevan and Bienfait.

I so present. Thank you.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise again with a petition from the citizens of rural Saskatchewan who are concerned about access to adequate health care. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the proper steps to cause adequate medical services, including a physician, be provided in Rockglen and to cause the Five Hills Health Region to provide better information to the citizens of Rockglen.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good citizens of Rockglen, Fife Lake, Killdeer, Coronach, Lisieux, and Assiniboia.

I so present.

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents of mine who are concerned with health care in the west central region. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure continuation of the current level of services available at the Kindersley Hospital and to ensure the current specialty services are sustained to better serve the people of west central Saskatchewan.

And as is duty bound, our petitioners will ever pray.

This, Mr. Speaker, is signed by the good folks from Kindersley and the town of Kerrobert.

I so present.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition opposed to Saskatchewan Crop Insurance 2003 premium increases to farmers.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to have Saskatchewan Crop Insurance reverse the 2003 premium increases and restore affordable crop insurance premiums to our struggling farmers.

As in duty bound, our petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Eaton and Laporte.

I so present.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly today to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of Saskatchewan that are concerned with the government's handling of the Crown land leases.

And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure current Crown land lessees maintain their first option to renew those leases.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, on this petition are from Frenchman Butte, from Loon Lake, and St. Walburg.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and are hereby read and received as addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional papers nos. 13, 18, 19, 27, 36, 90, and 100.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 38 ask the government the following question:

How much money did the government spend on The Future is Wide Open television advertising in the month of April 2003; and what percentage of that advertising was inside Saskatchewan; and what percentage of that advertising was outside Saskatchewan?

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of other questions that I will also present regarding The Future is Wide Open advertising campaign.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery are two gentlemen that I've known for a very long time. They're both residents of Regina. One is a constituent and neighbour. Both are gentlemen that have been very actively interested and work in the areas of health care, promotion of better health care for the people of Saskatchewan.

And I should like to introduce to you and through you to the members, and I would ask you to welcome, John Bryde and Don Wiks.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the member opposite in inviting these two gentlemen to the Assembly today. As many members of this Assembly know, both of these individuals are passionate proponents of chelation therapy, and I think most of us have had the opportunity of meeting with these individuals from time to time.

It's a pleasure to see them in the Assembly today. Welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the other members of the House, a personal friend of mine in the west gallery, Brendan Pyle. Brendan is a lawyer with the Merchant Group and he's here to observe some of the proceedings today. And I'd like to welcome him and have other members join me welcoming him also.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Saskatoon Badge and Shield Awards

Ms. Julé: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, May 2, I was very pleased to be able to attend the 2003 Badge and Shield Awards dinner in Saskatoon. The awards are presented each year by Saskatoon Fire & Protective Services and Saskatoon Police Service to community heroes in recognition of their voluntary service.

Mr. Speaker, Donna and Bill Rodway received the Saskatoon Police Service's Community Volunteer Badge Award for their work with the victim service unit since its inception 10 years ago. And the Corporate Badge Award was given to Canadian Heritage for its support in assisting police embrace community diversity and creating multicultural partnerships.

The Fire and Protective Shield Award went to community volunteer Geselle Doell. The executive director of the Friendship Inn has made contributions with various non-profit organizations and charities. And, Mr. Speaker, the Corporate Shield Award went to Saskatoon Co-op Home and Agro Centre, a long-time sponsor of public events staged by the Fire & Protective Services and supporter of campaigns like Fire Prevention Week.

And, Mr. Speaker, in addition this year marks the 100th anniversary of the Saskatoon Police Service, and on behalf of the official opposition we would like to extend our congratulations and commendation for their many dedicated years of service to Saskatoon and district.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Polonia Dance Ensemble

Mr. Kasperski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was my pleasure to attend the 15th annual Polonia in Concert performance at the Performing Arts Centre in Regina here on Saturday evening, Mr. Speaker. This yearly concert of the Polonia Dance Ensemble of Regina demonstrates the rich cultural heritage of Polish Canadians.

Over 350 people attended this exciting performance which featured the junior and senior dancers from Regina, and guest performers, the Polonez Dance Ensemble from Edmonton.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Polonia Dance Ensemble and its related organization, the Polish Canadian Cultural Club of Regina, and St. Anthony's Parish, have a well-deserved reputation and tradition of community activity and involvement here in the city of Regina.

The annual concert coincides with Constitution Day, a national holiday in Poland that is celebrated in Polish communities throughout the world. The holiday remembers the constitution proclaimed by the Polish Sejm, or parliament, on May 3, 1791 that attempted to reform and reorganize the old commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania.

Congratulations to the Polonia Dance Ensemble on another successful concert.

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Youth Business Excellence Awards

Mr. Lorenz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege to attend the Youth Business Excellence Awards last Saturday evening in North Battleford at the Tropical Inn. Also attending were members from Redberry Lake, Shellbrook, Spiritwood, and North Battleford.

Mr. Speaker, YBEX (Youth Business Excellence) provides young people with an opportunity to explore and experience entrepreneurship. Since 1997, 342 students have competed in YBEX. YBEX is an annual event hosted by Northwest Community Futures to encourage youth entrepreneurship in west central Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the competition is open to regional students attending educational institutes or home school in grades 6 to 12. Submissions are accepted in two categories: the

development of a business idea and the accomplishment of the youth business venture.

Mr. Speaker, these young entrepreneurs develop business plans, cash flow statements, profit and loss statements, business studies, as well as logos.

This year there were 42 projects submitted with 76 participating students. Business proposals ranged from sports and leisure wear, delivery services, waste management services, escape spas, horsemanship, retractable paintbrushes, and on to ongoing laundry services, and many more innovative ideas.

All students, educators, and mentors enjoyed a complimentary dinner and a fun-filled evening with youth entrepreneurs through exchange in new merchandise and certificates.

Mr. Speaker, with the imagination and spirit of youth of these young entrepreneurs, Saskatchewan has a very bright future. The Saskatchewan Party is ready to be working with these young people to grow Saskatchewan by 100,000 people in the next 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, join me in congratulating the YBEX winners and all young entrepreneurs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

North American Occupational Safety and Health Week

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May 4 to 10 is the seventh annual North American Occupational Safety and Health Week.

Mr. Speaker, this week reminds us all of the critical importance of workplace safety. Every year thousands of Saskatchewan workers are injured in their workplaces or contract work-related illnesses. Tragically, every year Saskatchewan workers die from work-related injuries or illnesses.

Mr. Speaker, we all need to work together to increase public awareness of workplace injuries and how they can be prevented. For our part, we will continue to support employers and workers to reduce hazards through a system of shared responsibility. We will continue to enforce health and safety standards through workplace inspections, focusing on higher risk industries. We will continue to provide technical support to workplaces to address emerging issues such as SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and West Nile virus. And we will continue to provide young people with information on health and safety practices before they reach the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, over 30 years ago this province pioneered occupational health and safety and we know that it works. We also know that workplace health and safety is everyone's business because when it breaks down, everyone pays the price. And that is why I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in supporting North American Safety and Health Week.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(13:45)

People of Swift Current and Area Replace Stolen Bicycle

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Late last month in *The Southwest Booster*, on April 26, young Alex Isinghood, 11 years old, of Swift Current wrote a letter to the editor that goes as follows. He said:

To the person who took my bike:

I'm 11 years old and I worked very hard for a long, long time to save money for my new bike.

Please will you return it to my house or to the police station.

He goes on to say:

If you need a bike that bad, I can help you fix my old one and you can buy it cheap.

He also says:

It makes you feel good to have something honestly. It doesn't when you steal.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the local morning show on the FM (frequency modulation) station in Swift Current, Kim Johnston and Jon Keen at the Eagle 94.1 saw the letter and took up the cause and promoted this young fellow's case to the whole community and to the region. And wouldn't you know it? The people of Swift Current and area responded by raising money to replace young Alex's bicycle and in *The Southwest Booster* last week his mother wrote a letter thanking the Eagle 94.1 morning show, Kim and Jon, for their efforts, as well as Mike Kanopic from Canadian Tire for his help. And she concluded her letter to the editor with the following, Mr. Speaker. She said:

To the thief, I hope you're enjoying your new bike. My son has something much greater — a sense of the kindness and love the majority of the people in this area possess. And that cannot be stolen (Mr. Speaker).

So thank you to the folks at the morning show at the Eagle 94.1. I know all of the members in the House will want to thank them and all of the people of Swift Current who contributed to restore back to him this young man's new bicycle.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Women Entrepreneurs Week

Ms. Lorjé: — Mr. Speaker, here's a line from a 19th century book review by a man about a novel by a woman, quote:

It raises the standard of what is to be expected of women . . . We know all about the female heart; but apparently there is a female brain, too.

Mr. Speaker, that was then; this is now. I would hope that this startling revelation in the 19th century is commonly accepted

knowledge in the 21st century. And as one indication of change over the years, I point to the women entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, while some politicians go about the province saying that women do not like conflict, Saskatchewan women entrepreneurs have quietly gone about their business of becoming a major driving force in our economy. They are using their brains and their hearts.

Today 30 per cent of all businesses are owned and operated by women, employing 90,000 people across the province. Women operate home-based businesses, they serve in the corporate boardroom, and they have moved into the international marketplace as well. And our government's Small Business Loans Association has provided over \$11 million to women business owners and entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, May 4 to 11 is Women Entrepreneurs Week, a time to recognize that women entrepreneurs have indeed come a long way with no limits to how far they can go. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Outlook Firefighting Expenses

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with concern that I rise in the Assembly today to talk about an issue which has been unresolved for nearly a year now.

On two occasions last summer, June 25 and July 18, the town of Outlook fire department responded to field fires which had been started as a result of the malfunction of SaskPower equipment. First there was a fire in the meter box on a SaskPower transformer pole; then there was a downed power line which ignited a grass fire.

The town of Outlook fire department responded to these fires and did an excellent job of putting them out. The town of Outlook then logically billed SaskPower for the services costing \$1,400. Since then SaskPower has refused to accept any responsibility for these costs.

I received a letter from the town of Outlook asking for my assistance. In January I sent a letter to the Minister of Crown Investments outlining the situation and asking for a solution to this issue. On January 17 I received a response, not from the minister himself but from the president of SaskPower, who again repeated that SaskPower is not responsible for the firefighting costs.

Our rural communities cannot afford to be out of pocket for these expenses. This NDP (New Democratic Party) government clearly has no interest in helping these communities, nor taking any direct responsibility for the financial well-being.

It is only logical the fires caused by SaskPower equipment failure should be the responsibility of SaskPower. The minister responsible for SaskPower and the president of SaskPower are willing to stick the town of Outlook for this large expense. Clearly the NDP has abandoned rural Saskatchewan in every way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Investment in Minds Eye Pictures

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the Crown Investments Corporation.

In 2001 the NDP decided to get the taxpayers of Saskatchewan into the movie business, so the government bought 15 per cent of a Regina movie company called Minds Eye entertainment for \$4.5 million. Mr. Speaker, in the most recent Crown Investments Corporation annual report, the value of that investment, of that NDP investment, is now recorded at, now written down to \$500,000.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister answer to the people of the province what happened to the \$4 million?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well first of all, let me point out that Minds Eye is a renowned Saskatchewan film production company that's been in business for some 15 years.

The member is correct, Mr. Speaker. The investment . . . By the way, the approved investment is six and a half million dollars and it's been written down by 4 million as he indicated, for the year-end 2002, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to say that it is an important investment, Mr. Speaker, in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we think that it is an investment that will pay huge dividends for the people of Saskatchewan because Crown Investments Corporation believes in investing in Saskatchewan industries as well, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that in July 2001 the Crown Investments Corporation did invest 4.5 million taxpayers' dollars into this movie company and they bought 15 per cent of this particular company. But it doesn't stop there, Mr. Speaker.

On December 18, 2002 the NDP cabinet approved further government financing for Minds Eye to a maximum of another \$2 million. And just 13 days later — the end of the reporting year, the end of December of last year — 13 days after they approved up to \$2 million, they wrote the investment off from 4.5 million down to \$500,000. They wrote off 4 million taxpayers' dollars.

So, Mr. Speaker, in light of that write-off, in light of that write-off, will the minister tell the House and the people of the province why they'd approve another \$2 million to the same company?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well if the member from Swift Current had listened to my answer, I

answered that question in the first answer when I said that the approved investment was six and a half million dollars, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the second, the second allotment of the \$2 million, as was indicated in the order in council, Mr. Speaker, was subject to partnering with other private sector partners, Mr. Speaker. And the funds would only be advanced when there was other partners, Mr. Speaker. And that has been the case. It shows that the private sector has, and is, and will continue to express confidence in an industry that has tremendous potential here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question wasn't what was the total approved investment that this government was prepared to make in this company. That wasn't the question. The question was simple.

At the very time, at the very time that the cabinet, that the minister opposite, approved up to another \$2 million investing in this company, at the same time they were doing that, they were writing off 4 million of their \$4.5 million original investment in this company, Mr. Speaker. They wrote off \$4 million at the same time that they were going to put in another \$2 million.

And the question to the minister is simple. Why would the government, in the process of writing off 4 million of a \$4.5 million taxpayer investment, why would they approve up to another \$2 million in this company?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Well let me get this straight, Mr. Speaker. That Sask Party member now opposes a strategy that would leverage private sector money, Mr. Speaker, that would support an industry that has gone, Mr. Speaker, from in the 1980s, \$5 million in production to \$50 million, Mr. Speaker — \$50 million. It supports some 700 jobs in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, why would he be opposed to a strategy that would leverage private sector money, Mr. Speaker? Answer that question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think what the taxpayers would be very concerned about — what they would be opposed to, Mr. Speaker — is a government, an NDP government, who has already lost \$4 million of their \$4.5 million that they've invested on behalf of the taxpayers, and then in response to that loss approve another 2 . . . up to \$2 million more. That's what they would be opposed to, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the coverage of this particular development in the *Leader-Post* not . . . just a few months ago, the president of Minds Eye also told the same daily newspaper that his company will need more government money in 2004. That's what Minds Eye is currently saying.

Will the minister please outline for the House how much more money is the NDP government prepared to pour into Minds Eye, based on the comments of this company official?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to — before I answer the question again, Mr. Speaker — I do want to point out that as we speak, Mr. DeWalt is actually speaking with, meeting with Minister Sheila Copps, discussing the industry here in our province. And I think the federal government is interested in what's transpiring here in Saskatchewan as well.

And by the way, may I say as an aside, I do want to congratulate Mr. DeWalt on his recent election as president of the Saskatchewan Film Producers Association. So congratulations to him.

Mr. Speaker, the strategy that was employed in last year, at the end of the year, when we agreed to advance the additional funding, Mr. Speaker, was that we would only advance funds as they were partnered with by the private sector, Mr. Speaker. Is there anything wrong with that; anything that would leverage private sector money to enhance the film industry here in our province, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the president . . . the article I was referring to in the *Leader-Post* dated January 17 of this year says, and I quote:

DeWalt also said Minds Eye will likely approach its investors, including CIC, for more money in 2004.

How much more money is the government prepared to put into this company?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the answer to the question is that we have said that we would partner with people right across our province, Mr. Speaker. And we've done that, Mr. Speaker, in many sectors.

And we've shown, Mr. Speaker, on this investment portfolio — to the year-end last year, by the way — in addition to creating all of those jobs, we produced for the people of Saskatchewan a profit of \$11.6 million that we can return back for services here in our province, Mr. Speaker. You compare that to any investment portfolio that largely, I would speculate in most portfolios, lost money last year. So in addition to making money for the people of Saskatchewan, we created jobs.

The answer to the question is, any proposal that comes forward that will create jobs in our province, Mr. Speaker, that makes sense, we will absolutely give it serious consideration. What we will not do though, Mr. Speaker, is give consideration to any more music halls of fame, Mr. Speaker, in Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, when the minister made the announcement, when the minister made the announcement of the original investment, here's what he said, and I quote:

We expect . . . to benefit Saskatchewan people through both a good financial return, and more jobs . . .

That's what the minister said. The minister was . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order, members. Order, please, members. Order.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, when the announcement of the original investment was made on behalf of taxpayers by this NDP government, the minister was more than happy to get involved with the announcement. And he indicated, and I quote:

We expect . . . to benefit Saskatchewan people through both a good financial return, and more jobs . . . (Mr. Speaker).

Well fair enough. Now it's time for the minister to weigh in again on another important issue with respect to Minds Eye Pictures. Minds Eye Pictures officials are saying they will be going to the government for more money in 2004. How much more is the government prepared to pour into this company?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, we have a vision for this province and this vision, this vision includes being proud of the stories that our producers tell, that our actors, our writers . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please.

(14:00)

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — And I have to say, Mr. Speaker, anybody who would take the approach the opposition has taken would not know what a huge contribution Minds Eye Pictures has made to the development of film production in this province. There would likely not be this level of a film industry to even discuss if it were not for his significant efforts around the world on Saskatchewan's behalf.

I have in my hand news story after news story about film production in this province. That's because strategic investments have been made in a good company. And I'd add, Mr. Speaker, there wasn't a place in the world where film did not suffer a downturn from September 11, and this company is not exempt from what happened to every other producer in the world.

This is a good company. Quit ragging on our investors and start being proud of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, that minister, that minister that just stood up to answer, was asked about the investing of taxpayers' dollars in this particular money-losing venture. And here's what she said last January. That minister told CBC (Canadian

Broadcasting Corporation), and I quote: “. . . to ask a business about what they plan to do in the future,” Mr. Speaker, she said that wasn’t any of her business.

She said it’s not her job, it’s not her job to ask, quote, “to ask a business about what they plan to do in the future.”

Right at that time she knew, Mr. Speaker, that the Government of Saskatchewan had already written off 4 million of a \$4.5 million investment on the taxpayers’ behalf. And even though they had done that, they’d approved another 2 million more.

So has the minister changed her opinion? Does the minister now believe that it might be a wise thing to do, to ask a little bit, ask a few questions about multi-million-dollar investments they make on taxpayers’ behalf?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that this company and these projects have had more business plans and scrutiny than the Country Music Hall of Fame that the member opposite was responsible for.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — All that being said, I agree with some of the things that the Hill family said last night at their event, the 100 years of being in business. They said, you have to keep your eye on the long term, Mr. Speaker.

This is an industry that in each and every year has been on a trajectory of growth, producing more jobs, more investment, more people who know about Saskatchewan, and more local work for our cultural workers, our producers, and our technicians.

And, Mr. Speaker, we’re behind this industry 100 per cent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the fact that the government has already written off \$4 million, we know that in December last year they approved another \$2 million, up to \$2 million more, for this particular investment.

Mr. Speaker, the question to the minister is this: will the NDP government receive more equity in Minds Eye for its \$2 million if all of that is needed? Will the \$2 million going to Minds Eye be a loan? Which is it, Mr. Speaker? Will the minister answer that question?

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I think I’ve answered this question. They’re just going to keep asking it, Mr. Speaker; it doesn’t matter how many times you answer them.

The approval for the additional \$2 million, Mr. Speaker, was subject to — I repeat, subject to — partnering from the private sector, Mr. Speaker. Some of that has now received partnering from the private sector, Mr. Speaker. None of the money will be released until there is partnering from the private sector. But this is a good thing that you can leverage private sector money

to continue to build an industry that’s gone from \$5 million to \$50 million, Mr. Speaker, and employs some 700 people in our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it’s interesting. We ask a specific question to that minister and that minister answers; and then we ask a specific question to that minister and that minister answers, Mr. Speaker. We ask the Premier, through you, just someone answer the question, Mr. Speaker.

If that minister is prepared to get up and now get into the debate again, I’ll go back to the question with respect to the government’s intention in 2003-2004. The president of this company has said they’ll need more government money. Will the minister tell the Assembly and the taxpayers how much more of their money is he prepared to risk on this venture this year and next?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I guess we thought if we had two ministers up answering questions at least one of us could explain to them, Mr. Speaker, what the answer was, Mr. Speaker — and they might understand.

Mr. Speaker, I say again, any proposals that come forward to this government and to the CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan) board, Mr. Speaker, any proposals that come forward, we will give consideration to. Any proposal that’s going to create jobs and has a sound business plan . . . (inaudible) . . . we will give consideration to.

It’s an important industry. It now has some 700 jobs. We’ve gone from \$5 million to \$50 million in productions. Last year was a down year, as was explained, Mr. Speaker, by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation as a result of 9/11, Mr. Speaker. But we will absolutely give consideration to further proposals that are brought forward.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Crop Insurance Program

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, my question’s for the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, after two years of a severe drought in our province, many farm families are being hit with a triple whammy by crop insurance.

First, there’s a 52 per cent premium hike. Second, many are seeing their coverage levels reduced because the long-term average yields have fallen after two straight years of a drought. And third — and here, Mr. Speaker, is what came as a big surprise to a lot of the producers — is that some farmers are being hit with a significant premium surcharge because they had big claims in the last couple of years.

Mr. Speaker, what is the reason for the surcharge? Why are farmers being penalized for making crop insurance claims during the last two years of drought?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, if the member knew something about crop insurance, she would be able to know the answer to this. But the reality is, is that the member opposite knows very little about crop insurance. Because it's the member opposite who said, Mr. Speaker, that you should be amortizing crop insurance out over a period of nine years to protect farmers in Saskatchewan and load up the premiums for producers to a far greater degree than they are today.

Mr. Speaker, in the crop insurance program today what happens, Mr. Speaker, is if in fact you have a . . . You have a premium discount. If in fact you've had a claim against your crop over the years, the premium discount kicks in, and you're seeing this year, Mr. Speaker, a reduction in the premium discount for some of the producers. That's what the member's going.

She should know something about that, Mr. Speaker. But when you talk about farm policy and you talk about agriculture safety nets and you talk about programs, she speaks on behalf of her leader, Mr. Speaker. And every time she speaks on behalf of her leader, she costs Canadian and Saskatchewan farmers money, Mr. Speaker, every time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, it's kind of humorous that that minister keeps on talking about how he has all the answers for agriculture. Maybe he should check the polls and see if the producers think that he have all the answers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, recently the minister would have received an e-mail from a Wakaw area farmer who calls it a double kick in the head. He says, the premium are up by 85 per cent this year and it includes a 26 per cent surcharge for the claim that he made in 2001. And he says, and I quote:

This tells me I must be responsible for the weather and must have caused the drought since I'm being penalized for having to use my policy.

Mr. Speaker, why is the crop insurance program that is to be enhanced, penalizing the producers who need to use the program?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — I've already answered the question to the member in terms of the premium discounts. And that would apply also to the member, Mr. Speaker, is that . . . or applies to the member from Wakaw, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to say to the member opposite and to this House, Mr. Speaker, every time that the member gets on her feet on behalf of the Saskatchewan Party, they talk about not . . . talk about issues. And I want to say here, Mr. Speaker, on the Saskatchewan Party opinion, on *The StarPhoenix* of Wednesday, April 26, Mr. Speaker, and what does the member say? And here's what, I quote, it says:

. . . while Hermanson's Saskatchewan Party hasn't exactly

articulated . . . (any) detailed . . . (cohesive) platform . . .

No platform, Mr. Speaker, on agriculture. Never mind anything on education or health, Mr. Speaker.

For the member opposite to stand up today and articulate any kind of issue around agriculture, Mr. Speaker, the media and the members opposite and the farmers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, would say that there is no plan from the Saskatchewan Party. There is no farm policy, Mr. Speaker, on agriculture. And every time they get involved in a debate in agriculture, Mr. Speaker, they take money out of Saskatchewan producers' farms.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the minister can recognize that the opposition party stands up and talks about issues, when all they do is stand up and talk about rhetoric, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the surcharge seems very unfair. The NDP can continue to tell farm families that the main farm safety net program is crop insurance. Yet when we have a drought and they wind up making crop insurance claims, they end up getting penalized in subsequent years with a premium surcharge.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that this surcharge probably exists to penalize poor farming practices. But drought is not a poor farming practice, Mr. Speaker. It's a problem that hit nearly every farmer in Saskatchewan at least once, and in some areas twice. And this is all on top of a 52 per cent premium hike, Mr. Speaker. Why are the producers being penalized for two straight years of a drought that was out of their control?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should know that when in fact you have two years of consecutive drought like we had in the province, that somebody needs to pay the premium. And the premium is paid, Mr. Speaker, by an injection of \$150 million from the federal government, brand new money, of which we found, Mr. Speaker, an additional hundred . . . and \$100 million from the provincial government, and an increase in the premium charged for the producers, Mr. Speaker.

Because insurances work that way, Mr. Speaker. When in fact you pay out the premium, you have to collect it back. And the member from Canora should know that, Mr. Speaker, having been in the business of selling insurance, Mr. Speaker. When insurance claims are higher in the private sector, what happens? The premiums go up to recover the costs, Mr. Speaker. That's what happens in agriculture as well, Mr. Speaker.

And I say to the member opposite, you should just read, you should just read the debate of which the member from Wilkie said, Mr. Speaker. Because their agenda, as the member for Wilkie says, is that we should be selling the crop insurance agency, Mr. Speaker, and having the private sector sell

insurance in Saskatchewan. That's what the member from Wilkie said.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Response to Excess Rainfall in Wadena Area

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, we all know that weather-related problems have caused much upheaval in the agriculture sector over the last two years in particular, and for some areas that problem is continuing. Mr. Speaker, the Wadena area received in excess of 2 feet of rain last fall. That, combined with early frost and snowfall, caused significant crop damage and conditions that made harvesting impossible. Now there's heavy spring rains in that area and it's still hampering efforts to get the crop off, let alone let the farm families get on with the business of seeding.

Mr. Speaker, this morning the RM (rural municipality) of Sasman No. 336 declared itself in a disaster situation because of these problems. How does the minister plan to deal with the RM and the farm families that are in a disaster situation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — We'll continue to do what we've been doing for Saskatchewan agriculture and Saskatchewan farmers, Mr. Speaker, and speaking out on their behalf in full force as we have over the last several years, Mr. Speaker. Because it's this government that, on this side of the House, where we got the additional \$600 million for farmers for Canada. And we get \$183 million this year and last year. That's happened because of our work here, Mr. Speaker. We got additional increases to the crop insurance program, Mr. Speaker, this year taking the federal amount from \$100 million to \$150 million to have a larger, larger package for Saskatchewan farmers, Mr. Speaker. And we got some trade injury money, Mr. Speaker, for Canadian farmers and for Saskatchewan farmers.

And, Mr. Speaker, we'll be there for farmers who experience drought like we did last year, and we'll be there for those farmers, Mr. Speaker, who experience flooding this year. Because on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we're building farm agricultural programs for the betterment of agriculture in Saskatchewan, Canadian farmers, while on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, every time they get involved, they cost farmers money, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, what farmers in Saskatchewan know is that for two years in a row this government has cut spending to agriculture. Mr. Speaker, crops that could not be harvested last fall have suffered significant wildlife damage, and now they're starting to sprout. The fields are too wet to put machinery on, and it's going to take at least a week's worth of hot, dry weather before that can be attempted. The crops are literally worthless and the losses for these farm families are significant.

(14:15)

Mr. Speaker, farmers with crop insurance presently can't receive payment for their crop losses until the harvest out in the field is picked up. Given the circumstances and the field conditions, is Crop Insurance considering any flexibility in dealing with the farmers in this situation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we already have within the crop insurance program capacity today to provide for farmers where they don't seed because it's too wet or we have reseeded programs where it's too dry, Mr. Speaker. We'll have additional support for farmers under the crop insurance program if in fact they aren't able to seed this year — and because on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we have articulated a variety of different options for Saskatchewan producers on agriculture, Mr. Speaker.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, this is what the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* says on Wednesday, April 16, Mr. Speaker. And that's the difference between us on this side of the House on agriculture policy and theirs. Where the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, and this is what the quote is, Mr. Speaker, and it says this:

(Mr.) Hermanson's Saskatchewan Party hasn't . . . (actually) articulated a detailed or . . . (cohesive) platform on agriculture . . .

Because they don't have one, Mr. Speaker. And they recognize that.

And in the *Leader-Post*, Mr. Speaker, and the *Leader-Post* says this, Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, April 16. The *Leader-Post* says this, Mr. Speaker:

The relatively low support from Mr. Hermanson suggests that people don't really know where they stand (Mr. Speaker), on health care, on education, on agriculture (Mr. Speaker), because they have . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The member's time is up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, please, members. Order. Order. Ministerial statements. Order, please, members. Order. Order, please, members.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the beginning of my statement, with leave to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to introduce a person who really needs no introduction, but is a guest here in this legislature today, Michael Jackson, chief of protocol for the province of Saskatchewan.

Now Michael not only makes sure we put our best foot forward, but makes sure we put the correct foot forward. And he helps to create an exciting and enjoyable event for the whole Saskatchewan community when we have a royal visit.

So please join me in welcoming Mr. Jackson today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Visit to Saskatchewan by His Royal Highness the Earl of Wessex

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, last December the Premier announced that Their Royal Highnesses, the Earl and Countess of Wessex, would visit Saskatchewan in June of this year to help us celebrate some of the significant anniversaries and take part in a number of special events.

This morning it was announced by Buckingham Palace that the Earl and Countess of Wessex are expecting their first child in December. And I'm sure all the members will join me in congratulating the royal couple on this very happy news.

Now we have been advised by the private secretary to the Earl and Countess of Wessex that Her Royal Highness will not be able to join her husband on the visit to Saskatchewan in June. And while we are obviously disappointed by the change in plan, we think Saskatchewan people will understand.

It's now my pleasure to announce the itinerary for the royal visit as agreed today with the office of the Earl of Wessex.

The program of the first day, June 19, will be in Regina. The visit begins with a public welcome in the morning in the legislative grounds during which the Earl of Wessex will turn the sod for the Golden Jubilee statue of the Queen on her RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) horse, Burmese, and inaugurate the Prince Edward meeting room in the Legislative Building.

At noon the Earl will celebrate Regina centennial at city hall, followed by a civic luncheon. In the afternoon the Earl will tour the Regina Sound Stage. In the evening he will attend a special performance at the Globe Theatre.

We can all be proud that since 1992, Prince Edward has been the royal patron of the Globe Theatre — the first, and to date, only patronage that His Royal Highness has granted in Canada.

On June 20, the Earl of Wessex travels to Lloydminster to mark the city centennial and attend a civic luncheon.

The next stop is Prince Albert where His Royal Highness will officially open the E.A. Rawlinson Centre for the Arts and participate in Urban Treaty Days.

The other engagement of the day is at Melfort, also celebrating its centennial, where the Earl will inaugurate Prince Edward Park.

In Regina on June 21, National Aboriginal Day, the Earl takes

part in the official opening of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College at the University of Regina. Prince Edward will then present the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards to young people from Saskatchewan and other provinces. In the evening the Lieutenant Governor hosts a dinner for the royal visitor at Government House.

The Earl of Wessex will spend June 22 in Moose Jaw. After attending Sunday service at St. John's Anglican Church, he participates in a military ceremony with the Saskatchewan Dragoons, an army reserve unit.

The Premier and Mrs. Calvert then host a provincial luncheon in Moose Jaw. And during the afternoon, the Earl will open the city's cultural centre and take part in Moose Jaw's centennial celebrations in Crescent Park. The last engagement is a visit at the Moose Jaw fair.

Mr. Speaker, this is a busy program, and we are grateful to the Earl of Wessex for responding so generously to our invitations, and I know that the people of our province will extend a very warm Saskatchewan welcome to our royal visitor.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition I would like to join with the minister in congratulating the Earl and Countess of Wessex on the happy news. We understand the importance and the benefit of children and that it is children that make a family, Mr. Speaker.

We are pleased to see that Prince Edward will continue his visit to Saskatchewan to participate in events across Saskatchewan, including Regina, Lloydminster, P.A. (Prince Albert), and Melfort, Mr. Speaker, as well as back in Regina again. The people of Saskatchewan I know are looking forward to this visit, Mr. Speaker, and are disappointed that the Countess will not be able to attend, because I know that a number of people across the province were looking forward to the opportunity to meet both Edward and Sophie when they visited Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the excitement of the royal visit and the visit to Saskatchewan, and I know that Saskatchewan people will open their hearts to Prince Edward when he is here. And I would like to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to extend an invitation to Prince Edward, to Sophie, the Countess of Wessex, and to their new family, to visit Saskatchewan as soon as is possible. And we look forward to this visit and to their next, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 202 — The Water Quality Recognition Day Act

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move first reading of Bill No. 202, The Water Quality Recognition Day Act.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be

read a second time at the next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased today to stand on behalf of the government and respond to written questions no. 157 through 183 inclusive.

The Speaker: — Responses to questions 157 to 183 inclusive have been submitted.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 4 — Non-Confidence Motion

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think, having listened through question period today and the evasive answers that we've been receiving from the government, it's certainly appropriate that we have this motion brought forward before the Assembly today.

And I'd like to begin by reading a quote, and this is the quote. It says:

Mr. Speaker, I want to provide ample time for others to enter into this debate and so let me conclude with what I believe is my central point. My central point is that we have a crisis of confidence in the province of Saskatchewan, (and) that we have a government that has been stripped of its credibility, a government that has no longer the confidence of the people, a government that no longer seems to have a vision or a clear direction; in short, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe, a government that has lost the capacity to govern.

And in a democracy — (and) I repeat — in any democracy . . . in any nation, in any nation when a government has lost the confidence of its people, when a government is stripped of its credibility, when a government has no vision, then it is time to defeat that government and give another group of men and women the opportunity to govern.

Mr. Speaker, this quote comes out of *Hansard*, March 27, 1990. It was given by the current member for the Saskatoon Riversdale riding and, Mr. Speaker, I agree wholeheartedly with that member's viewpoint.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that what we are seeing today, we are seeing a government that is in disarray. We see a government that doesn't have a vision for the province of Saskatchewan. We see a government that is stripped of its credibility. We see a government that it's time for that government and indeed this Premier, Mr. Speaker, to call an election. Because, Mr. Speaker, I'm not exactly sure if we've seen a period in time when the province and the people of Saskatchewan have not been waiting for and expecting an election in the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I was listening to the members this

afternoon and the questions that were being placed by my colleagues and the responses being given by the ministers in this afternoon's question period, one has to really ask themselves . . . In fact, I would say you don't even have to ask yourself whether or not we need an election. I think it's very obvious. We need an election because there is a lack of confidence.

And even on the backbenches of this government, I sense that there's a sense and a feeling of unease. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is why this Premier has decided that it would be inappropriate to call an election at this time in his mandate.

Well I reserve that, that it isn't his mandate. This Premier was elected as the Leader of the NDP of Saskatchewan in 2000, Mr. Speaker, and this Premier really does not have the confidence of the people of Saskatchewan to be the Premier because he's just filled the chair. He has not been willing to call the election to give the people of Saskatchewan the opportunity to determine whether or not they want this Premier to fill the Premier's chair in the province of Saskatchewan, or whether or not they would prefer to have the opposition leader move across the aisle and give a sense of direction and vision for the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there are so . . . Deputy Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are so many reasons why the people of Saskatchewan are looking forward to an election. And in fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you talk to people across this province and as you — in fact you don't really have to talk to people any more; you just go and start visiting with people, and it doesn't matter what community, you don't have to be in your constituency — as you walk into a community and people would see you coming down the road or the street and they recognize you, and the first question they ask is when are we going to have an election?

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, right across the city of Saskatoon you're finding people asking when are we going to have an election? When is this Premier going to screw up his courage and call an election? We went into the city of Prince Albert, Mr. Deputy Speaker. People are asking when will this Premier call an election, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Or, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you go into the city of Moose Jaw, people are asking — and I'm sure the member from Moose Jaw South is getting the question — when are you going to call an election? Or Moose Jaw North, pardon me, Moose Jaw North, pardon me, and Moose Jaw South as well — I'm sure both of them are getting the same question, when are you going to call an election, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe they're aware of the same issues that the opposition members are aware of. They're aware of the fact that there has been so many situations arise in their backbenches, in the front benches, in their leadership or lack thereof, that to call an election today would be folly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I happen to have been here in the late '80s when a number of members that are sitting currently on the government side of the House . . . And I'll give you credit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you weren't sitting here at that time so you weren't part of the action. However, a number of members who are sitting on this side of the House basically declared in the

late '80s that they were going to make this province ungovernable. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it just showed an irresponsible attitude. However, I think they did a very good job of making the province ungovernable.

(14:30)

However, since their election in 1991, I've yet to see where they have given a clear and concise direction and vision for the people of Saskatchewan, or indeed for people who have left this province to look at Saskatchewan as a place to come back to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have so much to offer. We all agree with that. We have so much to offer in this province, and yet people continue to leave the province of Saskatchewan. They go to our universities. In fact the number of young men and women entering our university campuses in this province, entering SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology), continue to increase as young men and women realize the benefits of furthering and enhancing their education. And so they enter our universities and colleges, only to find in recent surveys that over 50 per cent of them, before they even graduate, have made up their mind to leave the province of Saskatchewan.

And that's unfortunate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need young men and women living in the province, earning good salaries, and helping the rest of us pay taxes so that we can provide educational opportunities, we can provide the health benefits for the men and women and the seniors of our province down the road, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But unfortunately the direction that this government is giving us is sending the wrong message.

There are a few issues that I think I would have to suggest are . . . have been positive moves. But by and large, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I speak this afternoon, there's a number of issues that I want to raise as to why we should . . . this Premier and this government should call an election today.

But let me just give a couple areas that I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government has shown that they have a bit of sense where they should be going on issues such as highway construction. Well there's some major work that needs to be done in the area of the Moosomin constituency and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will continue to hammer on that.

The facts are the government finally in . . . two years ago realized they had to begin to put more money back into the highways budget. And as a result of that, we see an expanded role of twinning the No. 1 Highway and twinning the Yellowhead highway from Saskatoon through to the Alberta border, and then with the federal government coming forward with additional spending, expenditures this year, expanding that twinning process. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people across this province appreciate that, especially when we look at trade and we look at tourism.

However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, tourism just doesn't depend on a traffic flow east to west, from the Manitoba border to the Alberta border, or from Brandon, Manitoba through to Edmonton, Alberta. Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk tourism, we talk of people coming from the south of us, our neighbours

to the south coming to our province. And we talk of individuals, we talk about people coming from Eastern Canada and from Western Canada and we want them to stop in the province of Saskatchewan as they're driving through. As we look at twinned highways and an upgraded twinning system and a better highway mechanism to flow east and west, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we want people to begin to stop and visit Saskatchewan because we do have a lot to offer.

However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we continue to see not only our young people leaving this province and walking with their feet . . . speaking with their feet as they leave the province, we also see the fact that people just drive through our province, rather than taking the time to experience the benefits in our province.

Mr. Speaker, another area — and I'll give some credit to the member from Moose Jaw North — is some of the changes that have been made in the area of community and resource development, the formerly . . . the minister of Social Services. Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are a few issues there that I believe the government has been on the right track.

But, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we heard the Minister of Agriculture lamenting the fact that the Sask Party has not laid out its agricultural guidelines. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Minister of Agriculture wants to see the Saskatchewan Party's farm policy, he can turn to his colleague to his right and ask him to call an election and he will get the Saskatchewan Party agricultural policy.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will give . . . One other bouquet I'll pass to the government — before I move on and get into the litany of debacles that have happened within this government — is the fact that in 1999 the Saskatchewan Party spoke about a speed limit of 110 kilometres on all our divided highways, and we've been speaking about that for a number of years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And lo and behold, lo and behold, while the Minister of Highways and while this government has continually said no, we will not increase our speed limits, I believe the public of Saskatchewan must have . . . their voice must have been, become loud enough. And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fact that the Saskatchewan Party stood on increasing speed limits. And coming close to an election — and it would seem to me the announcement on the 110 kilometre speed limit came very close at a time when the province of Saskatchewan was certainly looking at calling an election and they were trying to salvage some of the ridings — that they're trying to hold on to in the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Deputy if this government is really serious about their vision, about their plan, about how they're going to grow this province, then why don't they go to the people of . . . the public? Why don't they call an election and let the people of Saskatchewan determine whether or not they have that plan, that vision?

If this Premier believes he has a mandate, if this Premier believes he knows where he's going, if this Premier has something to offer the people of Saskatchewan, then call the election. But I suspect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Premier has gone over the same comments he made in 1990 and he's looked at it, he said, oh my gosh, oh my gosh. What I said in 1990 about a government being stripped of its credibility — that's us;

a government that has no longer the confidence of the people — that's me; a government that no longer seems to have a vision or a clear direction — that's us.

And I believe as the Premier today is looking back over some of his former comments and saying hmm, based on what happened in 1991, maybe we need to ride this out a little longer. Maybe we need to carry on this debate a little longer so that the people . . . Hoping the people of Saskatchewan will forget about all the issues that have arisen over the last little while and the reasons why. If this Premier would screw up his courage and call an election today, that this . . . many of the members on that side of the Assembly would find themselves sitting on this side of the Assembly while the rest of them would not be back in this, in this Legislative Building.

So, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I are going to take some time today and give this Premier all the reasons why he should call an election. I suspect however, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he's not going to accept our reasons for calling an election at this time. And I suspect that, because of the fact that the polling that the NDP is doing right now probably isn't much different than the polling that the Saskatchewan Party continues to do or even the polling that the *Leader-Post* and the major newspapers have done in this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people in Saskatchewan do have a long memory. The people in Saskatchewan remember back to 1991, and the people in Saskatchewan remember that they voted in 1991 for a change. And the people in Saskatchewan at that time thought they were getting a real change. They didn't realize when they went to the polls in 1991 . . . The agriculture community didn't realize when they went to the polls in 1991 that the agricultural safety net or the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) program of that day, which had been implemented, which was being worked on to simplify and to address some of the major issues with it, would be soon unilaterally changed and done away with — ripped out from underneath their feet.

And the agriculture producers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have not forgotten that; 12 years later they have not forgotten that. And they look at this Minister of Agriculture and they look at what this Minister of Agriculture has done, and the Minister of Agriculture says they love him. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm glad to see that he thinks that because if he goes out and talks to the people in the province of Saskatchewan, he'll find that there isn't a lot of love lost between the farmers' agriculture community of Saskatchewan and this Minister of Agriculture who even in this year's budget has removed another 41 or \$51 million from agricultural spending in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I look at the budget that's been laid out, one has to ask themselves exactly what pull this Minister of Agriculture has even in this budget, allowing his budget to be decimated at a time when the farmers of . . . agriculture producers in Saskatchewan have been facing such a difficult time in their history.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we don't have to go too far. We see some of the difficulties. If you left the city of Regina and you drove up through Fort Qu'Appelle and through Melville and up into

Yorkton and to the Canora area, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you look at the acres and acres of unharvested crop that is still sitting out in that area.

And my colleague, the member from Kelvington-Wadena, today spoke about the difficulties farmers in her area are facing as a result of the excessive moisture they had last fall. And don't get me wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there aren't many farmers who will complain about moisture because we've seen such a large area of the province over the past two years in a devastating drought. And in fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some areas are still facing that.

However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you have conditions that you have no control over, you look to government to give some direction through policies to help you address those shortfalls so that you can continue to survive. And when we talk about insurance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're not talking about government putting up all the money, we're talking about farmers working hand in hand with provincial and federal governments to ensure their livelihood. And in many cases the insurance they're carrying barely covers their costs but at least it gives them something to work with, something to build upon for looking forward to a new future.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, springtime is a time of hope. For many producers in the province of Saskatchewan even this year, despite the areas that have gotten more moisture, are feeling a sense of doom and just really trying to come to grips with how they're going to address their farming situation.

And I say that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of the fact that there's crop, acres and acres of crop that continue to, or need to be harvested before producers can even think of putting crop in the ground. So it's going to impact significantly their seeding intentions.

Mr. Speaker, as well, and as a result of that . . . And when I think about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you think of some of the crops out there, canola for example, I'm not exactly sure that there's going to be a lot left in that swath. Most of that swath's going to have shelled out, and actually very little . . . other than you have to do something with it to get it off the field, as you can see, but as you put your machine through it it's an expense for a very little return.

And I think it's time the crop insurance came up with a policy whereby its adjusters could go out and look at a crop — basically we had it back in the mid-'80s — where the adjusters could go out and look at a crop and basically say, you know this crop really is valueless, there's nothing here.

It's not just the oil seeds, the canola, Mr. Deputy Speaker; it's the cereal grains. Some of the individuals . . . In fact my colleague was talking about his brother taking off 160 acres of barley. And what he had left in his hopper, Mr. Speaker, was a measly pittance of what he would have expected to harvest last fall, but most of it was only 38-bushel barley at best, plus excrement from wildlife damage, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So it seems to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the end of the day, crop insurance is still going to be making out fairly significant payments to a lot of producers. And you would begin to think

that maybe it's time we had a policy where we could identify what is worthless and not worth the effort of harvesting, write that off, pay out the crop insurance program that is needed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and get on with putting the crop in the ground.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture doesn't want to see that. He wants people to expend more money, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So it just . . . What I'm saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people across this province are just becoming fed up with the lack of direction and lack of vision that the province has.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we talk about agriculture and we talk about GRIP. What about the urban community, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the NDP Party was elected government in 1991. And I remember a by-election in 1989, a by-election in the Shaunavon area where the NDP Party of the day sent out a letter to the people of the constituency and said, if you elect a Conservative MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) — at that time it was a Conservative government — you re-elect a Conservative MLA, they will close the five hospitals you have in your constituency. So vote for us, because we won't close them.

(14:45)

And yet, what happened after the 1989 election? Well yes, the people of Shaunavon sent a Conservative MLA to the Legislative Assembly. In 1991, the people of Shaunavon decided however that they would send an NDP MLA to the province of Saskatchewan to be part of the Roy Romanow government.

And guess what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Those five hospitals that they accused the former government of closing weren't closed. Very shortly after they were elected, they closed most of those hospitals. In fact, not just in Shaunavon, but they closed hospitals across the province of Saskatchewan. I think at the end of the day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some 53 hospitals were closed in the province of Saskatchewan.

And if you think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that people have forgotten about the legacy that this government has undertaken since it was elected in 1991, think again. Many, many people, people on waiting lists — waiting to see specialists, waiting for surgery, having to deal with painful health experiences while they wait for an opportunity to see a doctor to have their situation addressed — have not forgotten the legacy that this province . . . that this government has put on the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, what I find very interesting . . . And we've certainly over the . . . Through the '90s, we've given the government some credit for their ability to manage the economy of the province of Saskatchewan. But as I look at the government's own financial documents that were received most recently in the budget speech, what I found very interesting, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the gross debt of this province . . . And I believe back in 1991, when the government was elected, the gross debt of the province was in the neighbourhood of just over \$12 billion. Today that gross debt in the province of

Saskatchewan is over \$13 billion. Some 11 years later, while we were supposedly seeing reductions in the debt in the province of Saskatchewan, we've actually seen a growth in the debt in the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not going to just use the government's own document — although the government's own document certainly proves that it hasn't been as open and honest with the people of Saskatchewan as they're trying to tell us they are — but I'd like to, I'd like to look at the auditor's statement, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When you look at the auditor's statement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a line in here that shows the budget estimates and the expenditures of government regarding the government's management of the economy. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture would like to get into this debate and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will certainly give him the opportunity. I just wanted to let the Minister of Agriculture know as well that there will be ample time in the debate because this debate can go on to infinity as we debate the issue of why the government should call an election.

But I'd like, and I'd like to point out a couple things here. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the auditor's Fall Report Volume No. 1, the auditor gives a broad picture of the expenditures of government from 1991 through to November of 2002. And what does the government point out? The government . . . The auditor points out that in 1991 the accumulated deficit at the end of the year was 7.89 . . . eight seven nine billion dollars . . . \$7.879 billion. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you follow that, if you follow that line across the page, what you see today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is accumulated deficit at the end of the year for 2002 is \$8.708 billion. Mr. Speaker, almost a billion dollars of growth . . . of debt, growth in the debt in the province of Saskatchewan.

And another issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I think the people of Saskatchewan need to know about, and I'd just like to point out to the people of Saskatchewan, and I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what caused the public sector to take the government to task is the issue of unfunded pension liabilities in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the unfunded pension plan in the province of Saskatchewan in this . . . since 1991 has . . . In 1991 the unfunded pension liability was \$2.7 billion; today that unfunded pension liability is over \$4 billion, Mr. Speaker, over \$4 billion. And you have to ask yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, here are . . . There's every reason here why the people of Saskatchewan are calling for the opportunity to go to the polls and have an election.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the former minister of Finance could argue about how well he had done at balancing the books of Saskatchewan. But, Mr. Deputy . . . Mr. Speaker, pardon me, Mr. Speaker, all you have to do is look at the auditor's statements, look at the auditor's documents, Mr. Speaker. You just look . . . have to look at the government's own financial documents, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you have to ask yourself, exactly what has this government done to create any confidence for the people living outside of this province — even former Saskatchewan residents — to look at moving back to the province of Saskatchewan.

I'm going to look at, over the past month we've had a number of headlines have hit the paper about this government. In January, and I believe maybe back in January we had the former minister of Justice decided it's time to pull the pin. Mr. Speaker, was it because that member started looking at where this government was going and that member decided that he didn't have any confidence in his Premier any more or in his cabinet colleagues and decided that it might be better to get on with life and move into the private sector? Is that why this member decided to pull the pin — a lack of confidence in his cabinet colleagues?

Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that when Mr. Axworthy decided to pull the pin he was showing that he didn't have a lot of confidence in the leader of this, the NDP Party and the Premier of this province to lead this province into the future with a vision for this future that, whereby this province would be able to grow. I'd like to quote a little bit from this article. It says:

Just as the federal NDP was too idealistic for Chris Axworthy to stay on as a federal MP, the (Lorne Calvert) government was too interested in making sure government is part of the solution to every problem in society.

And he says:

In spite of the government's brave words about how rosy the NDP's chances are in Saskatoon, you have to wonder if Axworthy knows something about public opinion that we don't (Mr. Speaker).

And, Mr. Speaker, that I think says it very well, that sentence that you have to wonder if Axworthy knows something about public opinion that we don't. I think, Mr. Speaker, the recent opinion polls are showing that Mr. Axworthy must have been reading the same opinion polls that my colleagues and I and certainly that the major newspapers across the province of Saskatchewan have been coming out with.

The article goes on to say, talking about Mr. Axworthy:

He is too polite to say so, but it's a safe bet the government's direction over the last two years in Saskatchewan would have been very different had Axworthy won the NDP leadership at the end of January 2001.

And I would think, Mr. Speaker, probably the sentence that expresses it all is:

Above all else, Axworthy is interested in winning. Given that the NDP very nearly lost the last election on a much less interventionist course than the present one, Axworthy had lost a lot of his curiosity about what the outcome of the next election might be.

Mr. Speaker, I think that speaks volumes as to why the former minister of Justice decided to pull the pin — not only a lack of confidence but a lack of ability, the ability of this government to govern.

And I think in view of the many issues that have arisen since

the former minister left his position as Justice minister, have probably . . . Over the past few days or the past few weeks and months, the former minister is thinking, thank you, Lord; thank you, Lord, for leading me in a new direction and I don't have to be here with this government trying to defend the policies of this government.

Mr. Speaker, we were called to session in late February, mid-February, and the government came forward with the Throne Speech. And a Throne Speech that most people were expecting would give a real vision for the province of Saskatchewan, but a Throne Speech that, Mr. Speaker, many editorials across the province of Saskatchewan talked about a lack of vision, a lack of confidence.

In fact in the *Leader-Post* in March 19:

We all know that throne speeches are banal by nature. (But) more to the point, they seldom reflect the climate of a legislative session.

But you'd think that Calvert and his government would be eager to shake up the status quo, given that . . . the way things are going seems a sure formula for relinquishing power to the Saskatchewan Party.

And, Mr. Speaker, sometimes quoting from the media is difficult as well.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think the . . . what the article basically says is the fact that the media are reflecting the thoughts and the views of Saskatchewan people across this province. The fact that this province has lost a lack of direction and really doesn't know where it's going, hasn't got any clue as to where it wants to head and the direction it wants to give the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about people quitting and leaving this government, one would think that a person of Janice MacKinnon's nature and stature would . . . that's the type of person you'd want to continue to have on the front benches in this government.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, shortly after the election of the current Premier of this province as the Leader of the NDP, Ms. MacKinnon took a look at this government, took a look at the direction that this Premier was leading this NDP government into, took a look at the direction that this government was trying to lead this province, and she said, it's really not what I want.

I believe Janice MacKinnon had a real vision for the province of Saskatchewan. And you know it's very interesting, Mr. Deputy, it's interesting that I would be saying that. And I see some members across the floor agreeing with me, that I would even agree with Janice MacKinnon on some of her ideals.

But you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, politics being politics, I guess it can be subject to change. People's opinions can change.

And what we've seen . . . what was seen, Mr. Speaker, is we look at Janice MacKinnon who was the Finance minister in the province of Saskatchewan, who was given so many accolades during her tenure as Finance minister in the province of

Saskatchewan, and basically she as well said . . . She talks about her reasons for quitting Calvert's cabinet just three weeks after being sworn in. And this is a quote:

She writes that she felt a "malaise" about the new government's direction particularly with regard to the new premier's first budget.

She comments here, and there's a quote from her book, and it says:

Had she gotten her way, she would have moved out some of the "wheelers-dealers" in the Crown sector and taken the government right out of making direct investments in companies. In short, what Premier Calvert is looking at now is a campaign not just against the Saskatchewan Party but also against the provincial finance minister who took the tough decisions when they were needed.

I guess what it says of Ms. McKinnon, while she was elected and certainly had built a fairly reputable reputation as a minister of Finance in the province of Saskatchewan, there comes a time when your integrity has to be . . . you have to weigh your integrity against the direction of your colleagues and certainly the new leadership of a political party. And that, Mr. Speaker, I think points to the reasons why Ms. McKinnon left the NDP, left this government, and decided to get on with her own life — get on with her life.

And again I see some colleagues across the floor who want to get into the debate; however, I can assure them, Mr. Speaker, they'll have ample time to enter this debate. And they can quiz some of the many of the comments I have been making and the reasons that I've been giving as to why the people of Saskatchewan are looking for this government to call an election.

Mr. Deputy, Mr. Speaker, members across the way were just lamenting the fact that I would even refer to Ms. McKinnon as someone that we would look to and be quoting from and upholding. But it's not just, it's not just my colleagues and I, Mr. Speaker. Look at what, at what some of the articles in . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I beg the member's indulgence in order that I can make an introduction.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Kowalsky: — Members of the Assembly, I wish to bring to your attention a group of 51 good-looking students who have travelled all the way to Regina from the city of Prince Albert.

They attend a school that is in my constituency. It's Ecole King George Community School. A group of grade 5 and 6 students and they are here with their teachers, Ms. Tanya McShane, and the teacher, Andrea Jonnason, who I am proud to say was a student in one of my classes at one time. And I believe also that they have present with them a couple of drivers, whose names I don't have at this time.

(15:00)

This group that goes to Ecole King George Community School, at least some of them are bilingual. And I will be meeting them later. I look forward to meeting with these groups later.

And I just want to say this to the students: je dis bonjour aux étudiants d'Ecole King George de Prince Albert.

(Translation: Hello to the students from Ecole King George of Prince Albert.)

Bienvenue à notre Palais. Welcome to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The member has requested leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with you in welcoming all these shining young faces from Prince Albert, who've come to their Legislative Building. It's always good to see a group of students from Prince Albert. It's a long way from Regina to our home. And I want to welcome you all here.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Prince Albert is the forestry capital of Saskatchewan, home of the new forestry centre to be built in Prince Albert in the next weeks. And I know all these students are very proud of that new centre as well. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 4 — Non-Confidence Motion (continued)

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to join with Mr. Speaker and the member from Prince Albert Northcote to welcome the students who have come down from Prince Albert. Certainly it's quite a drive and we're pleased to see that you've come to visit our Legislative Assembly.

And just an explanation of what you're seeing this afternoon. It's private members' day and private members' motions that we'll be debating on the floor at this time, so you won't see the raucous debate that you normally would get in the question period. However there might be times when members might enter the debate. And certainly we just want to thank you for coming and joining us this afternoon.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, when we look at, we look at this government and its lack of vision, lack of direction, and what is very appalling . . . And I'm sure for government members was something that they certainly didn't want to hear or didn't want to see, and I continue to refer to Janice

MacKinnon and her book and another quote from *The StarPhoenix* on April 15. I believe it was the day after she had released her book to the public.

And there's a couple things I'd like to quote out of this, of this editorial. It says . . . the writer says:

Janice McKinnon sounded like a member of the Saskatchewan Party Monday, as she officially launched a memoir of her days as a high-powered NDP cabinet minister.

And then he quotes from the minister, and says:

While professing a reluctance to enter the current political debate, the former finance minister criticized the provincial government's economic development policy, implied the economic growth assumption in the recent provincial budget isn't prudent, and questioned the government's ethanol policy.

And a quote from Ms. McKinnon's book that's in the article says:

"I think two of the lessons of the 1990s was that the government should not be intervening directly in the economy, picking what I call winners and losers. The other lesson about the '90s is that we have to be more open-minded about how we deliver services . . . (So) all public services . . . (can) be delivered by the public sector? We have to be open to the fact that in some cases this may not be necessary."

Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Once again I beg the member's indulgence to make a couple of introductions.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Just walked into the . . . Seated in the front of the Speaker's gallery are five people who are on the Internship Selection Committee, selecting and interviewing and selecting interns of the future for this Assembly. I would like to recognize them at this time. And if they'd wave or stand when I mention their names.

First of all we have . . . Two of the people that are here are actually former speakers of this Assembly. One is John Brockelbank, who was the member for Saskatoon Mayfair and Saskatoon Westmount, and I think Saskatoon Centre at one time. Welcome, Mr. Brockelbank. Also a former speaker was the member from Rosetown-Elrose, Herb Swan.

On the committee is a professor of political science from the University of Regina, Jocelyn Praud. And we welcome to the gallery two people who you often see in the legislature as well, who are also on the committee, and that's one of our interns, Corinne Barnett, and of course our Clerk, Gwenn Ronyk.

Welcome to the gallery.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 4 — Non-Confidence Motion (continued)

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as well to extend a welcome to Mr. Brockelbank and Mr. Swan. They were here when I was first elected, so they gave me a few pointers on how I should be performing in this Assembly and how I should conduct myself, and I really appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we're talking about a government that has lost a vision, lost a sense of direction, and a government that on a daily basis continues to ask the Saskatchewan Party, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, for new ideas that they can implement in their policy as they think about going to the polls.

And what we've been basically saying today and letting the government know, that if they wanted to and if they would screw up the courage to call an election, they're certainly welcome to call an election at any time because I know my colleagues are ready to go to the polls right now . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — And many people across this province certainly want to go to the polls.

But as I was saying, Mr. Speaker, we can see why the government is so reluctant to call an election at this time.

There have been so many issues they've had to deal with in regards to how they manage the finances, their lack of direction, their lack of vision, and how they manage agencies who handle finances or funds that are put in their trust, or the lack thereof as far as management, and we . . . I'm going to bring a number, talk about a number of issues where there are concerns that have been brought to the attention of this Assembly regarding this government over the past number of weeks.

And let me, let me begin first of all with the Dutch Lerat situation, Mr. Speaker, where we had . . . and I'm going to quote from an article in *The StarPhoenix*, Saskatoon, March 27, and where we had an individual who misappropriated some \$837,000.

If you compare the scale of the Tories' misdeeds with Lerat's mispending you will find that the \$837,000 appropriated by the former MLAs very nearly matches the . . . 811 that Lerat still owes SIGA for his globetrotting ways.

And the article goes on to talk about the fact that very interesting how the prosecutor's office in the province of Saskatchewan found that there really wasn't sufficient evidence or thereof to prosecute, and yet they found it quite convenient to prosecute former members, such as the member from Canora-Pelly for a podium that he had purchased which he then gave to his local community; it wasn't a personal benefit.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think what people find very distasteful is when they see 830 . . . \$811 million misappropriated by an

agency and yet the government is not prepared to hold this agency accountable. Mr. Speaker, people find that very . . . They become irate when they think about this misappropriation because it's their taxpayers' dollars.

It's their dollars then, and they think about people waiting on waiting lists for hospital beds, for surgery, or for health procedures and this \$831,000 could have gone a long way to addressing some of the needs in the health care field or, Mr. Speaker, could have gone a long way to addressing some of the needs that our universities and our colleges are facing.

And even as we see in the gallery this afternoon, the schools across this province and the lack of provincial funding that has been declining over the past number of years.

And many schools are, many schools are struggling with maintaining their programming because of that funding other than . . . And the reason they're struggling with that, Mr. Speaker, is because the local property tax owner is becoming fed up and tired of always being called upon to meet the void that has been implemented by the Minister of Finance and the Premier of this province in their budgets as they brought . . . been bringing them forward over the past number of years.

Mr. Speaker, we look at a \$6.2 million loss in a, I guess it was called a bega mingo . . . pardon me, mega bingo, pardon, we'll get that correct yet — mega bingo project. And if I'm not mistaken, Mr. Speaker, I believe that is now up to over \$7 million lost in this project.

Mr. Speaker, what it, what that project was, was an attempt by this government when it implemented gambling across the province of Saskatchewan, when it allowed video lottery terminals all across this province, and what it did, it was . . . destroyed the ability of local organizations, and in many cases through their small bingos, to raise the finances that they would use to provide services, whether it be in rinks or whether it be in local community centres or projects at the local level to meet the need of providing those services.

And as they saw their revenues dwindle, while the VLTs (video lottery terminal) . . . And the government I believe in 1991 promised that they would share 10 per cent of those winnings with the communities across this province. Because of that lack and because the government decided that no, they couldn't, that they would not, were not prepared to honour that campaign commitment, many of these communities, many of these organizations found themselves in the positions of barely surviving.

So what did the government do? The government came up with another bright idea. And the government decided, well we'll come up with a major bingo plan whereby we'll . . . electronically we'll tie all these bingo, large bingo operations together. And as a result of this larger pot that we'll be able to produce, we'll get more people coming back into the bingo parlours, and so many of these local organizations will then be able to recoup some of their losses and build on the funds that they use to support their local rinks and other initiatives within the communities.

However, Mr. Speaker, however, Mr. Speaker, this mega bingo

project, what happened?

First of all it was just a hare-brained scheme to try and address a problem that this government had created because of a lack of a plan and initiative to build the province of Saskatchewan. I mean, somebody came up with an idea but forgot to put a plan in place to see whether or not this mega bingo project would work.

And as a result, Mr. Speaker, what we have today is the government losing \$7.9 million on a project that if they'd done a little bit of research in, Mr. Speaker, they would have found that that project was not worth proceeding with, and they would have not spent that money. They would have used that money to address health care and education costs in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and even addressing our highways.

Or, Mr. Speaker, if you want another issue that the people of Saskatchewan are annoyed with, talk about our land titles registry. And, Mr. Speaker, to talk about ISC (Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan) and the land titles registry in the province of Saskatchewan, it doesn't matter who you talk to, it doesn't matter who you come across, as soon as you mention the words or the letters I-S-C, people become annoyed.

Why do they become annoyed, Mr. Speaker? Because the government decided that they were going to put a program in place, a computerized program in place that would simplify the process of the transfer of land titles that would cut down on the amount of paper that has been used in the past. And that would be quite economical.

However, Mr. Speaker, what have we seen? It hasn't simplified anything. In fact, Mr. Speaker, most people have found that someone just over the telephone and with pencil and paper could process land titles transfer papers a lot quicker than this ISC program has done.

And what has it done to date? It originally was going to cost \$17 million. To date we're well over \$64 million and we still have not rectified the problem of simplifying the process of land transfers in the province of Saskatchewan. Just another example, prime example, Mr. Speaker, of why many people across this province think it's time for this Premier to call an election.

Mr. Speaker, another issue comes to the forefront, and I'm sure even the students in the gallery today have heard about SPUDCO (Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company). Oh and pardon me, Mr. Speaker. I'm not supposed to draw the students into debate, and I apologize for that.

Mr. Speaker, people across this province, whether they're observing by television or whatever, know what SPUDCO is all about. They know about this initiative that this province attempted to undertake in building a potato industry in the province of Saskatchewan.

(15:15)

However, Mr. Speaker, the part that is somewhat appalling is that we had a number of private individuals in the province of

Saskatchewan who had begun to develop a potato industry, who had begun to develop a marketing arm for their industry, and were doing actually quite well, only to find when the government got involved, the government, because of their initiative and because of their bigger, better, and I-know-better-than-you-can ideal in regards to marketing potatoes, what they found themselves in was sitting in a scheme whereby the province of Saskatchewan lost . . . initiated a program that actually cost the Saskatchewan taxpayers another \$28 million — \$28 million.

Rather than allowing the private individuals who were already building the industry on their own to continue to build that industry, they decided, no, we've got a better idea and we've got some taxpayers' dollars that we don't know what to do with, so we'll build some potato sheds and we'll get into the potato industry in the province of Saskatchewan; and at the end of the day the people of Saskatchewan will be thanking us for getting into the potato industry.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think what we found, we found a lot of rotten potatoes in the state of Saskatchewan. And Saskatchewan people and the voters of Saskatchewan will not forget about the \$20 million debacle that this province initiated when they decided that they were going to get into the potato industry.

Mr. Speaker, even . . . And just another small enterprise that the government decided to get involved in was FarmGro, another . . . I believe here's another situation of about a \$12 million expenditure and again, a situation where a farm community and farm families themselves were beginning to design a program that would work to help them market their specialty crops. And again, the government gets involved and what do we have? We have farmers losing their shirts and losing thousands of dollars to a failed project, the FarmGro project that was just nicely came on the market and then the plug was pulled on because it just did not have a sound business plan to build on, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, what I've been showing and what I've been speaking about over the past half an hour or so is a number of issues, and I haven't even got down to expanding in depth into some of these issues that have been raised. But I think my colleagues have a lot that they'd like to add into this debate, so we'll allow them to do that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important for this government to realize that its time is running out. And I believe the fact that they are realizing that its time is running out, that's why we have not gone to the polls at this time. And my guess is we may not even get to the polls in this fall; it could be next spring before we go to the polls.

In fact the member from Saskatoon Nutana, and I remember sitting on that side of the House when the member from Saskatoon Nutana kept saying, call an election, call an election. But I don't know where the member from Saskatoon Nutana is today. I would expect that member to be calling an election. Or the member from Moose Jaw North wanted to call an election, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there's enough members over there who were calling for an election in 1991, and that election was

finally called. And I will not disagree with the fact that maybe the government extended its time period. But I wonder if those members over there today are sitting in the same position and saying to their Premier, I think we better hold on a little longer. It might be a little brighter, might be a little more light at the end of the tunnel. We just better hold out a little longer rather than calling an election today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think when this Premier calls, is ready to and calls an election in the province of Saskatchewan, that people of Saskatchewan are going to speak. And they will speak very loudly and they will speak very clearly because they are not happy with the direction this province is going. They are not happy with the lack of leadership, a lack of vision that is coming from this Premier's chair. They're not happy with the current fiscal position the province of Saskatchewan finds itself in.

And, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the fiscal situation of the province of Saskatchewan, you have to ask yourself sometimes why, why we would even want to campaign to form a government, looking at what, looking at what this government has done and the fiscal situation it has left this province in, Mr. Speaker. And as I said earlier, we just have to go to the government's own documents to find that out.

We see in the budget that was presented earlier on, the government predicted that the Saskatchewan economy would grow by 6.8 per cent in 2003. And the editorials for the following few days, Mr. Speaker, they just called it laughable. In fact as you looked across this country, there wasn't one economic group, there wasn't one agency that even looked at 6.8 per cent growth as something that was even achievable. Most of the growth factors that were being presented by economists across Canada and across each province were predicting, at the best, some 3 per cent.

So when you look at this budget, and it's basing its economic growth and its ability to come in meeting the target figures that the Minister of Finance presented, if we're looking at 6.8 per cent — if we don't reach that potential, if indeed the potential ends up being at around the 3 per cent then we are looking at a sad situation regarding the fiscal situation of the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are so many other reasons why it's time for an election. And I believe some of the editorials have certainly initiated that. In the *Leader-Post*, one of the editorials said, "Bright future optical illusion — call an election." This was shortly after the budget was delivered. And I'd like to quote:

The fact is, though, Saskatchewan people are voting with their feet. They have lost confidence in the province's ability to provide them with a future . . . they don't see any sense of direction coming from the provincial government.

When it should be leading the way, the provincial government is wallowing in (its) indecision.

Mr. Speaker, the article ends up by saying:

What Saskatchewan needs is an agenda for recovery.

What it needs is an election.

Mr. Speaker, I believe, and my colleagues believe, that it is time for an election in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Harpauer: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in your gallery, I am very, very honoured and pleased to introduce a man that I've known for some time now. He has been . . . He's an inspiration, quite honestly. He's gone back to school and is doing extremely well. And we're all very, very pleased with him in our community. And I am quite proud and honoured to know Mr. Doug Ehler.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 4 — Non-Confidence Motion (continued)

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe the people of Saskatchewan are indeed looking for a bright future. But at this time they do not see that bright future coming from the leadership of this government and this Premier. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the member from Cannington:

That this Assembly expresses its non-confidence in the Premier and cabinet.

So moved.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise today to address this issue: a vote of non-confidence in the Premier and cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have indeed lost confidence in this government. They have lost confidence in the Premier, who has never been elected by the people of Saskatchewan in a general election, Mr. Speaker. He has been elected in a by-election in one riding, certainly, but not across the province, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have lost confidence in the members of cabinet especially, Mr. Deputy Speaker, after reviewing all of the failed adventures that these elected members have been involved in with taxpayers' money, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, they have lost confidence in the ability of the backbenchers of this government to fill in, Mr. Speaker, for any of the members who are currently in Executive

Council.

We have seen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a number of people who have left this government over the last three years. They have been what would be considered the strongest members of this government, Mr. Speaker. They saw the writing on the wall. They understood that this was a government that was old; it was a government that was tired; it was a government bereft of ideas.

Mr. Deputy Chair, this government came in in 1991 with some ideas. The people elected them. They carried out the platform that they ran on, Mr. Deputy Chair. But since 1995, this government has simply been running to hold power — not with any particular agenda, Mr. Speaker, just simply to maintain their hand on the levers of power. And we have certainly seen what this government has been prepared to do to maintain that hold, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It certainly hasn't been for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan. It hasn't been for the benefit of the Crown corporations which this government likes to point to all the time. So you have to ask yourself, for whom has this been a benefit? And it's certainly not evident that it's the public, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that the people of Saskatchewan have lost confidence in the government opposite is they have no plan. They don't know why they're government. And fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whenever you ask the government a question about one of their policies or one of the things that they have done, they cannot accept, Mr. Deputy Chair, responsibility for their actions.

In fact, you know we look at our parliamentary system, we look at the Saskatchewan legislature and the . . . and how we are governed, and we like to use the term responsible . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I would ask the . . . Order. I would ask the member for Athabasca and the member for Estevan if they would like to have a private conversation to take it behind the bar. I'm having difficulty hearing the speaker.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and I'm glad you used the word conversation in that particular comment.

Mr. Speaker, we like to look at our legislature and term it as being responsible government. And yet, Mr. Deputy Chair, the members opposite are the most irresponsible government that this province has had in a good many year.

Not one of them, Mr. Deputy Chair, is prepared to stand in their place and accept responsibility for their own actions. Only, Mr. Deputy Chair, only when forced by the courts and the media, Mr. Speaker, is a member of that Executive Council, of that government, prepared to admit to an action that has cost this province millions and millions of dollars.

Mr. Deputy Chair, I look to the member from P.A. Carlton, I believe it is. No, which one is it? P.A. Northcote — and my apologies to the member from P.A. Carlton — the member from P.A. Northcote, who for six years, Mr. Deputy Chair, refused to accept the responsibilities for the losses at SPUDCO. Only, Mr. Deputy Chair, after the courts provided the evidence

that he had been misleading the public of Saskatchewan, misleading the people of Saskatchewan, misleading the taxpayers, Mr. Deputy Chair, did that member admit to not having provided the proper information when asked, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Mr. Deputy Chair, the member from P.A. Northcote said that the SPUDCO deal was a public-private partnership, and yet we find out, Mr. Deputy Chair, that there was no private partnership there. It was all public money.

And now we hear today in the House from the minister responsible for CIC, that the government's prepared to release an additional \$2 million to Minds Eye Pictures, providing they can get some further private financing.

(15:30)

Well, Mr. Deputy Chair, it turns out they got some additional private financing. The government's prepared to put up \$2 million, and Minds Eye managed to find another 300,000 of public money . . . of private money, excuse me.

So the public has an investment of six and a half million dollars in this particular company. And yet if you look at the CIC annual report, it's worth a half a million. And yet the minister stands up there and brags about how much of a success he has been. In the film industry, he only lost \$6 million.

Now I can understand why the member might be excited about that because the member from P.A. Northcote lost \$28 million in SPUDCO. So the member from CIC, if you look at it on the positive side, is more successful than the member from P.A. Northcote. But I really think that the members opposite are more interested in seeing how much they can lose, not how much they can make for the province of Saskatchewan.

The member from . . . the minister in charge for CIC, the member from Meadow Lake, has lost \$85 million in total, Mr. Deputy Chair, for CIC just in the last year. That's the kind of leadership the members opposite are providing. And that's why, Mr. Deputy Chair, the people of Saskatchewan no longer have any confidence in the members opposite, no longer have any confidence in the philosophy that they follow, Mr. Deputy Chair.

And in fact, if you look back over the elections since 1944, five times have the government opposite managed to make a majority vote of the people, where the public said yes we support that government. Now that's not to say that the other parties have done any better. Certainly not, Mr. Deputy Chair. But when you look at a philosophy that has been a guiding force in this province for a number of years, you have to ask yourself, what success has that philosophy had? What success has government ownership?

The members opposite are saying we need to buy into these companies across the province — like SPUDCO, like NST (NST Network Services of Chicago), like buying SecurTek, competing against the cable companies in this province, against the co-op cable companies, Mr. Speaker. The government's saying they have to buy into the ethanol industry. They have to buy into the pulp industry. They have to buy into the upgrader

industry. They have to buy into the oil industry, Mr. Speaker. And you ask yourself, you ask yourself, if this philosophy is the philosophy that will make Saskatchewan successful, why is no one else in the world following that same philosophy? The people who have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, — such as Russia, such as Eastern Europe — those economies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, failed, and, Mr. Speaker, have we failed in Saskatchewan following that policy?

Back in the 1930s, Mr. Deputy Chair, we had a million people in Saskatchewan — a million people. Our neighbour to the west, Alberta, had 600,000. They were less economically well off than we were; they had less potential than we did. And yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 60 to 70 years later, we're still at a million people and Alberta is over three million.

Even, Mr. Deputy Chair, even Manitoba is growing, even Manitoba is growing. Whereas Saskatchewan, our population continues to decline; our out-migration continues, Mr. Deputy Chair. And who is leaving this province? Well traditionally, in Saskatchewan, it's always been the younger people who have left. Because the people that we raise in Saskatchewan have ambition, Mr. Deputy Chair, they have ideas that they want to implement. They are entrepreneurial, but they can't do it here. They leave.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — They go to Ontario. They go to Manitoba. They go to Alberta. They go to BC (British Columbia) or they go to the US (United States), Mr. Deputy Chair. But they leave.

But what's happening now? Those same people are leaving. But now we also have the grandparents that are leaving because their sons and daughters are living elsewhere. Their grandchildren are living elsewhere and they want to be a part of those grandchildren's lives, so they pack up when they retire and they move out.

So we lose not only the youth who should be building this province, who are our future taxpayers, we're losing the people who are our current taxpayers. If you take a look at the demographic graphs, we have a shortage of people in percentage-wise comparisons to the rest of the country in the taxpaying years of 20 to 55. And that has occurred under their watch — under their watch.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have to look at why is that happening? What's causing this? Well for a number of years, Mr. Deputy Chair . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, the ministers opposite were saying, we're so diversified in Saskatchewan that whatever happens to agriculture won't have an impact on this province, even though, Mr. Deputy Chair, the people of Saskatchewan were continuing to leave.

But in the latest downturn, now they're blaming agriculture as the flaw. Well that's not the flaw; that's one of the symptoms, one of the symptoms of the failure of this government. 1992, this government came in, Mr. Deputy Chair, and tore up the GRIP contracts. They didn't ask people in agriculture if they wanted that to happen. They deemed it to have happened. They deemed it to have happened legally when it didn't. But because

they're the majority, Mr. Deputy Chair, they have the power to do so.

Ever since that time this government has claimed, the members sitting opposite have claimed, the Premier — because he was here even though he quit for a little while in there, he was sitting here in cabinet, Mr. Deputy Chair — claimed that they were going to bring forward a new safety net program for agriculture in this province. Well, 11 years later and we're still waiting — 11 years later. And yet the government members opposite want us to believe they have a plan. Well it's taken them 11 years not to come up with a plan.

And yet prior to that '91 election they were running around the province saying, we have the solution, we are the salvation for agriculture, we're going to make GRIP bigger and better. Well all they did was eliminate it.

But that's not unusual for the members opposite. I can remember back in the 1980s in a by-election down in Wood River where the members opposite that were here at the time were down there campaigning saying, if you elect a PC (Progressive Conservative) member here, they're going to close every hospital in this constituency.

And you know what, Mr. Deputy Chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it happened. Every hospital in that constituency but one was closed, but who did it? It wasn't the PCs. It was the members sitting opposite . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And in fact at that time Wood . . . Shaunavon was not in the Wood River constituency, I'll have the member from Regina know. He needs to go back and check his history a little bit. There was one hospital out of five left open. And yet they were the members who ran around fearmongering, fearmongering in an attempt to gain favour with the constituents, that the hospitals were going to be closed under a different party. But when they became power, they closed those hospitals.

And now we have the same sort of thing happening with the members opposite running around the province saying the sky is going to fall if you elect a Sask Party government, they're going to sell every Crown corporation. Well, Mr. Deputy Chair, just like their rhetoric on the hospitals, it's not true. The fact is, over the last two decades if you take a look at who has sold more Crown assets, it's the members opposite.

The members opposite like to say well we have to keep the Crowns here. We have to have the head offices here. We have to have those workers here.

Well I sat in the legislature on the opposition side, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the government — the NDP government — changed the legislation to allow the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to change their share structure so that there was no limit on it, so that the headquarters could move. The headquarters are still in Saskatchewan but they changed the rule. They changed it — the NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker — they changed the rules on the ownership, taking away the fact that the headquarters had to stay here.

Then we look at SaskEnergy, Mr. Deputy Chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker — the same thing. They took away the rule that said the headquarters had to stay in Saskatchewan. It wasn't some

radical right-wing government that did that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was the NDP that did that, that allowed that headquarters to move. They were the ones who sold the shares, SaskEnergy . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It was, right, Saskoil. Sorry. The member has corrected me on the name and I thank him for that — Saskoil.

They're probably looking at selling SaskEnergy. We just don't have the evidence yet.

But they were very seriously looking though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at selling SaskTel. That corporation was up on the sales block, along with SaskPower, at one time from this government when Mr. Romanow was in power.

And so while they want to run around the province trying to scare people, the clear facts are that the members opposite, the NDP, have been selling the Crown assets of Saskatchewan.

Our policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we believe the core Crowns need to be in place, that they provide very good opportunities for the people of Saskatchewan in this province. And it's key, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I say, in this province. Because what they're doing opposite is they're taking the hard-earned tax dollars of the people of Saskatchewan and squandering them around the province. And they don't have a plan in doing this, it's just helter-skelter — well gee, it's warm in New Zealand, maybe I'll buy shares or buy a company in New Zealand, or maybe I'll buy one in Australia.

Take a look at the list here. We have here, Retx.com in Atlanta, Georgia — you know that's not a bad place to have to go for a board meeting once in a while, you know — Austar in Australia, which also operates I believe in New Zealand. And yet all of these, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are losses — serious, millions-of-dollars losses around the world — perpetuated on the public by the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to take a little run down the list here. You know the member from P.A. Northcote lost \$28 million on SPUDCO. That was an investment in the province of Saskatchewan where they had a lot of support in the communities initially — a lot of support in those communities initially, such as Outlook and Lucky Lake — because it looked like something that could add to those communities.

But why was it pressed ahead at that particular time — 1997, 1998? Because the member opposite, Bernie Wiens, who was the minister of Agriculture, the minister of CIC, was politically in trouble and so this looked like a good economic development for that area. The public in that area liked it. But when it came time for the election, they turfed him anyways because by that time they could see all of the holes in SPUDCO. The potatoes had their eyes open, Mr. Speaker, and the whole public could see how rotten this deal was. And yet the member, the member opposite, continued, continued to deceive — continued to deceive — the public of Saskatchewan for a further six years.

Craig Wireless is another one that, another one of the investments that the members opposite have put their money into and that has lost money — \$10 million in losses — *tapped into* .com has lost \$2.4 million. And everyone knows, Mr. Deputy Chair, that these are losses that can never be recouped.

These are dollars that the people of Saskatchewan have taken from their pockets to subsidize businesses, government losses outside of Saskatchewan.

(15:45)

You know, the next thing we could expect to see this government investing in is a manure company, because that is basically what their whole economic platform has become, Mr. Speaker. It smells and it doesn't work.

So, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government needs to come up with a plan. They need to have an economic plan because the economic plan that they're using is 60 years old, is out of date, and doesn't work.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — The Premier here, just over a year ago, announced an advertising program, a feel good advertising program that is supposed to bring people back to Saskatchewan, is supposed to make us feel good about Saskatchewan, is supposed to rejuvenate the province of Saskatchewan. And what's happening? It's not working. Out-migration continues.

But you have to take a look at where the government is doing their advertising. Are they advertising in Alberta to try and bring people back? Yes, there's a few ads. Are they advertising in Manitoba to try and bring people back? Yes, there's a few ads. But the majority of the money, Mr. Deputy Chair . . . Speaker, is spent in Saskatchewan. And isn't it amazing, isn't it amazing that this multi-million dollar advertising campaign, paid for by the government, takes place just before an election? Paid for by taxpayers just before an election. Isn't that amazing? Isn't that amazing?

Well the Deputy Premier says, when's the election? Well I take a look at the legislation on the order paper and say, I think this government wanted to go to an election this spring but was scared off by the polls because it says they can't win.

The Deputy Premier says it's going to be a year and a half away. Well if it's a year and a half away, I guess the Lieutenant Governor will be calling the election not the Premier, because by that time their mandate will have run out.

So, Mr. Deputy Chair, the philosophy that these members opposite have been following for the last 60 years has shown itself not to work. If it did work, if the philosophy of complete government ownership was successful, we would have the best growth rates in Canada. We would be the pre-eminent province in Canada because it's been tried here now since 1944.

And yet our population has not grown, not grown at all. Where you look across Canada, mid-1930s, '40s, we had a population in Canada of somewhere between 15 and 20 million people — 15 and 20 million people. It's doubled in that time in Saskatchewan . . . in Canada, excuse me, and yet in Saskatchewan, we're stagnant. We're not moving ahead because of the economic policies of the members opposite. It's time that they step aside and let somebody else . . . Even Tommy Douglas's ideas, Mr. Deputy Chair, have worn out, not only across the world but particularly in Saskatchewan, Mr.

Deputy Chair.

Let's take a look at what this government's plans are or were for seniors. Last year the members opposite decided that seniors in nursing homes needed to pay more so they raised up the caps to \$4,200, I believe it was. And the government was going to take 90 per cent of the income of any senior living in a nursing home up to that level.

So I find it interesting today to see an article in the paper of a complaint by the Leader of the NDP — in Nova Scotia I believe, maybe it's New Brunswick, one of the two, in one of the Atlantic provinces — complaining that seniors are being forced to pay too much for nursing home care in that province. And that is exactly the plan that the members opposite were going to impose on seniors last year until the official opposition and seniors themselves embarrassed this government.

And fact is it was a person in a wheelchair, a quadriplegic from my constituency, Mr. Speaker, that seemed to be the turning point — when Mr. Stevenson come forward and said, it's going to cost me \$500 a month more than I make as an employee to pay my nursing home fees. That's what the government opposite wanted to do. And the Minister of Highways stands up and says, it's the right thing to do.

Well the Premier made the government reverse that role. But in spite — in spite, Mr. Deputy Chair — he took it out of rural Saskatchewan to make up for the shortfall in Health. Seven million dollars was extracted from the Highways department. That was money that should have gone on the roads and highways around rural Saskatchewan.

So at the end of the day, out of spite, the Premier, the Deputy Premier, took the money away from rural Saskatchewan because they disagreed with this government's policy. That \$7 million should have gone on the roads across Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and rural Saskatchewan paid the price of this government's attitude towards seniors.

If you have money, the government wants it. Just send it all in. That's the taxation policy, last year, for seniors.

Let's take a look at what this government — I've talked about it earlier — what their policy was for agriculture. They killed the GRIP program back in '92, promised to replace it, and have failed to do so. Whenever there has been some discussions taking place between the federal government and the provinces to develop a new agriculture policy, this province has always stood on the sidelines and refused to participate into the development of the program, always arguing, Mr. Deputy Chair . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. I'm having very much difficulty listening to the speaker. I would ask all hon. members to let the speaker who has the floor carry on with his speech.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — The agriculture policy as put forward by this government has always been to avoid responsibility. Just as

I was talking earlier about this government's lack of responsibility, they continue to do the same in agriculture. Whenever there is discussion between the federal government and the provinces about establishing a new federal program, co-signed by the provinces, this province has always stood back and said, no we don't want to participate; we don't want to put any money on the table; it's all your responsibility. That has been their whole attitude.

And then whenever a program comes out and the feds say, this is what it's going to be, and it doesn't suit Saskatchewan, then they stand up and complain about it. But they refuse to be at the table and to negotiate, and to negotiate what we need in Saskatchewan.

We saw the CFIP (Canadian Farm Income Program) program that didn't fit. We saw another program in there, a program that didn't fit in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Chairman. So now they're developing a new program. And again the minister refused to sit at the table and negotiate it.

Now what we need out of this minister for the new farm program is to keep his hands off it still and say, look, this program does not meet the needs of Saskatchewan agricultural producers — be they grain, be they oilseeds, be they cattle, be they hogs, whatever. The new program still doesn't meet the needs of Saskatchewan.

And this minister isn't at the table. He needs to be at the table negotiating. He needs to be at the table and negotiating with money in his pockets. Because to simply go to the table and say, I haven't got any money and I'm not putting anything up, gets you nowhere. You have to be a full participant, and this government has refused to be participants in the agricultural strategies of Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It's time that we had new people in place that do understand the needs of agriculture across this province — not the members opposite, but rather that should be the Saskatchewan Party system. Deputy Premier wants to know who that should be. That should be the Saskatchewan Party and the members that are sitting here and those other members that are nominated across this province.

We look at the economic strategies of this government. The economic strategies of this government are: it has to be done by the government; the only vehicle that can provide for an economic stimulus in the province of Saskatchewan is a Crown corporation. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it ain't working. If it was such a great idea, as I said earlier, we would be the pre-eminent province in Saskatchewan.

But their philosophy of Crown ownership doesn't work. The idea that we're going to grow Saskatchewan by 6.8 per cent when everyone else across Canada, in particular, but North America and around the world is saying between 2.5 and 3.5 per cent growth, you have to ask yourself: why is the government picking a number out of the air of 6.8? What benefit does that provide?

Well what it does is it allows the government to claim additional tax revenues which they can try to balance their books with, even though at the end of the day those tax

revenues will not be there.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's why the government wants to use a 6.8 figure for economic growth in this province, so that they can inflate their tax revenues to try to make it look like the books are balanced. Well the books in this province haven't been balanced for three years. We're over \$1 billion further in debt since the member from Saskatoon Riversdale became Premier. Since the member from Saskatchewan . . . from Saskatoon Riversdale became Premier, we have gone over \$1 billion in debt additionally. That's \$1 million a day — \$1 million a day. That is what their economic policy is, Mr. Speaker.

The Cannington area that I represent is a oil producing area of the province — southeast Saskatchewan, southwest Saskatchewan, up the west side. And the oil industry is slowly expanding throughout Saskatchewan. And you have to ask yourself why is it slowly expanding? Oil prices were over \$30, they were \$35, you would think that production . . . that people would be drilling, trying to bring new production on stream. And yet across Saskatchewan that wasn't happening. It was happening in Alberta, it was happening in other jurisdictions, but it wasn't happening in Saskatchewan. So you have to ask yourself, why? Because of the economic policies, the taxation policies, that are not business friendly in the province of Saskatchewan.

The people who are drilling for oil understand that they have to make a profit. Even though the government and their Crown corporations don't have to make a profit, private enterprise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has to make a profit. And so they look at where can they make their best return based on the economic environments of the regions, based on the productive capabilities. And we have lots of opportunities here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the opportunities for profit are less here than they are in other jurisdictions, so the drilling is taking place somewhere else.

They are doing drilling here though, however, for natural gas because our natural gas costs to drill are very low. It's shallow gas, it doesn't take very long, it doesn't take very much money to do it, and people therefore get into it because the difference in the cost of the drilling offsets the economic disincentives provided by this government. So we are seeing some development in natural gas. And thankfully so because this government would be even deeper in the hole if that was not the case.

(16:00)

Mr. Deputy Chair, you take a look at the profits that the Crown corporations make. I hear the minister for CIC hollering from his seat from time to time, we've made \$1.6 billion in the last 10 years. You see — and they're agreeing with that — and you know that is a lot of money, that is a huge amount of money to be made for a profit.

And we're very glad that that profit has been made, but you've got to take a look. And what's that profit being made on? Well the asset base of the Crown corporations is roughly \$8 billion. So if you talk to John Wright who is the president and CEO (chief executive officer) of SaskPower, his expectation is that SaskPower should make a return of 10 per cent a year on its

investment.

So if you take that number and apply it to the rest of the Crown corporations, to their asset base — Crown corporations should be making a 10 per cent return on their asset base, according to John Wright — that would amount to 800 million a year. At the government's numbers, that would only take two years to match their 10-year profit return. Over 10 years they should have made \$8 billion, but it didn't happen. Why?

If you take into account that the Crown corporations don't pay PST (provincial sales tax), don't pay GST (goods and services tax), that's a 13 per cent difference right there from a private business.

They don't pay . . . Okay the minister says that they force him to pay PST so that it's a change from one pocket to the other pocket, and it's a transfer . . . really then becomes, is a tax transfer from the Crown corporations and the people who subscribe to those Crown corporations to the Consolidated Fund. Nothing more than that; it's simply another form of taxation.

Even having said that, though, you're looking at a 6 per cent difference then between a private corporation to a Crown corporation. And the minister is saying that over 10 years they made 1.6 billion which, under normal business practices subscribed to supposedly by SaskPower, they should have made that return in two years. But they should have made an additional 6 per cent because they're not paying the GST and they're not paying property taxes. They pay a grant in lieu at times which, if you listen to the city of Regina, isn't anywhere near what they would be paying if they were a private business paying those same property taxes.

And fact is when they had SPUDCO and the potato bins, barns, out there in the Outlook, Lucky Lake country, they didn't pay any property taxes. In fact as I remember seeing the bill on these . . . Each one of these was about 2 million plus. Seven of them, that's \$14 million. And a property tax bill sent by one of the RMs out there amounted to \$138 on this 2 million plus barn — \$138. That doesn't even pay for hardly a couple of pails full of gravel for the road necessary to get there. And yet that's what the government was paying to the RM. That is an insult to the local people there who have to pay that bill to get traffic to and from those potato bins. That's the economic policies and plans of this government.

So when you look . . . And now what do they do with their \$1.6 billion in profit? Well one of the things that they have done is they have driven up the debts of the Crown corporations to pay dividends. And they have taken their profits and they have spent them in New Zealand, in Australia, in Chile, in Georgia, in Chicago, in Manitoba, in Nova Scotia, Palm Springs. Yes, even in Palm Springs, California.

And you have to wonder why, why do they . . . And the minister says himself, yes we're in Palm Springs but it's only one employee. What does one employee do for you in Palm Springs, California? I don't know. Maybe he's a golf instructor. I don't know. You have to wonder what the heck, if you've got a business there that's spending millions of dollars, what does one employee do for you?

So, Mr. Deputy Chair . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, why is this government spending its money on these losing propositions around the world? Their argument is, we need to do it because they will pay a return and benefit the people of Saskatchewan.

Another one of the minister's lines was, these are start-up costs. Well we've got the annual report from one of those businesses that says they've been in business for 40 years and yet they're still losing start-up costs. Still losing start-up costs after 40 years. Why? Why are you investing in these losers?

Why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are you investing in these losers? Because we're all doing it. Each and every one of us is a taxpayer and the province of Saskatchewan is making these investments. Well as a shareholder, I want that to stop.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — There's one way to make that decision. We don't get a chance to vote on the board of directors in SaskPower or SaskTel or SaskEnergy. We don't get a chance to pick the CEO or the president. But we do have a chance, once every approximately four years — and if you listen to the Deputy Premier, it'll be five years — we do get a chance to pick the government. And I think, this time around, the people of Saskatchewan have lost confidence in the NDP.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — You go around the province and you talk to people at the rink, you talk to people at the auction barn, you talk to people on the street of any community. You talk to people at the hairdressers in Regina and what do they tell you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, they tell you it's time for an election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — And I know that there's members in the House that are jealous of the fact that I have hair and that I get a chance to go to these places and talk to people, but they want an election. And it doesn't matter whether you're in rural Saskatchewan, whether you're in urban Saskatchewan or even if you're from Swift Current, they want an election, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Even in Swift Current?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Even in Swift Current. They're happy with the member in Swift Current. They want a chance for him to sit on the government side.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're tired of this government competing against their businesses in their home communities. They're tired that SaskTel comes into their community and sets up a business to compete against them, especially when they don't even have to pay the same taxes that the person does.

You know, I can't believe this, that the NDP, the people who supposedly hold co-ops dear to their hearts, are out there

competing against the co-ops in the cable business. Can't believe that. You know, it's amazing. It's amazing.

You know, trying to . . . And these are the people that they've always said, oh no, if you're a good co-op member, you're a good supporter of the NDP. That's what they like to claim. Well that's changed. That's not the case any more, because the NDP have become just a means to maintain power by a small group of people.

And, Mr. Deputy Chair, it might surprise you to know that I am a co-op member. I'm a member of the credit union even. In fact, it'll be a shock to the members opposite, but I was the president of my local credit union. And we had to fight, as a credit union, some of the hare-brained schemes that the members opposite came up with in the past and we managed to stop some of those things, and I'm proud to say that I was a part of it.

Mr. Deputy Chair, when you look at the people opposite and you take a look at that new literary masterpiece that came out not that long ago — Janice MacKinnon's book — she talks about some of the members opposite. She talks about those wheelers and dealers, wheelers and dealers. You know, you have to wonder if they're the guys with the pinstripe shirts, with their sleeves pushed up and the little armband on there, and the green eyeshades, you know. The people that are gambling the money of the people of Saskatchewan — those are those wheeler-dealers and their gambles are all losing. You know, it's a good thing that they own the casinos because if they didn't, they would certainly be losing at them as well.

You take a look across this province at the casino industry. It's certainly been paying off for this government. But the Premier himself, when he was in opposition, led the marches against casinos. He led the march down Main Street in Moose Jaw against the idea of putting a casino in there, and yet today that's exactly what's happening — his government is putting a casino into Moose Jaw. It's there already. Yes there are various activities that are associated with the casino industry and you have to be wondering, does the Premier support all of these other industries that take place, all of these other activities that take place around a casino?

One of the items that . . . The study done by the government prior to implementation of the casino policy was that there should be no ATMs (automated teller machine) within 100 yards of a casino because to put them in there was to encourage compulsive gambling, it was to encourage gambling addiction.

So what did the government do? Well you know if you make people leave the slot machine, if you make people leave the casino and go down the street, you know what? That blast of fresh air might bring them to their senses. You know they might say, gee I can't afford to lose any more money. And they might just keep on walking. So what did the government do? The government said, we can't allow that to happen; if we get them in the casino, we have to keep them there until they have spent all the money that they have available for gambling.

And so they put the ATMs in the casinos so that the people could run over and take another chance on the ATM and see if they can get some money out. You know what? A lot of the time it worked. They got more money out and they could run

back to their slot machine again and keep pulling on that handle, just keep pulling on it.

And what did it do? Well we've seen the sad stories around this province. We've seen the person who misappropriated money from various organizations. We've seen the suicides around this province because of the . . . how deep they had gone into the hole, how desperate they were, Mr. Deputy Chair, because of this government's gambling policy.

And what did they do about gambling addictions? Most jurisdictions that do allow gambling put aside a certain amount of money, revenues that they have generated, for gambling addiction. What has this government done? They have put aside a very, very small amount — very small amount.

And fact is, one of the VLT establishments was telling me about the gambling addiction sign that, placard that they had sent out to be placed above their VLTs. And you have to understand that a large number of these places are rather dark wall panelling, you know, the lighting is subdued. And so they sent out a black poster talking about the dangers of gambling addiction. So you have a black poster in a dark room that's supposed to discourage you and supposed to stop your gambling addiction.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that poster worked as well as this government's foreign investment programs. It didn't work . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the Deputy Premier wants to know how it was seen. Well you see what happens is earlier on in the day the cleaners turned the lights on and the owners spotted the sign. But the public and the people who were playing could not see it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You take a look at the health policy of this government, you know. They went around this province in the last decade saying . . . the previous decade, saying that they had the solutions to health care. They had the answers. They came in in 1991 and they were going to restructure health. They were going to save money and provide better health care.

(16:15)

Louise Simard stood in the House here and it was, we're going to save money and provide better health care — the new wellness program, the new wellness program. And what did it do? Well we've gone from a health budget of 1.5 billion to 2.5 billion. We have 63 less hospitals in this province; we have nursing homes that are full; people on waiting lists, not just for weeks but months and years; we have people who are leaving this province because they can't get health care here, they have to pay for it themselves.

And fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have . . . even the Crown corporations are sending their clients out of this province. They're sending their clients out of this province because they can't afford to wait for NDP health care in Saskatchewan.

SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) and WCB (Workers' Compensation Board) are sending their clients to Alberta for MRIs (magnetic resonance imaging), for CAT (computerized axial tomography) scans because they can't wait to have it done in Saskatchewan. They have an economic

necessity to get those clients rehabilitated and back into the workforce.

And yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the individual in Saskatchewan the government says it isn't important for that individual to become rehabilitated and back into the workforce. Mr. Speaker, if you're on a government program like SGI and WCB you can get the best service, you get premiere service. But if you're an ordinary citizen of Saskatchewan you get second tier.

Two-tiered health care in Saskatchewan, paid for and sponsored by the NDP. And yet they run around the province claiming that it's the Saskatchewan Party that wants to bring in two-tiered health when the NDP has already implemented it in Saskatchewan.

And the fact is, I have a letter from a dear lady in my constituency who wants to talk about health care in Saskatchewan. And this lady would like to get cataract surgery. About a year and a half ago she got cataract surgery on one of her eyes but now she needs it on her other eye. And she's been waiting for that year and a half.

And, Mr. Speaker, what she says, and I quote, and she's talking about her doctor here:

He is only allowed to perform 4 such surgeries in an allotted time, whereas he did 10 (in the same time) last year. Even then he had a waiting list!

So it's getting worse, not better, Mr. Speaker; it's getting worse. She goes on to say, and this lady is a farmer so she puts some of it in terms relating to farming. She says:

Farmers that have been lucky enough to have a "nest egg", have had to use it and then some, to keep going. I can't understand why the Saskatchewan government can't, until times improve, use money from other less important areas. Goodness knows!, SGI has to pay out fortunes for (our) car accidents and who knows how many ... (have been) caused by eyes needing care they are not getting.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we went through a list here earlier of items that the government could have used the money to provide cataract surgery but yet spent it in Georgia or in Australia or in Chile or around the world, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Ag Dealer, they invested 8.1 million and they won't tell anybody how much money they have lost on that one. Business Watch International, another \$2 million, and they won't tell what the value of that company now is because most of these companies, if not all of them, have gone down in value.

This lady, Hazel Paton is her name, from Oxbow, and she says:

As one who (has) had one eye corrected almost a year ago, and really needs the other one done, I feel that months and months of further waiting, is not necessary if Government would allot their money to more important categories, like eye care. Money is available for all sorts of things ... and safety of the citizens of the province (is needed).

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can certainly see that the people of Saskatchewan believe that this government no longer represents them, that there is a need for a change of government, and that change cannot happen soon enough.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — You know, can you imagine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how much additional support would be in health care, how much shorter the waiting lists would be if the money that was wasted on ISC was made available? This was a project by the government to computerize our land titles system. It was supposed to cost us \$20 million — \$20 million.

And it was a worthwhile project. I mean you should be able to take a simple piece of paper with people's land title on it, with any caveats and liens against it, and record that and have it available. And you can simply go in and pull it up and print it off. Seems pretty simple. And yet it has cost this government \$107 million — five times as much as the original projection. Over five times as much as the original projection.

And you know what? It doesn't work. Instead of one piece of paper coming out with the title, the name, any caveats and liens or encumbrances against the piece of property, you end up with reams of paper ... (inaudible interjection) ... Yes, in a paperless system — reams of paper which have a high percentage chance of being wrong. They've got the wrong names on them. They've got the ... Instead of putting a property description, they've got some number on there that nobody knows what it means. They're not even using a legal land description. It's a failure from start to finish.

Now they're hiring another company to try and go back in and straighten it out. Who knows how much money is it going to cost now? Oh, the Deputy Premier says they're not going to straighten it out. You know, I don't know how you can operate under this system where you can't get a title properly.

You know I was listening to a program on CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) one night and they were talking about the reasons why there is a difficulty across the Third World in generating economic activity; why people who have property, have homes, cannot take their property and use it for equity to generate new capital. And the reason that couldn't happen is because they had no means to record and measure property titles.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we allow the NDP to continue to run their corporation, the ISC, the way it has been running, we will be getting to that position as a Third World country.

Where our medicine has been heading in that direction — we've been heading to turn-of-the-century medicine, that's 19th century. Our road system under the NDP has been heading to turn of the century, 19th century. And now they're trying to move our land titles back to the turn of the century, the 19th century. I can see the NDP now trying to revive the land titles office in Arcola, putting it back to where it was 100-and-some years ago, because that is the way their system works.

They cannot move forward. They're still operating on an economic philosophy that was discredited, but it's 60 years old

and it's theirs.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's another one of the reasons why the people of Saskatchewan have lost confidence in this particular government.

An Hon. Member: — Are there any other reasons, Dan?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Oh there are so many reasons that you can't possibly go through and list them all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but there are others here who would perhaps like to have the opportunity to outline some of the areas that they believe why the people of Saskatchewan have lost confidence in the members opposite.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know my colleague from Moosomin quoted a quote talking about governments that have lost confidence, and I think to repeat that quote would be an appropriate way to end this. And I would like to quote from the Premier, today's Premier. This is a quote that he said in *Hansard*, in this Assembly in 1990, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to quote from it.

My central point is that we have a crisis of confidence in the province of Saskatchewan, that we have a government that has been stripped of its credibility, a government that has no longer the confidence of the people, a government that no longer seems to have a vision or a clear direction; in short, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

And that is still a quote because obviously the Deputy Speaker was still in the Chair.

. . . I believe, a government that has lost the capacity to . . . (government).

And in a democracy — I repeat — (and) in (a) . . . democracy or in any nation, in any nation when a government has lost the confidence of its people, when a government is stripped of its credibility, when a government has no vision, then it is time to defeat that government and give another group of men and women the opportunity to govern.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's time for this Premier to call an election and today is not too soon. I support the member for Moosomin's motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very, very, very pleased to enter into this debate this afternoon, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And at the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be moving an amendment that more properly reflects the attitudes of Saskatchewan's people about the Government of Saskatchewan and this legislature.

And I would challenge the members opposite to allow us to vote on it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because the members opposite, they keep talking about wanting to vote . . . (inaudible) . . . in this non-confidence vote, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Let them have

the ability and the will to let the people of this legislature to determine whether or not there's confidence in the government.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk about the members opposite. I want to talk about the Saskatchewan Party and where they stand. And I want to set the record straight for the people of the province.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to start with the most recent fiasco. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all heard in this Assembly over the last few days about the P.A. forestry centre. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we heard how the people of Prince Albert didn't want it. We heard how industry didn't want it. We heard how the First Nations people of our province didn't want the P.A. forestry centre.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to talk about what the member from Saskatchewan Rivers said today on the John Gormley show. Mr. Deputy Speaker, he says this. After he cut down this project day after day in this Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, today on the radio he says this:

This project is good for the people of Prince Albert. It's good for the people of Saskatchewan. It's good for the forest industry. The Saskatchewan Party has always maintained this position.

We were mighty fooled in this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by what was said. But so was the whole community.

The opportunity to expand our learning in the forestry sector is something that we can't pass up. This opportunity is simply way too good. We've always been in support of it, and we will continue to do so.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't know, but I sat in this Assembly the last few days and heard the member from Saskatchewan Rivers say just the opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And when the people of Saskatchewan catch him telling, telling the story in a way in which they don't believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then they call us . . . call them accountable, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, John Gormley then asked, did you not though do your due diligence, to the member from Saskatchewan Rivers. You could have made the same calls yesterday before you talked to me on the show. Because again, the day before on the show he said it wasn't a good project. And you could have said, hey, there is strong support for it, couldn't you?

But the member, no, he couldn't do that then because he wanted to take an opportunity to politically attack the government on something and say the people didn't want it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when clearly the people of this province do want it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I now want to talk about another fiasco. I want to talk about the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party. I have here an article saying, Hermanson apologizes to Schmidt, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have a situation here where the Leader of the Opposition attacks an individual, attacks his employment, attacks his family values, in a most . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . and integrity in a most disrespectful way, something that no leader of a political party should ever do to another individual.

But the Leader of the Official Opposition, of the Saskatchewan Party, did just that. And that man one day wants to be the premier of this province.

(16:30)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of this province, the people of this province will not put a person in charge of this province with the values that this Leader of the Opposition has demonstrated, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This election will be on an issue of values.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to talk about another issue. We have the member . . . We have the, pardon me, the member from Arm River talking about Crown corporations and he said and I quote. In *The Outlook*, he wrote this:

But it is no secret the Sask. Party wants to rid the province of most Crown corporations, however, Brkich said the "core Crowns" — such as Sask Water, SaskPower, SaskTel and SGI — will be treated differently than the other "treasury Crowns," which would not be sold off immediately but when the selling price would reap the "best bang for the buck."

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite are prepared to sell off the very assets that the people of this province value for the delivery of costly . . . cost-efficient and effective services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk now about the member from Swift Current, the member from Swift Current. And I have an article here saying, "Critic distorting facts."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it says:

Wall may deem it politically beneficial to manipulate the facts, to claim that the government is allowing the Crown utility to gouge customers and suggest that the company staff lacked the competence required in a volatile industry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even the reporters are catching on that these people will say anything to try to garner political power, but it's about nothing more than garnering political power.

The article goes on to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the article goes on to say:

. . . that reality. And if Wall still doesn't get it, Saskatchewan residents will be in huge trouble with him in charge (huge trouble) . . . (inaudible) . . . that the utilities must pay higher than spot-market rates to secure longer term contracts for the benefit of people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say just one more thing about this article about the critic, the Saskatchewan Party critic on Crown corporations. It goes on to say:

But he (referring to Mr. Wall) and his party should let voters decide the issue without distortions and misrepresentation of facts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that what the people of Saskatchewan

want in their future government? The answer is no.

I want to go on to talk about another, another situation involving the member from Swift Current. And again I'm quoting from the *Leader-Post*, the Murray Mandryk column, Wednesday, February 26, 2003, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I quote:

And last week, the Saskatchewan Party's release on Spudco fell just shy of fabrication. At issue was a quote attributed to Crown Investment Corp. Minister Maynard Sonntag made June 13, 2000 during budget estimates debates. The Saskatchewan Party release quoted Sonntag as saying: "With respect to Con-Force in the construction of the buildings, they were jointly owned. The ownership was Con-Force 51 per cent and ourselves 49 per cent."

However what Sonntag actually said . . . And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to emphasize, what Sonntag actually said — the minister for CIC — is this:

"First of all, with respect to Con-Force in the construction of the buildings, they were jointly owned but they were entirely debt-financed and SaskWater, the Spudco division of SaskWater subsequently bought Con-Force out."

Not only did the opposition completely reconstruct Sonntag's quote, but it did so to make the point that (they needed to be) that there needed to be a special legislative investigation of Sonntag for (and I quote) "lying to the Legislature."

That's not just irresponsible. It's contemptible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is the calibre of the men and women opposite and what they believe and how they believe this province should be governed. Are the people going to choose the members opposite to ever be a government when they approach issues in this manner?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk again about the member for Swift Current. The member from Swift Current apologized to the members of the legislative Crown Corporations Committee for a false statement he made in committee. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I applaud the member opposite for apologizing when he understood he made a statement and was called upon by fellow members of the legislature. I do applaud him for apologizing. He's getting very, very good at it because he's having to stand up many times and apologize for comments he makes.

And I think that do the opposition . . . or do the government members on this side draw attention to that? Most definitely we do, because we think it's very important, very important for the people of Saskatchewan to judge people based on facts, not fiction, Mr. Deputy Speaker — fact, not fiction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd also like to deal with another situation. I have, I have here two press releases from the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The first one dated April 24, 2003, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where it says:

The NDP loses at least 10 million taxpayers' dollars on

Honolulu cable company.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they did not do their due diligence as they always want others to do. Because just a few hours later, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a press release here apologizing for the misrepresentation of the first press release, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that what the people of Saskatchewan want in a future government? The answer is no.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, and now I want to talk about a press release put forward by the member from Cannington. It says:

D'Autremont said a Saskatchewan Party government would not make equity investments in any private-sector company in Saskatchewan.

I have here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, an interview with John Gormley and Elwin Hermanson, the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I have two issues I want to raise to the Assembly. One is I'm having difficulty hearing the member who has the floor, and I believe that he is making mention of members referring to their proper names. As the member knows, he's only permitted to do that in the aspect of a quote. So two things, I would ask hon. members to please tone down the volume, and also the member to make sure that he not uses proper names.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I apologize for using the member's name.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member for Rosetown-Biggan, the Leader of the Opposition, says here and I quote:

Well the challenge with Crown corporations is to decide what role they should play in the 21st century.

And it goes on to say:

I think we have to create a new generation of Crown — it might not be quite in the shape it is now — to release the shackle so that they can expand beyond the boundaries of the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition says they should be investing and expanding beyond the boundaries of the province. And when this government does just that, they sit and criticize it day after day after day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they don't have a plan. They don't have a policy. They want to be all things to all people. So when it's popular to say they will do something, they'll say it. When it's popular to say they won't do something, Mr. Speaker, they'll say it. They have no plan. They have no direction. They tell people what they want to hear because they have no vision for a future — no vision, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, well, Mr. Speaker, I want to take just a couple of minutes here to talk about the things that are going on in this province.

In the area of employment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or, Mr.

Speaker, pardon me, we've been . . . Mr. Speaker, we are up 11,400 jobs, year over year — 11,400 jobs. We're tied for the fourth highest percentage of increase in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have retail sales up 7.7 per cent for 626 million unadjusted. We have the 17th consecutive monthly increase in retail sales. And we have the highest percentage of increase in all of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

And the members opposite talk doom and gloom. They can't say anything positive about their own province.

In fact they had the audacity, Mr. Speaker, to attack, to attack the forestry centre in Prince Albert and say that business, the Aboriginal community, and the city didn't want it. And then, Mr. Speaker, what happens? The city, industry, and business rallied to send a very clear message that they in fact do want the forestry centre in Prince Albert.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk for a minute about some other great economic indicators in the province of Saskatchewan. To start, department store merchandise is up 6.4 per cent sales to \$181 million. We've got, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've got manufacturing up 1.4 per cent. We've got housing starts up a whopping 137.5 per cent, Mr. Speaker. We've got natural gas production up 6.5 per cent. We've got potash sales up 10.4 per cent, Mr. Speaker. We've got new motor vehicles up 3.8 per cent. We've got 17 per cent increase . . . 17.4 per cent increase in business and corporations. And we have tourism and visitors to our province up as well, Mr. Speaker.

This is a province that is growing. It is a province on the move. It's a province that is expanding to meet the needs of its provincial citizens. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have an opposition who wants to talk negatively, talk about doom and gloom day after day but they have nothing positive to say. They don't have a plan. They don't bring forth any ideas; they simply sit and complain.

And, Mr. Speaker, we all know it's easy to try to be all things to all people. It's easy to complain but it's much more difficult to bring forward ideas. It's much more difficult to grow than to destroy. And, Mr. Speaker, they are set with a single agenda to be government at any cost even if they have to destroy the very foundation of our province to get there.

They talk about doom and gloom every day. I have never heard, I have never heard in four years in this Assembly the members opposite talk about the good economic news. I've never heard them talk about the positive things. They only talk about negative things, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . or, Mr. Speaker, and they only do it in which to try and drag our province down. They have no interest in building the province. They have an interest in only one thing — attaining power at all costs. And they will do anything to attain that power.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure you and the people of this province that those of us on this side of the Assembly will do everything we can to ensure that this province continues to grow and that we continue to move forward for our children. And, Mr. Speaker, that means we have to work extremely hard to make sure the members opposite, the members opposite

never, never become government.

Nays — 20

Mr. Deputy Speaker, or, Mr. Speaker, as we're drawing towards the end of my remarks, I would like to end by saying that the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province will judge us all on an issue of integrity. And they will judge the Premier of this province versus the Leader of the Opposition and, Mr. Speaker, when they do that this Premier is going to win hands down.

Hermanson	Toth	Julé
Krawetz	Draude	

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Once again I would ask members for complete silence during the vote.

Gantfoer	Bjornerud	Wakefield
Stewart	Harpauer	Eagles
McMorris	D'Autremont	Wall
Huyghebaert	Dearborn	Wiberg
Weekes	Hart	Allchurch

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yates: — He is a man with great integrity, with great principles, and he is a man for this province, for a province that believes in the collective responsibility of all its citizens — not about simply attaining power at any cost.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or, Mr. Speaker, for those reasons, I would move the following amendment, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Fairview:

The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.

That all words after the word "Assembly" be deleted and substituted with the following:

expresses its confidence in the Premier of the Government of Saskatchewan, owing to the achievement of economic diversification; the achievement of job growth that includes opportunities for persons previously dependent on social assistance and persons with disabilities; the achievement of enhanced health, education, and social programs; and the achievement of a massive program of transportation, telecommunications, energy, and municipal infrastructure development.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order.

(16:45)

The division bells rang from 16:46 until 16:55.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 30

Calvert	Addley	Crofford
Hagel	Lautermilch	Serby
Melenchuk	Cline	Sonntag
Osika	Lorjé	Kasperski
Goulet		

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. I would ask for complete silence during the taking of the vote.

Van Mulligen	Prebble	Belanger
Thomson	Junor	Nilson
Atkinson	Hamilton	Harper
Forbes	Jones	Higgins
Trew	Wartman	Yates
McCall	Iwanchuk	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS	
PRESENTING PETITIONS	
Draude	903
Gantefoer	903
Elhard	903
Stewart	903
Eagles	903
Huyghebaert	903
Dearborn	903
Brkich	904
Allchurch	904
READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS	
Deputy Clerk	904
NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS	
Hermanson	904
INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS	
Van Mulligen	904
Gantefoer	904
Junor	904
Crofford	911
Kowalsky	918
Lautermilch	918
The Speaker	919
Harpauer	922
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS	
Saskatoon Badge and Shield Awards	
Julé	904
Polonia Dance Ensemble	
Kasperski	905
Youth Business Excellence Awards	
Lorenz	905
North American Occupational Safety and Health Week	
Jones	905
People of Swift Current and Area Replace Stolen Bicycle	
Wall	906
Women Entrepreneurs Week	
Lorjé	906
Outlook Firefighting Expenses	
Brkich	906
ORAL QUESTIONS	
Investment in Minds Eye Pictures	
Wall	907
Sonntag	907
Crofford	908
Crop Insurance Program	
Harpauer	909
Serby	910
Response to Excess Rainfall in Wadena Area	
Draude	911
Serby	911
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	
Visit to Saskatchewan by His Royal Highness the Earl of Wessex	
Crofford	912
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS	
Bill No. 202 — The Water Quality Recognition Day Act	
Brkich	912
ORDERS OF THE DAY	
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	
Yates	913
The Speaker	913
PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS	
Motion No. 4 — Non-Confidence Motion	
Toth	913, 918

D'Autremont	922
Yates	930
Recorded division	933