

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

Mr. Speaker, signatures on this petition this afternoon are all from the community of Moose Jaw, and I'm pleased to present on their behalf.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to present a petition on behalf of constituents in the communities of Cabri and Hazlet concerned about the increase to their crop insurance premiums this year. 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 have Saskatchewan Crop Insurance reverse the 2003 premium increases and restore affordable crop insurance premiums to our struggling farmers.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to present this on behalf of my constituents.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with the dangerous and deplorable condition of Highway 43. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to repair Highway 43 in order to address safety concerns and to facilitate economic growth in rural Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from the communities of Gravelbourg, Moose Jaw, and Regina.

I so present.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition today with citizens concerned about the rapidly deteriorating Highway 20. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to repair Highway 20 from Nokomis to Strasbourg in order to

address safety concerns and to facilitate economic growth in rural Saskatchewan.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Nokomis, Humboldt, Lanigan, Regina, and Saskatoon.

I so present.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Saskatchewan citizens very concerned about the condition of Highway 47 South. 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 this is signed by people from North Portal, Estevan, Midale, Carlyle, and Lampman, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, along with my colleagues, I rise with a petition from citizens who are very concerned about the highway conditions in rural Saskatchewan. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to repair Highway 43 in order to address safety concerns and to facilitate economic growth in rural Saskatchewan.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is in total signed by the good citizens of Vanguard.

I so present.

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of people of southwestern Saskatchewan and west central Saskatchewan concerned with health care between the cities of Swift Current and North Battleford. 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 that current specialty services are sustained to better serve the people of west central Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good folks from Kindersley, Brock, and Major, Saskatchewan.

I so present.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition

from citizens opposed to the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance premium rate increases to farmers. The prayer reads:

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.

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

Signed by the good citizens of Wilkie and Kerrobert.

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 Crown land leases. And the prayer 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.

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

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, on this petition are all from the centre of Spiritwood.

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 paper nos. 12, 13, 18, 100, 114, 119, and 120.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice I shall on day no. 55 ask the government the following question:

To the Highways minister: can the minister please say if construction for repaving the section of Highway 42 from the junction of Highway 2 to the junction of Highway 19 will begin in 2003; if yes, is the work scheduled to be completed in 2003?

Ms. Bakken: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 55 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Highways: what are all the highway construction projects being undertaken in 2003-2004; what is the budgeted cost for each project, for each project listed on the 2003-2004 construction project list; what are the details of each project in terms of reason, location, and cost?

To the Minister of Highways: what was the cost incurred by Morsky Construction in the fall of 2002 to repair and

prepare for winter highway . . . for winter for Highway 13 between Ogema and Highway 334 turnoff; who paid this bill, the original contractor or the Department of Highways?

To the minister of Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming: in light of the fact that SLGA never received the cash and paper management system from Wascana Gaming, for what reason did Wascana Gaming receive \$291,000?

To the minister of Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming: what are all the details of the royalty agreement between Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming and Wascana Gaming for the cash and paper management system paid for but never received by Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming, such agreement referenced by Minister Osika in the Legislative Assembly on June 2, 2004?

To the minister of Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming: with reference to the fact that Wascana Gaming pays a royalty to Western Canada Lottery Corporation if it sold the software developed for mega bingo, what are the details of this royalty agreement between SLGA and Wascana Gaming?

To the minister of Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming: why was it necessary for Wascana Gaming to develop a new cash and paper management system for SLGA and bingo halls; how is this cash and paper management system different from the system Wascana Gaming had developed years prior to the mega bingo contract?

I so present.

The Speaker: — Order, please. Once again I think the practice that members ought to use in all questions is the questions are of the minister rather than of an individual. Let us continue.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Hon. Assembly, a group of 36 grade 6 to 9 students from Mossbank School seated in the east gallery, Mr. Speaker. The students are accompanied by their teachers Arnelda Lawrence and Dale Guthormsen.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that they'll have an educational, informative, and fun day in the legislature and here in Regina and as I'm sure all members do, and I look forward to meeting with them later.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you and to all members of the Legislative Assembly, 36 grade 7 and 8 students from Queen Elizabeth School who are joining us today and they are seated in the west gallery. Along with the students are Mr. Thibodeau and Mr. Paterson, teachers for the grade 7 and 8 students, as well as the chaperones, Mrs. Bezaire and Mrs. Meakin.

Mr. Speaker, I've had an opportunity to have some refreshments with the students and answer some questions. I

know that the students are going to enjoy question period and they're going to have an opportunity to tour the Legislative Assembly Building.

I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these grade 7 and 8 students from Queen Elizabeth School in Saskatoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Prince Albert Regional 4-H Finished Beef Show and Sale

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again some good news from our hometown of Prince Albert which I hope will go a long ways in confirming the confidence that we in Saskatchewan have in our beef industry.

I want to tell the Assembly about an auction sale, but the fact that it took place itself is a story of faith and determination on the part of all who were involved. Yesterday and Sunday at the exhibition grounds, the Prince Albert 4-H Regional Finished Beef Show and Sale was held — held we have to add in the face of the current circumstances facing our Canadian beef industry — and I'm delighted to say that the sale was a roaring success, not just for these times but for any time.

Over 1,000 people attended. Kids from the seven 4-H clubs in the northeast region had 102 steers auctioned to the highest bidder and every animal was sold. The grand champion steer owned by Lauren Cromartie of the Wild Rose 4-H Club sold for \$3.10 a pound.

A feature of the sale always is the charity steer sale. The charity steer also sold for \$3.10 a pound raising an amazing \$3,878 for this year's charity, the Professional Fire Fighters burn unit.

Overall 102 cattle were sold; the average was \$1.57 a pound.

I want to congratulate all of those who were involved and I know all members will join with me in expressing our congratulations and admiration for each person who were involved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Indian Head Rural Sports Hall of Fame Induction Dinner

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past Friday evening I had the privilege of attending the Indian Head Rural Sports Hall of Fame eighth annual induction dinner. Over the past eight years numerous individuals and teams from the surrounding area have been recognized for their commitment to their local community through their achievement in sport.

This year 10 recipients were recognized for their achievements including the Nancy Kerr rink, 2003 world seniors curling champions; John Lynch, Mitch Blair, and Rod Pedersen for their involvement in broadcasting. And of special note, Rod Pedersen will be calling the play-by-play of this year's Grey Cup.

Russel Parker was recognized for his achievements in the

promotion of baseball in Western Canada, while Matt Hengen was recognized for his promotion of both baseball and hockey in the community of Windthorst and surrounding area.

Sonny Reinhardt was recognized for his contribution to wrestling, and the team sport category recognition was given to the '72-73, '73-74 Balcarres Broncs.

In softball, Harvey Curtis received recognition while Adelaar Douan was recognized for his many years of coaching in the Montmartre area.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to this year's inductees and hats off to Mr. Ken (Scoop) McCabe of Indian Head and his committee for their promotion of the Rural Sports Hall of Fame and the hard work they put in to making this year's induction dinner such a great event. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Holy Cross Collegiate Wall of Honour

Hon. Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we approach our centennial year and as our schools and other institutions put more years of service behind them, it's both obvious and appropriate that they give formal recognition to those who have passed through their doors. Simply put, it is appropriate that we observe and record our various histories.

An example of this is at Holy Cross Collegiate in my constituency of Saskatoon Eastview. As a millennium project Holy Cross created a Wall of Honour which permanently recognizes alumni who have distinguished themselves in areas such as academics, athletics, fine arts, and religion.

Recently Holy Cross added six new faces to its Wall of Honour at a ceremony held in the school. Some will already be familiar to most of us; the rest soon will be. The six new faces to the wall are: Julia Cunningham, a harpist who has performed with B.B. King, Tom Jones, the Rolling Stones, and some guy named Pavarotti; Mark Hammel, a computer animator with Disney; Janet Klobel, a dancer and singer in productions such as *Cats*; Marcus Oleniuk, a freelance photographer nominated for the World Press Photo Award; Earl Pereira, of the band Wide Mouth Mason; and Timothy Steeves, nationally renowned concert pianist.

I congratulate these six, and I applaud Holy Cross for this worthwhile project.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Prince Albert Finished Beef Show and Sale

Mr. Wiberg: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the member from Prince Albert Northcote in bringing news today of the event held in Prince Albert last night in regards to the 73rd annual Prince Albert Finished Beef Show and Sale put on by the local 4-H.

Mr. Speaker, it was a great deal of concern of course to the show that because of the issues raised around BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), the mad cow disease, that these

young 4-H'ers were being left to wonder if they would be able to even hold this prestigious event.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the agribusiness community came to the plate, so to speak, with their cheque books wide open. Bidding all evening was brisk and enthusiastic as prices remained strong from beginning to end to show that Saskatchewan agribusiness is very confident in our livestock industry.

The grand champion and reserve grand champion continued to bring top dollar for the young owners, while the third annual charity steer brought in the same value as the two top steers.

(13:45)

Mr. Speaker, the charity steer is raised by a contributing club who then choose a recipient for the monies raised this year. This money was donated to the Professional Fire Fighters burn unit.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the buyers of a steer, I along with scores of other buyers was proud to be given an opportunity to support 4-H and Saskatchewan's beef industry. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating the future beef producers in the Prince Albert region on another successful 4-H season and finale.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Kidzone Child Care

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This year marks the 25th anniversary of Dr. A.E. Perry School in Regina's New Albert Park. As part of the celebrations, I was very pleased to join the family of the late Dr. Perry and others in helping mark the occasion.

In 1977, Dr. Perry elementary school was an architectural innovation. Today, 25 years later, the staff, parents, and students of the Dr. Perry School are continuing to promote innovative uses for this wonderful facility. In part, they're doing this through the integration of the Kidzone Child Care centre with the school and the use of additional space for after-class programs for school-age children in the Panther Pit, named of course for their mascot, the Prairie Panther.

These innovative programs are designed by parents and teachers and they help demonstrate why our NDP (New Democratic Party) government is interested in and committed to promoting and building our communities around the life of families and schools through innovative programs like our newly announced School^{PLUS} initiative. It's also why I was very pleased to announce that Kidzone Child Care centre will receive ongoing funding for 20 child care spaces starting this year.

Mr. Speaker, this funding is made possible as part of our government's \$1.8 million expansion in child care funding this year and it's creating 500 new licensed child care spaces and further funding an additional 200 spaces for children throughout our provincial community.

Mr. Speaker, the spirit and innovation of the Dr. Perry School association, parents, and teachers are part of the reason why 25

years after the school first opened that we're continuing to see a strong role for this facility in our vibrant local community.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

No. 23 Elementary Flight Training School Dedication Service

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to talk about an important event held at Davidson town hall on May 24. I had the honour to attend a plaque unveiling service at No. 23 Elementary Flight Training School, a large air force training base built a few miles east of Davidson during World War II. This important air crew training centre was part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. The centre trained over 1,300 student pilots from 1941 to '45, seven of which give the ultimate sacrifice — their lives.

The plaque dedication service was organized by members of the Air Force Association of Canada and was attended by local members of the Sherlock Squadron Air Cadet Corps and local veterans of the Royal Canadian Legion. Following the full march and parade in front of the cenotaph, dignitaries representing the various levels of government, including Davidson mayor, Jim Cross, paid tribute to the accomplishments of this air training base and its historical contribution towards our ultimate victory in Europe.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, Lynda Haverstock, spoke to those assembled on behalf of Her Majesty, and then presented the memorial plaque to the town of Davidson.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the local air cadet leader, Gordon McRae, for the invitation to attend and address this important event. I salute the veterans of the 600 and 602 Wing, and 15 Wing in Moose Jaw who were there on Saturday on behalf of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

I would like to ask all members to join me in honouring the veterans, the cadets, and the people of Davidson for this well-planned dedication service.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Future Links Prairie Championship in Saskatoon

Ms. Lorjé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unlike nearly all my colleagues in the Assembly, I'm not a good golfer. However, Mr. Speaker, I am an enthusiastic booster of my constituency and my town. And I know that when visitors come they are invariably struck by Saskatoon's beauty, its variety of entertainment, its excellent food and lodging, and the hospitality of Saskatoon people.

The connection between these two statements is straightforward, Mr. Speaker. Beginning on Sunday and finishing tomorrow, the Riverside Country Club in my constituency of Saskatoon Southeast is host to the BMO Financial Group Future Links Prairie Championship. Eighty-four of the country's best junior male and female golfers are here for a 54-hole competition. The young golfers are

competing in two age categories for each gender.

This is the fourth year for the BMO junior championships. And they have established themselves as the premier junior golf circuit in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when 84 kids come, they bring with them parents, coaches, officials, friends, and fans — you know, the multiplier effect. They spend time in Saskatoon and they have the opportunity to sample the many delights we offer tourists. They will come back and they will bring others.

So I congratulate the Riverside Country Club and the BMO Financial Group for bringing this tournament to Saskatoon. I welcome the golfers and wish them all a subpar game. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Consequences of Occurrence of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, it was hoped that with the DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) test results, the CFIA's (Canadian Food Inspection Agency) investigation into the BSE case would be concluded this week and the international bans on Canadian beef would be lifted in short order.

However the news that the tests were inconclusive means more animals will have to be destroyed and tested, and in all likelihood the earliest the CFIA can conclude their investigation will be the beginning of next week.

Mr. Speaker, from the minister's conference call with the federal minister and his provincial counterparts this morning, what is the earliest indication that the CFIA will be able to announce conclusion of their investigation and that their science related to this case is ready for presentation to our international trading partners?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, the member is correct when she states that it will be yet now a few more days before the test results are had from the sort of second line of investigation that's happening on now the five Alberta farms where there was some thought that maybe the host actually came from.

Those animals are now en route for slaughter. The investigation, or the testing, will begin in the next day or so and those results won't come back until probably Friday. Now that might mean that before Monday, we'll have all of the results on the final group of animals from that initial net of 17 farms that were quarantined. And so we'll be into the new week before we'll have any sense of being able to conclude the work that we've done to date. And we'll be guided by the CFIA on that direction.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister met with the BSE industry advisory committee to discuss the issue of industry compensation. As it is widely known, the impact on the beef industry as a result of the three-week BSE investigation is significant and growing by each and every passing day.

In the feedlot industry in particular, the pressure to see some movement in the cattle is at a boiling point. And now that it appears that the investigation will take several more days to conclude while several other animals related to the case are put down and tested, the situation is becoming even a more tremendous concern.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister update the Assembly on what specific compensation options the industry committee is recommending for feedlots and rendering plants and by what date they want to see a compensation package in place?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, there are a number of players or teams that are working on this very issue that the member asks about.

In Saskatchewan, we have our industry advisory committee. Last evening, the industry advisory committee was chaired by Mr. Bob Ivey, who is a feedlot operator himself, and a decision was made by the committee that we would have Mr. Brad Wildeman sitting on the national table representing Saskatchewan as it relates to this issue and specifically to compensation. Mr. Wildeman is on his way, I understand, already to Ottawa to meet with a team of people who are working on this particular issue.

The question that the member asks is, you know, how soon will we know how much the compensation package should be and to what value should it be? The reality is, is that they're still examining when the clock should start ticking in terms of the compensation package. Initially the view of the industry, and not only in Saskatchewan but across Canada, is that it's the feedlots and the rendering plants that need to be dealt with firstly and it's from that perspective that they're working, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday it was announced that an international panel of three scientists is coming to Canada to review how the CFIA has handled the BSE investigation and to review Canada's food safety and animal health and movement regulations. The CFIA expects panel members from New Zealand, Switzerland, and the United States to arrive in Canada by the end of the week.

Yesterday Saskatchewan Agriculture officials indicated that this would be a peer review of CFIA operations in relation to this case and should not preclude the lifting of any international bans of Canadian beef.

However Dr. Brian Evans with the CFIA said it is hoped that the panel will encourage countries, including the United States, to, and I quote:

... reconsider the interim measures that they have adopted.

Mr. Speaker, is the United States planning to wait for the international panel's review before they decide whether or not to lift the ban on Canadian beef?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well I don't know the answer to that question from the point of view of what the United States might do, Mr. Speaker, but the member is correct as has been reported widely now, that it is in fact a peer review of the process and of the scientists who are conducting the work. And we're confident that our scientific team in Canada not only meets but will exceed any standards that are established now internationally.

But the reality is, is that we have already put forward to the US (United States) government the notion of them opening up their borders to animals that are under 25 months of age because it is the international scientific community can assure the consuming public that in fact animals under 25 months of age would not have BSE.

And so if we're successful through Mr. Vanclief, the Minister of Agriculture for Canada, to convince the US government that in fact we could start to see some of our feedlot animals, primarily under the age of 25 months, that would certainly relieve a lot of pressures that we have immediately in the industry. And that's what we're putting forward to the US government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the federal-provincial Labour ministers are meeting in Halifax this week. The Alberta government has put out a press release stating that Minister Clint Dunford will be meeting with Jane Stewart to discuss what can be done to assist workers laid off due to the BSE investigation and the slowdown in the cattle industry.

My question is to the labour of ... to the Minister of Labour. Will she be attending these meetings to attempt to help lobby, along with the Alberta government, to change the mind of the federal minister, Jane Stewart, to help assist people laid off due to the BSE outbreak in both Alberta and in Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. To inform the minister opposite, it's the ministers responsible for the social services area that are meeting in Halifax this week.

Mr. Dunford from Alberta, his portfolio covers ... Resources and Employment, I believe his portfolio is called, and it covers the social services area plus the labour area.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Supply of Health Care Workers

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health care providers all over the province are concerned about the serious

shortage of health care workers.

Today the Provincial Auditor is raising the same concern in his Spring Report. The Provincial Auditor says that health care workers suffer one of the highest rates of workplace injury in Saskatchewan. Between 10 and 20 per cent of health care workers are injured annually in health care facilities. It's an astonishing rate; in fact, it's higher than the construction industry.

Mr. Speaker, a big reason why this high injury rate is a shortage of health care workers, which leads to excessive overtime, which leads to excessive fatigue, and one worker trying to do what two or three workers should be accomplishment ... accomplishing.

Mr. Speaker, when is this NDP government going to realize that there's a serious shortage of health care workers in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We appreciate receiving the attention from the Provincial Auditor around a number of things that we're doing in the health sector. And I think the important part is that, listening to the advice that he's given and people throughout the system, we've been able to make improvements.

This year's report has some comments around workplace injuries and this affirms the commitment that we've had to address this issue. And we've dealt with many, many different things. And one of the issues relates to numbers of employees, but there are also many other issues that relate to workplace injuries. We'll continue to work with the regional health authorities, with all of the employers across the province in the health field, and we'll work with the Provincial Auditor because that's how we find solutions that make our system better.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:00)

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, it's exactly because this government has neglected this issue over the years that the Provincial Auditor has finally found it important to bring it to the attention of government so that something may be done about this.

Mr. Speaker, rather than being something that the government should feel happy about, they should be embarrassed that the Provincial Auditor has to bring to the attention of this government something that has been obvious to the health care system for years.

Mr. Speaker, this excessive injury rate in health care workers is leading to a costing of millions of dollars of health care money that's used to cover sick time and injury time. Mr. Speaker, health care workers in this province need to know and count on the fact that they're going to work in safe workplaces and there's going to be adequate measures taken, including enough health care workers, so that health care can be provided in a safe and proper way.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that he's neglected the supply of health care workers in this province? And when is he going to draw attention to it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, we've been working diligently with all of our colleagues across the country around the shortage of health care workers in various areas. We'll continue to do that. But I think that one of the things that we should point out is that our regional health authorities, the main employers of health care workers in the province, have been working very hard around issues related to workplace injuries.

In 2001 for example, the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority was accredited by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation as it related to improvement of processes related to workplace injuries. And they came out in that accreditation as above average in all areas related to workplace injuries.

And part of what the challenge is is to continue to identify those areas where we need to improve, and work at them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Support for Law Enforcement

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. Last week the NDP government announced phase 2 of an auto theft strategy implemented in Regina last year. The general strategy has had some impact as auto thefts in Regina so far have dropped about 10 per cent over the last year.

But the rate of car thefts is still very high for a city of this size. And in fact in April the number of cases of stolen cars jumped over the earlier months of the year. The number of car thefts is still on pace to top 2,000 this year, Mr. Speaker.

Part of phase 2, Mr. Speaker, includes two more police officers to be added to the seven currently working in the Regina Police Service's stolen auto unit. However my understanding is that those two additional officers will not be assigned until next January. Mr. Speaker, why will it take so long to give the stolen auto unit an increase in manpower?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I want the member to know that I was very pleased, along with the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety, to tour the place where this kind of strategy is being carried out in Regina. And presently there's some construction going on at Dewdney Avenue, where workers who will intensively work with young people who are involved in car theft are going to be housed. There is some planning to be done. That planning is underway, and when the team is in place the police officers will be there to join the team.

And I want to say for the benefit of the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, that contrary to the implication of his question, a representative of the Regina Police Service, Mr. Clive Weighill, was at the press conference, and he was very praiseworthy, Mr. Speaker, about the . . . I believe he said up to 20 additional

police officers that had been allocated for strategic habitual offender work in Regina and other centres. He was very pleased with the activities of the government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Heppner: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the real answer is that the Regina police services has limited manpower, and any assignment of people to a stolen auto unit reduces manpower to other areas such as street patrol. It is simply a shuffling of the deck, Mr. Speaker. There were 11 officers assigned to the auto unit at the start of this year and it is due to their hard work that the numbers were kept in check. But now there are only seven officers left in the unit dealing with more offenders released to the street, and the summer is a time when this is most critical, Mr. Speaker.

Those seven officers in the unit are now being asked, with phase 2, to provide more monitoring, more curfew checks, and to keep the number of stolen autos in Regina as down as far as they can.

Mr. Speaker, why isn't the NDP providing more resources on a timely basis to the Regina Police Service to help them do the job that they are being asked to do?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to report to this House and to the people of the province that since 1999 the Government of Saskatchewan has funded 142, Mr. Speaker, 142 additional police positions.

And I want the member to know, Mr. Speaker, that in addition to that, certain rules with respect to the reporting of accidents, Mr. Speaker, have been revised, saving the time which has, according to the police, the effect of increasing the number of police officers by an additional 12, Mr. Speaker.

I also want the member to know that policing is being made more effective through the provision of a new radio system, Mr. Speaker, which will make police resources go further.

I also want the member to know that The Pawned Property (Recording) Act which is going through this House will further enhance the tools available to police. Because we believe in safe communities, Mr. Speaker, and we invite that party to join us in those efforts.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the minister hops, steps, and jumps around the question. He tries to take pride, as a typical socialist would, for a promise of 142 that he says that they've put in when they promised 200. He hasn't even taken into account those people who have retired and moved elsewhere, Mr. Speaker.

That commitment certainly doesn't help the numbers of police manpower when retirements in the police service so far outpace that. When officers must be reassigned from the front lines of the patrol to special units like the one we're just discussing now, it takes away from the number of people on the street to

deal with the calls that the police get on a regular day.

If the province is going to demand results from the police like they have through this auto theft strategy, they had better provide adequate resources so the police service can meet those expectations. It has been proven, Mr. Speaker, that, given the resources, the police do get the job done and make a huge difference in reducing crime rates.

So why has the NDP not kept their promise of delivering 200 new police officers to the forces?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to report to the House and to the people of the province that this year the province will be contributing \$91 million toward policing costs in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that is an increase of \$21 million over four years ago and that is a record — a record, Mr. Speaker — contribution towards the cost of policing in this province.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, in answer to the member's question about the city of Regina Police Service, the representative of the city of Regina police department at the news conference the other day, Mr. Speaker, was very praiseworthy of the additional resources that have come to the city of Regina for policing — very praiseworthy was the deputy chief, Mr. Speaker.

And if I have to take the word of the deputy chief of police of the city of Regina or the member from Rosthern, I'll be content to take the word of the police in Regina, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Children in the Sex Trade

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Justice. The car theft numbers in Saskatchewan clearly demonstrate that if police and justice and social services personnel have the resources, they can implement effective programs.

Mr. Speaker, the same should be true of the effort to reduce the number of children being abused in the sex trade. Unfortunately, according to a report in last Friday's paper, the number of children involved in the sex trade is growing. Social agencies estimate there are as many as 300 children being abused in the sex trade on Regina streets today. And they also warn that hundreds of other Regina children are at risk of being forced into the sex trade.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has clearly failed children on Regina's inner city streets. What specific actions is the NDP government intending to take now to fix its failing approach to the child sex trade in Regina?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. I think she would also be interested to know that the presenter who was speaking at the occasion she's referring

to was referring to a number that the committee in fact had estimated, but in fact is of the view that the number of children who are being sexually exploited in Regina these days is probably more accurate somewhere in the range of 40 to 50. However, Mr. Speaker, the important issue here is not the numbers because the fact of the matter is that one is too many.

And, Mr. Speaker, since the issue was addressed through this House in the last session, a number of things have happened. As we discussed in estimates for the Department of Community Resources and Employment last week, there have been intervention committees put in place in around the province. There are 26 privatized services, Mr. Speaker, that are addressing the needs of kids when, for their own protection . . . that they are provided them as victims, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the report in the paper clearly indicated that the social agencies were referring to the number of children in the sex trade in Regina. So whether or not that was a mistaken number by that social agency I guess is for the minister to question. In time, in the days ahead, I hope that he does that.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's also important for this government to recognize that other recommendations from the Child Sex Trade Committee are very important and need to be implemented to make sure that the children out on the streets are getting the services they need and that pimps and johns are deterred.

And that's why the Saskatchewan Party has proposed legislation giving police and social workers the authority to remove abused children from the sex trade and put them in protective, secure care for assessment. And that is why the Saskatchewan Party also supports tough laws that severely punish men who abuse those children, with automatic jail sentences or a minimum mandatory fine of \$25,000 on their first offence.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister agree today to draft tough new legislation as proposed by the Saskatchewan Party that protects children from abuse in the sex trade and hands out harsh, meaningful punishment to the sexual predators who are abusing children on our streets every day?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think in many ways the presenter at the workshop last week talked about what is necessary to address the issue in a responsible and effective way.

I quote from the article that:

Cavers predicted it will take a tremendous effort to cripple the child sex trade but if groups work together, progress can be made.

And it goes on to say that:

. . . there are many efforts at both the grassroots level and at

the government level to try and keep children off the street.

Acknowledges that. Mr. Speaker, it is a . . . I recognize it is the proposal by the Saskatchewan Party that what should be done in effect is to, in effect is to cause children to feel like criminals by locking them, by removing them and locking them away. Mr. Speaker, in my consultations very clearly the road to recovery and rehabilitation for these kids, who we must remember are victims — who are victims — is not to lock them up.

The road to recovery, to rehabilitation, is to begin a relationship that is based on trust. And, Mr. Speaker, you don't start a relationship built on trust by locking kids up. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the . . . although we will continue to review to make sure we're doing the best possible, that the best approach is the one that's being taken responsibly in the province of Saskatchewan today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:15)

Ms. Julé: — Mr. Speaker, the minister will know that it was members on both sides of this House that agreed to recommendation no. 23 from the committee that made recommendations to protect children.

Recommendation no. 23 clearly indicates that on a pilot project basis, there should be protective secure care and it was recommended that be in the city of Regina. Now what that would do, Mr. Speaker, I think the minister knows, is to put the children in for assessment and help them to access the services on the road to recovery.

But another point to be made, Mr. Speaker, is that according to Saskatchewan Justice, police have seized 95 cars from men arrested for attempting to pick up prostitutes. Clearly the police are trying hard to get the job done. But of those 95 vehicle seizures, at least 88 were returned to the offender after completion of johns school. And those 95 vehicle seizures resulted in just two convictions where children were involved.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister explain why only two johns were convicted over the past 12 months for attempting to solicit a child for sex when social agencies are warning that the number of children being abused in the sex trade is growing at an alarming rate?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, the number of people that will be apprehended and charged with an offence will be dependent, Mr. Speaker, upon the work of the police. And I want the member to know, Mr. Speaker, that the police do their utmost under difficult circumstances, with respect to a crime which is difficult to establish, to ensure that people are not engaged in this kind of activity.

But I want to say for the benefit of the member, Mr. Speaker, that many of the measures that have been undertaken by this government with respect to vehicle apprehension, the anti-john laws, and so on have reduced the number of sexual predators who are driving around looking for children to abuse on the

streets. It has had a positive effect.

So the effect, Mr. Speaker, goes beyond the arrest and charging of individuals. It also relates to prevention. It also relates to education of people through johns school. This horrendous crime, Mr. Speaker, is taken seriously by everyone. The police are doing the very best they can, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Members, before orders of the day, I would like to advise all members that I did lay on the Table, the Volume 1 of the 2003 *Report of the Provincial Auditor to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today to stand on behalf of the government and convert for debates returnable questions 610 through 648 inclusive.

The Speaker: — Questions 610 to 648 have been converted to orders for return (debatable).

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Promotion of Saskatchewan

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today to enter into debate, and at the conclusion of my remarks I'll be making the following motion:

That this Assembly enthusiastically support the ongoing positive campaign by Saskatchewan business and the Saskatchewan government to publicize and promote Saskatchewan and its many opportunities, a campaign that is exhibiting strong leadership, inclusive participation, and the belief that Saskatchewan's future is wide open (Mr. Speaker).

Mr. Speaker, this is a debate about two visions. On one side, Mr. Speaker, you have the government and our business leaders of the province that recognize that only through a positive attitude and a positive outlook for our province that our province will grow, prosper, and be a place that is envied by others in Canada and sought after by our youth.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yates: — Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, that's a vision of a strong Saskatchewan that the business people in our province support, that the leaders in our business community want to see in our future, and that this government, led by the Premier, want to see for our children.

Mr. Speaker, and it's a vision that's being recognized by those leaders outside our province as well. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk for a minute about what an Alberta CEO (chief executive officer) sees in our province. Mr. Speaker, Nancy Southern is a

prominent member of Alberta's business elite according to this article, Mr. Speaker. She was unabashed Wednesday in endorsing the Saskatchewan government's Wide Open Future marketing program.

Mr. Speaker, leaders from outside Saskatchewan recognize that in order to build and to grow, that our province needs to allow others to understand the many attributes and the many qualities our province has so that others outside our province can come and seek opportunity within Saskatchewan. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, so those within Saskatchewan understand that others see our province as a province of opportunity, a province that has a bright future for our children, and a province that, Mr. Speaker, people want to move to, to build new businesses and to contribute to, Mr. Speaker.

Now Nancy Southern, a prominent Alberta CEO and businesswoman, she believes in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and she believes in our Wide Open Future campaign, and she believes there's a strong future for Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why can't the members opposite also believe in our province? Because only through a bright and optimistic attitude can we have that bright, optimistic future. And, Mr. Speaker, I would hope the members opposite are listening and can share with us our views of a very optimistic future.

Mr. Speaker, Nancy Southern goes on to say:

"It is good commerce yes, but it is something more important," she said. "We've encountered open, hard-working, straightforward visionary people with the highest integrity, dedicated to excellence for whom we have the highest regard."

That's what Nancy Southern says about our province, our business leaders, our Premier, and our government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yates: — And, Mr. Speaker, I wish the members opposite could share that vision.

Mr. Speaker, Paul Martin, a very well-known local media voice, shares the view of this government that our future in Saskatchewan is wide open, and that in fact that we only can move to our potential in the future by sharing with the rest of the country and with the people of the province our view of a positive future in which we all can prosper, which includes all people, which is inclusive of all of the people in our province, Mr. Speaker, and that creates opportunity for small-business people, for corporations, for Aboriginal First Nations people, Mr. Speaker, and for most of all, for our youth.

Mr. Speaker, that's the vision this government has for the future. But I want to contrast that a little bit with the vision that the opposition has put forward, Mr. Speaker. They portray a province that's in a mess, a province that's in a death spiral, a province that has no future. Mr. Speaker, they talk about . . . negatively always about our province. They don't talk about anything optimistically, Mr. Speaker. They talk about our

province as if it's something that has no future.

So if they want to talk about the province in a negative way, Mr. Speaker, how do we expect people to view our province optimistically? How do we expect business people to come to our province? How do we expect them to view our opportunities enthusiastically when members of the legislature from the Saskatchewan Party talk about our province with nothing but a negative vision? Mr. Speaker, they do more to hurt the future of our province than they do to help.

Mr. Speaker, but that doesn't surprise me. Because, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite don't believe in the positive opportunities of our province. Mr. Speaker, we're talking about a party that views things from a negative perspective. We're talking about a party whose members will elect a candidate, and whose party executive and party leader will overturn.

Mr. Speaker, most Saskatchewan residents understand that in a baseball game the team that gets the most runs wins; that in the local hockey rink when you go watch the hockey game, that the team who gets the most goals wins. It's a pretty simple concept, Mr. Speaker. It happened last night, Mr. Speaker. In the NHL (National Hockey League) Stanley Cup playoffs, Anaheim got one goal, New Jersey got no goals, Anaheim wins — pretty simple concept, Mr. Speaker.

Now that applies, Mr. Speaker, to all sports. But, Mr. Speaker, in the constituency of Melville-Saltcoats, the new constituency of Melville-Saltcoats, a long-standing party member, long-standing party member with the Saskatchewan Party . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. I'd like to bring to the member's attention the subject of the debate which deals with the ongoing positive campaign of Saskatchewan business and government to publicize Saskatchewan. I'd ask him to stick to the topic.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just getting around to connecting all these items, Mr. Speaker.

In looking at an optimistic province where business leaders and businesses want to come to our province, Mr. Speaker, they have to have confidence. And they have to have confidence not just in the government, but they also have to have confidence in the opposition parties, Mr. Speaker. So in having that confidence, Mr. Speaker, they have to look to the future. And when they're looking at the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker — or Mr. Speaker, pardon me — they must look at what the possibilities might be.

So I just think that the business leaders and the people of our country who are looking at Saskatchewan have to understand that if they were to elect the Saskatchewan Party — a party who will let one of its members stand to be their candidate; a member who was their constituency president, Mr. Speaker, and who will go out and will win that constituency candidacy, Mr. Deputy Speaker; and then the party will overturn the will of the people. Now, Mr. Speaker, if the party will overturn the will of the people then, Mr. Speaker, can that party be trusted to govern the province, Mr. Speaker? I say not.

Mr. Speaker, our country is founded on democracy, and our

business leaders look to our democracy to be the foundation of the future in order to build a strong province. In order for our business leaders to build new businesses in Saskatchewan, they have to have confidence, Mr. Speaker. They have to have confidence that the government at any point in time, Mr. Speaker, is going to listen to the people. And, Mr. Speaker, in listening to the people can you move forward.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how can you move forward and how can a political party that will overturn the will of the people, that will overturn the will of the people in an elected . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. I find it rather strange that the member's not sticking to the topic of his very own motion. And I would ask the member to quickly reread the motion and get himself on the topic.

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, I think talking about the legislature and the government and its political parties, Mr. Speaker, talks about building our future. And we are dealing with, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we need to build an ongoing, positive future for our province, for our children, for our youth.

Mr. Speaker, in building that positive attitude, business people need to understand that those essential services that they believe and have come to know in our province are going to continue to exist — Mr. Speaker, publicly funded health care; Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, that deliver if not the lowest rates in Canada, among the lowest rates in Canada; Mr. Speaker, an education system that's publicly funded, where our children get a quality of education and have equity of education at a level not attained anywhere else in the G-8, Mr. Speaker.

Those things businesses need to understand, if we're going to build a prosperous future, if they're going to come to this province, they're going to move their families here, and they're going to look to the future.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they need to know that if in fact those things are there, that they're going to be there in the future. They need to know what the future for health care is. They need to know what the future for education is, and they need to know what the future of our Crown corporations are, Mr. Speaker. They need to understand that if they build in our province today that the foundation in which they move to is going to be there tomorrow.

(14:30)

And, Mr. Speaker, we have in the opposition a party that has hidden agendas. It doesn't lay out its platform. They talk about privatizing, Mr. Speaker. They talk about privatizing elements of health care. They talk about privatizing liquor stores. They talk about privatizing Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker.

Now, we can't have a wide-open future. We can't build the foundation if that foundation's going to continue to change in a way that's negative to the public. It's got to be about what's good for the business people of our province. It's got to be about what's good for the working people of our province. It's got to be about what's good for the First Nations people of our province, Mr. Speaker. It can't be about what's good for a political ideology, Mr. Speaker.

Now we have a campaign that we're going out and telling the people of Canada about our opportunities of the future. We're going out and trying to build the future for our children. And what do the opposition opposite say, Mr. Speaker? They talk about negativity. They stand and they talk about privatizing things. They talk about taking away things. They're promising all things to all people, Mr. Speaker, and they can't afford it. They can't deliver it, Mr. Speaker. They should worry about . . . Mr. Speaker, the opposition should worry about being positive about our future instead of negative. They should worry about building our future for our children.

And, Mr. Speaker, they should look at the foundations of our province — our Crown corporations, our education system, our health care system — and not talk about privatizing them, Mr. Speaker, but to continue to deliver those base services for the people of Saskatchewan; those services which the people of Saskatchewan have come to expect, have come to believe in, and have come to rely upon for their families, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, in a wide-open, bright future, it'll be a future that the government will respect all people. It'll be inclusive in its decisions, Mr. Speaker. It won't reject ideas, Mr. Speaker. It will look to the future with optimism. It'll provide the basic services that our communities need and our businesses need to continue to grow. But it'll always look, Mr. Speaker, to a future that's bright, wide open, and accountable for all our people, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our government, the Government of Saskatchewan, believes in a wide-open future, and I wish the members opposite took the time to understand that only through a positive attitude can change be achieved. Mr. Speaker, the negative attitude that the members opposite bring forward on a daily basis does nothing to grow Saskatchewan. What's the goal, Mr. Speaker? It's simply a goal to obtain power for power's sake.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan want more from their elected representatives. The members . . . The people of Saskatchewan want a future. They want a wide open future that's inclusive of all people, that's optimistic — a future that creates opportunities for our youth, for business, for corporations, Mr. Speaker, for our farm families and, most of all, for our children.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Meewasin:

That this Assembly enthusiastically support the ongoing positive campaign by Saskatchewan business and the Saskatchewan government to publicize and promote Saskatchewan and its many opportunities, a campaign that is exhibiting strong leadership, inclusive participation, and the belief that Saskatchewan's future is wide open.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Jones: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to second the motion, the rather excellent motion I believe, made by the member from Regina Dewdney.

Now there is absolutely no doubt in my mind and there's no doubt in most of the public's mind and certainly not in the members of government's mind that Saskatchewan is poised to enter its second century in great shape with a growing economy, its many, many opportunities that present themselves. And a newly elected New Democratic Party government, Mr. Speaker, will secure its future as it has guided its past. And I'm very much looking forward to our celebration and I believe that our campaign that we've launched in partnership with the business community is going to secure that future even further.

The Wide Open Future campaign by Saskatchewan business leaders and our government to publicize and to promote Saskatchewan is just what the doctor ordered, Mr. Speaker. And it's working. We've been quiet for far too long, Mr. Speaker, and now it's time — it's time to toot our own horn. It's time to let others in on the big, big secret that we've been very silent about, Mr. Speaker, and that is that Saskatchewan is a great place to live, a great place to work and to do business, and a wonderful place to raise families.

But the Sask Party doesn't think so, Mr. Speaker, and they're very noisily, very noisily speaking out in this Assembly and in the media and in the public, telling anyone who will listen that Saskatchewan has nothing to offer, and everything would be solved if only the Saskatchewan people would let them govern.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not going to happen. It's not going to happen, and I'll tell you why. It's not going to happen because it's a simple matter of trust. The people he would govern don't trust him. They don't trust the Leader of the Sask Party, and they don't trust his party members.

And why would they? We've seen in this session where they issue a press release in the morning and have to retract it later in the day. We've seen in this session a Sask Party member taking two quotes from *Hansard* and running them together to fabricate a different quote, and released that off to the media and then have to apologize.

We've seen them trying in vain to explain away their real plan for the Crown corporations — and that plan, as we all know, is to privatize them. We've heard them in this session and last fall . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Would the member please relate . . . take effort to relate her remarks to the motion on hand.

Ms. Jones: — Indeed I will, Mr. Speaker. And I will do that by showing that the Saskatchewan is wide open . . . Saskatchewan's Wide Open Future campaign is about positive, positive action. It's about promoting our province. It's about all of the good things that are happening contrasted with the negativity that we see from across the way. And how the future of our province is so tied to a positive attitude and so very . . . It's so very important not to have this negativity, and it's important to the people to know what that negativity is.

There are many examples of the platform of the Sask Party that are very hurtful to Saskatchewan and how they have gone about trying to undermine our public service. They've gone about saying that they would follow Gordon Campbell's core services

review, and we know what that's done to that province, and we know that that province's future at this particular time in history is not wide open. And we don't want that same kind of thing to happen in our province.

They want to ferret out as they say, the skunks and the deadwood and then say, oh no, that's not true, the civil service is safe in this province. And then in year-end remarks, they turn around and say, well we're putting them on notice that there will be changes and there will be absolutely no question about that. And so I don't want Saskatchewan's Wide Open Future campaign to be over clouded by the negativity that we hear coming from the other side of the House.

We know what that negativity has meant in BC (British Columbia). It means that there are more people living on the streets. There are more people . . . The schools are busting at the seams. Their universities are in decline. And ours, Mr. Speaker, with the very wise motto and the wise campaign that we've launched are really . . . We've invested greatly in the infrastructure. There's much going on as a science centre. And we need to boast about that. We need to talk about it.

There's much going on in Prince Albert at the moment and what we hear across the way is a member who says no, we shouldn't be doing that. It's not good for the wide open future of Saskatchewan to have a forestry centre in P.A. (Prince Albert). And then he takes a little trip to P.A. and the community there says, yes indeed, it is a good thing to have the forestry centre in P.A. and in downtown P.A. at that. And we're very pleased with that.

And so the member comes back and he says, well okay, the people up there say it is a good thing so I guess it is a good thing. And then he comes back to Regina and his leader says well he might have said yes, but I'm here to tell you that he really meant no and it's not a good thing and no, there is no difference between what he says and what I say; it's the same thing.

So imagine what kind of a wide open future Saskatchewan would have if we had a leader and an opposition that happened to be on this side of the House as government making all of these confusing messages to the public when our message is crystal clear — Saskatchewan's Future is Wide Open. And we've very, very proud of that campaign.

So the negativity that goes on and on from that side of the House and has absolutely nothing good to say about the province, it's . . . They're so power hungry, so power hungry that they will stop at nothing including painting a very bad picture of our province, painting a picture of doom and gloom.

Mr. Speaker, our job numbers increase every month for many months in a row. They're doing so well. What do they say? Absolutely nothing. They're silent on the fact that our job numbers are doing very well. When more and more families leave social assistance to find new opportunities in jobs and in training, what do they say? They don't say anything. So you see, Mr. Speaker, they can't seem to say anything nice so perhaps it's that old adage — if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.

But on the other hand they do see things. When business and government leaders across this nation praise the efforts of our Wide Open Future campaign, the member from Lloydminster says we have nothing here to attract investors. Now what kind of a thing to say is that when our future is so good and other people across this nation recognize our efforts, and he says we have nothing here. The member from Cannington, he says that we're selling snake oil. Well what a thing to say when our future is wide open and people are coming here, and people are proud of this government.

I would like to end my remarks, Mr. Speaker. There's so much that I wanted to have an opportunity to say but I'd like to end my remarks with some more positive news, and this came, this little snippet came from the Premier's address to the Regina business luncheon that was held — a very, very successful luncheon I must say — building on the number of participants year after year, anxious, anxious to hear the positive message from our government. And what the Premier said to that group was:

What we have accomplished in just the past two or three years tells me, it guarantees me, that there is little we cannot do if we put our minds to it — if we dream big, plan well and work hard. And it tells me that those who say it can't be done should just stop interrupting those of us who are doing it. It tells me that the 21st Century . . . (is ours, is) our time to shine.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wanted to end on that note, that the 21st century is our time to shine, that the government and the business community's Wide Open Future campaign is a very positive step in making that shine, and just to repeat one more time that those who say it can't be done should just stop interrupting those who are doing it.

So thank you very much, I'm very pleased to second the motion for the member from Regina Dewdney.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:45)

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad to stand in the House today and enter into this debate. And before I read the motion, I'd just like to compliment the Deputy Speaker on his superhero tie.

Mr. Speaker, this motion reads as follows:

That this Assembly enthusiastically support the ongoing positive campaign by Saskatchewan business and the Saskatchewan government to publicize and promote Saskatchewan and its many opportunities, a campaign that is exhibiting strong leadership, inclusive participation, and the belief that Saskatchewan's future is wide open.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I haven't observed as much dribble since my two-year-old son Blake moved from a sippy cup to a big-boy cup.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak in favour of this motion, and I'm going to go through it and give the reasons why.

To begin with, our first sentence — that this Assembly enthusiastically support the ongoing positive campaign. It would seem to me that in 1999, the election of this Assembly, that the popular vote did not fall with the government. As a matter of fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it fell with the side of the House that is now the opposition and the government-in-waiting. Which begs the question, is . . . from that point, how does that allow for the ability for great enthusiasm to be demonstrated throughout the motion in this Assembly when the majority of the populace of this province never elected this government?

Further to that, we have a Premier that came on partway through, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who has yet to face the electorate in a general election. There has been ample opportunity. And that again begs the question relative to the first sentence in this motion whether enthusiasm would be capable within this Assembly of supporting an ongoing positive campaign.

The question regarding the positive nature of the campaign causes some questions to be raised about can a positive campaign and propaganda be differentiated one from the other, Mr. Deputy Speaker? And it would seem to me that there's a good possibility that it could be.

But when we see the Our Future is Wide Open campaign entered into by this government and the idea of promoting Saskatchewan, it begs the question whether it can be positive when 60 per cent of the budget for that campaign has to be spent within the province to tell our own citizenry how good things are. It would seem to me — because I've known a number of people in Saskatchewan, having lived here and been born here — that most people are able to make their own decisions and wouldn't have to be fed propaganda.

So when we get to the second part of the sentence, it's difficult, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that an ongoing positive campaign is even part of the question.

Further to that, it goes on to say that this campaign is supported by Saskatchewan business. And it would seem to me that there would be dollar figures related to anything that business tends to support. They tend to do their own promotions, their own advertising, and we don't really see this in our Future is Wide Open campaign. The business community hasn't seen fit to making contributions towards this kind of propaganda.

What we have seen fit is the business community making great contributions towards the party in opposition. And I can assure the Deputy Speaker that that's going to aid very much in having a change in government as . . . (inaudible) . . . As we continue to go on through the motion and we talk about publicize and promote Saskatchewan and its many opportunities, and this begs the questions on the question of those opportunities in and of itself.

There's no doubt to any member of this Assembly that we have a province that is blessed with a great abundance of natural and human resources, yet we have a government that sees fit to squander these on an ongoing and systematic basis.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the opportunities speak for themselves — 16 consecutive quarters of population loss. And why is this, Mr.

Deputy Speaker?

Well it's because we have a present government that is unable to ensue confidence in the citizenry so that more of them, every year for the last 16 consecutive quarters, have left the province than have come in. And this is largely in part, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of the way that the government has first of all handled our economy and second of all has handled the opportunities therein. They have tried to have a centrally planned economy where Crown corporations and the government needs to run everything, as well as having a high taxation jurisdiction.

We can see that historically the royalties for oil in Saskatchewan — and they've come down and we've had some new drilling which should be commended — but historically they were the highest tax jurisdiction in North America. This is a complete contradiction to this motion, Mr. Speaker, specifically with regards to the point on opportunities.

The next point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I see that I'm a little more than halfway through, we'd get, following the comma, that this is exhibiting strong leadership. Strong leadership would entail that it would come from a leader, Mr. Deputy Speaker; and the attributes demonstrated by a superhero such as Batman, as demonstrated on your tie, have not been demonstrated by our current Premier where we've had a situation where he has come in, he's been elected by a tiny majority of individuals within the New Democratic Party, and he has been the longest serving Premier that's never faced a general election.

These are not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the attributes of strong leadership. They're the attributes of a wee Premier, and I believe those are his words, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. A couple of points just to have the din be removed a little bit from the Assembly. Also to remind the member that he's not to involve the Chair in debate and draw the Chair into debate. And thirdly, also to use parliamentary language. Whether a member uses a term to describe themselves or not, if the term is unparliamentary, then other members are not permitted to use that term as well.

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I say right away that if I have said something that's offensive, I withdraw that and I'd beg the members opposite their pardon.

I was, as a returning to the motion, commenting on the aspect, behind the first comma, of a campaign that is exhibiting strong leadership and making comment to that in that I believe the demonstration of leadership has been sorely lacking.

We've seen the current government, following the SPUDCO (Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company) fiasco, promise open and accountable government at a precedent unseen before and yet we have the member, I believe from Dewdney, who is converting questions left, right, and centre at a very rapid rate.

Mr. Speaker, following that to the next point in the motion, we have that it is to be inclusive in participation. And again that is very difficult to comprehend when we have more than half of

the population did not vote for this current government in 1999.

We have a coalition of sorts — and from that there seem to be a large number of persons excluded. You can ask the members of my riding, by and large, or the members from the riding of Cut Knife, which just recently both gone through by-elections. And you could see from the voter returns that there are many people that feel that there is not a participation in this government.

So to end all that in the belief that the future of Saskatchewan is wide open, unfortunately in and of itself and the history has proven that that is not the point. And to those ends then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be moving an amendment to the motion. And the amendment would contain . . . It'll be moved by myself, seconded by the member from Rosthern.

And the amendment would read as follows, that we move:

That all words after "enthusiastically" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

congratulate the people, workers, and businesses of Saskatchewan for their talent, initiative, and determination to create economic growth in Saskatchewan despite being constantly hampered by a provincial government that seems to be determined to drive away much needed private investment which has only served to hold back our province and keep us from achieving our great economic potential.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that all we need to do is look at the history of our province. From 1905 up to 1929 we had a rapid growth in population and economic boom — and the large factor there was we were not inhibited by an ideology of socialism which crept up on us after the 1930s — and we haven't seen a return.

And to that end, Mr. Speaker, I would have our . . . I would end debate and allow other, my seconder to speak on the amendment as presented.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is an important motion that we're discussing today, and the amendment follows very well upon it. The reason for its importance is that it lays out very clearly and succinctly for the people of this province the difference in the philosophies.

But before we get into that aspect, I think we need to underline how great this province is, Mr. Speaker, and how great the people are in this particular province for the initiative that they have had, for the perseverance they've had — whether we talk about grasshoppers, we talk about weather, we talk about snowstorms, we talk about hospital lineups, or we talk about the NDP.

There is no end of obstacles that this particular province and the people of this province have had to put up with and yet they have persevered, Mr. Speaker. They have persevered decade after decade after decade.

And it's an amazing people that can go ahead and survive as

long as the people of this province had, with a government, an NDP social government that only twice, Mr. Speaker, twice in the history of this province, have ever had more than 50 per cent, more than 50 per cent of the votes — more than 50 per cent. The other 15 times that they've been in charge of this province they've had less than that, Mr. Speaker.

This is the most unelected government we have ever had in province. This is probably the most unelected government we've ever had in the history of North America, and it's a shame. But it's a great credit, it's a great credit to the people of this province that they have stuck it out.

Unfortunately during the time that we've managed to maintain 1 million people, we've lost millions that have gone out of this province and built Alberta and Manitoba and North Dakota and British Columbia and Ontario. Virtually every part of this world, Mr. Speaker, has benefited from the people of Saskatchewan. Unfortunately their gain has been our loss. Their gain has been our loss.

And it comes back to that philosophical aspect that I mentioned just recently. The philosophical aspect comes out of something you will find if you check on your handy dandy little computer and you want to find out, and you go on the Web site of the NDP, you want to find out what they stand for.

They have an archaic bit of literature there, Mr. Speaker, called the *Regina Manifesto*. It even sounds stuffy. It sounds stuffy and it sounds dusty. Unfortunately it hasn't been put to rest by the socialists. They actually voted for it at one of their conventions within the last decade and said, we still believe this, we still believe this.

And what does it say? And here's where the credit needs to go to the people of Saskatchewan. A key part of that says . . . And we have a lot of labour critics, but the interesting thing is when you look at the labour people elected by the NDP, where are they sitting, Mr. Speaker? They're all sitting in a back row; they're all sitting in a back row. You would think after being leaders of their own little empires they'd be able to move right to the front. But no.

Sitting in the front they have RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) people, they have ministers, they have insurance salesmen, and their union leadership sits at the back.

Anyways, back to my point and back to what we're discussing here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They have in that *Regina Manifesto* the key item, the key item that brings so much credit to the people of Saskatchewan — not that they voted for it. They voted against it most of the time, almost always. Even in this last election, Mr. Speaker, we need to bring to the attention of the NDP, they got less votes than the Saskatchewan Party. Not only did they get less than 50 per cent, they got less than the Saskatchewan Party.

There's only one party of the three in this House — well three and a third because there's a few there that are part of the coalition, we're not quite sure where they belong — that they beat and that is the Liberals with one member. They did beat that, Mr. Speaker. We'll give them credit. They got more votes than the Liberal. But that's all.

(15:00)

Back to the *Regina Manifesto* and the credit the people of Saskatchewan deserve. There's a key part in that that says government should own all aspects of production.

Now, Mr. Speaker, now, Mr. Speaker, it's taken a little while. Tommy Douglas is gone. He managed to snow a few people in this province and they didn't quite see through him.

The people in rural Saskatchewan have seen through that because they know when it says the government should own all means of production, it means the NDP if they had their way — and most particularly those labour people in the back rows over there — if they had their way, Mr. Speaker, they would own every single acre in this province.

They've tried it before. They've tried it before and they were kicked out. And if they thought there was a hope of doing it again, they would do it again.

The people of Saskatchewan, as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, have not just persevered against cold and drought and grasshoppers but they've had to persevere against a government that has actively said, and put it on their television screens when they check their Web site, that they want to own the means of production which is the very farms they live on. They'd like to turn every single farmer in this country into peons. Turn them into serfs. That's what they want, Mr. Speaker. Their own documents indicate that.

Now there's a few of them, who now say they're NDP, would like to say, well we stand up for labour. Let's see how they stand up for labour. We've just had the mad cow crisis, Mr. Speaker. And one of the key things, key groups that have been injured because of that is the labour community — the labour community — those people who've been working hard in our slaughterhouses. Jobs that very often aren't even the best jobs in the world, difficult jobs, hard jobs. Jobs this government should be protecting.

And when, Mr. Speaker, throughout the rest of Canada, when the people in the fishing industry need some help, the federal government is right there and gives them some breaks in Unemployment Insurance. When it happens in SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) in Ontario, they give them a break.

But when it happens in Saskatchewan to our people, what kind of a noise do we hear from these people? Next to nothing. Next to nothing, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'll have to give you a quote from the Premier. The Premier called himself a wee Premier. That . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. The member for Rosthern was here when I called the member for Kindersley to order, referring to people's physical attributes and I cautioned him not to do that. So I would direct the member for Rosthern to stand in his place, apologize, and withdraw his remark.

Mr. Heppner: — I apologize for calling the Premier a little man.

However, Mr. Speaker, if we look at part . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I would ask him to withdraw the remark as well, and apologize and continue on with his remarks.

Mr. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that remark and apologize to the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, part of the original, part of the original motion that we're . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, you required the hon. member to withdraw his remarks and apologize to the House. In violating the debate rules of the House, he has in fact, Mr. Speaker, brought into disrepute the House. The apology is not to an individual member, it's to the House. And I would ask that you would require the hon. member to withdraw his remark and apologize to the House.

The Deputy Speaker: — I appreciate the member's point of order. I will offer the member for Rosthern the opportunity to clarify his apology.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I apologize to the House for that remark.

As we said earlier on, the original motion, the original motion talked about strong leadership, Mr. Speaker. And what I was just talking about, when we talked about the workers in the meat industry, this government did not supply strong leadership.

It's the people of Saskatchewan that deserve credit for being able to withstand the ravages of this government. What should we have expected, Mr. Speaker? When those employees get sent home because there are no cattle to slaughter, this government should have stood up and screamed and hollered at the federal labour people and saying we deserve, we demand something.

What did we hear? We had to beg and ask: have you made a phone call? Well the kind of thing we heard on a different issue, but still on the mad cow disease — it's Thursday, I'll pick up the phone on Monday, I'll pick up the phone on Monday. That's the attitude we've had from this NDP government. That's the attitude. And that's where the credit comes . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. As difficult as it is to believe, I'm having a hard time listening to the member for Rosthern. The sound is obviously beyond what it should be. I know everyone wants to be part of the debate and you will have the opportunity, but please allow the member from Rosthern to make his remarks uninterrupted.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Leadership is what we're discussing here. Leadership is what it's all about. We haven't had it from this NDP government.

We've seen it twice in spades in the last week: one on the issue of standing up for the people who are raising the beef; the other

one, standing up for the people who are involved in the slaughter system. And it wasn't there, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't there.

Our amendment said that the credit needs to go to the people of Saskatchewan. And it's amazing that any of those people would hang around this province when they see what this NDP government has done to them. There is no leadership. The credit goes to the people of Saskatchewan who time and again, and time and again would have it put to them by this government. And they say, well we'll keep on trying. We'll keep on trying.

We'll go to the polls again, time after time. Fifteen out of seventeen times they voted for other parties more than they voted for the NDP and not had their way. But time after time they will come back and they will vote again. Last election, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party got more votes than the NDP did by far. This time, Mr. Speaker, we'll not only get more votes, we will get more seats. We will get many more seats, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Heppner: — And had I but time, Mr. Speaker, had I but time, I would go down the front and the middle and the back rows of that NDP group and indicate which ones of those would not be back in this House, because their names are legion, Mr. Speaker. There are many of those that will never be back in here again.

The people of Saskatchewan will persevere. They've persevered, as I've said, against drought and grasshoppers and the NDP. They will continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the amendment made. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure who said it but someone in this House once said that strong and bitter words indicate a weak cause. And never, Mr. Speaker, is that truer than the statements that we've been seeing from the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion. I do not agree with the amendment in this particular case.

I want to just briefly speak about three aspects of the debate that has been occurring: one is about the economy; one is about the Crown corporations, their role in Saskatchewan; and thirdly, about leadership, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the economy, one of the opposition speakers — and this is a current refrain from the members opposite — they portray a picture of Saskatchewan's economy of they, the opposition, say that it's a mess. Well that's what they say, and that's the impression that they like to create for the people of Saskatchewan.

You would think that if the economy as such were such a major, critical issue and that it's doing so badly, that this is something that they would raise on a daily basis in question period and

whatever other forums they have in this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker. They do not do that. They don't raise those questions.

Why is that, Mr. Speaker? Because contrary to the impression that they seek to create, and that is the impression that . . . is the nature of opposition they have to create, that things are never as good as they are. They seek to create the impression that things are bad.

In fact the economy is doing quite well, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the fact that Saskatchewan has suffered two years, two years of the worst drought since the 1930s. In fact some say that the drought was worse than anything that we experienced in the 1930s. Saskatchewan's economy is doing well and is projected to continue to do well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Those, those, Mr. Speaker, are the facts of the matter, Mr. Speaker. Not our facts, but those are the facts that are confirmed by all those who have any role to play in commenting on economies in Canada. They say the Saskatchewan economy is doing very well and will continue to do very well in the months ahead, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, we have also seen now for 12 consecutive months more jobs in Saskatchewan than the same month of the previous year — not by our measurement, Mr. Speaker, not by our measurement, but by measurement of some impartial federal agency, Mr. Speaker. Another indication that the economy in Saskatchewan is doing well and is projected to continue to do well, Mr. Speaker. And those are the facts of the matter.

Mr. Speaker, it's also — and I've said this before in the House — it's a reflection of the strengths of economies in Canada as to the extent of equalization payments they get from Ottawa. Weak economies in Canada receive great equalization payments from Ottawa. Strong economies in Canada do not get large equalization payments, if any, from Ottawa.

The strongest economies in Canada are the Ontario economy and the Alberta economy. It used to be that the third-strongest economy in Canada was the British Columbia economy. Well now based on equalizations, it might be said fairly that the third-strongest economy in Canada is the Saskatchewan economy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Contrary to the point of view that they would seek to portray, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's economy is doing well and will continue to do well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And those are the facts, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and I can't fault them for that, Mr. Speaker. This

is something that they have to do in an election year. No one would elect an opposition to be the government if there is some sense that the economy was doing reasonably well, people were employed, businesses were doing businesses, people were making profits, people were making good wages, the tax revenues for the governments were increasing as a result in this strong economy. They couldn't hope to get elected if that were the case. That is the case and that's why they won't be elected, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the other issue I just want to briefly touch on is the question of Crowns and why it is that we can be optimistic about our future in Saskatchewan, why it is that people are looking to Saskatchewan as an example of a strong economy in this country and part of it has to do with the Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. Those Crown corporations deliver good services at reasonable rates to the people of Saskatchewan. Everybody knows that — good services at reasonable rates to the people of Saskatchewan.

Yet Crown corporations is one area that they consistently — that is the opposition — consistently criticize. And I think that reflects a fundamental belief on their part that they don't support public enterprise. Fair enough, they don't have to believe in Crown corporations.

And if you examine the comments that they make, directly, indirectly, you get some sense that if they were ever to form the government that the attitude and position of the government of the day would change dramatically when it comes to Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker.

But the facts of the matter are one, that Crowns deliver good services at very reasonable rates to the people of Saskatchewan. There's no denying that. In fact, what was it, Mr. Speaker, just the other day? There was an article in *The Globe and Mail* where an organization from the United States went out to survey all of the major cities in North America, all of the major cities in North America, and tried to ascertain which cities it was that were getting the best deal in terms of telephone services.

And they concluded that not only were Canadian cities getting the best deal in terms of telephone services, but you know, Mr. Speaker, the very best deal, the very best deal of all the major cities in North America, of all the major cities in North America, the very best deal for basic telephone service was where, Mr. Speaker? Right here in Saskatchewan, in Regina, Mr. Speaker. That's where you got the very best deal.

And I say that by way of example, Mr. Speaker, that we can be optimistic about our future because we do have those Crown corporations to provide very good services at reasonable rates, Mr. Speaker. That's one of the conclusions I draw about Crown corporations, unlike the members opposite.

(15:15)

And, Mr. Speaker, they like to point out the areas where Crowns have not been successful in investments, and I recognize that not all Crown investments are successful ones. And if anyone over there has a secret, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that all investments are successful, I encourage those people to

go out of this Chamber and make the 10, 20, \$100 million a year that they can make for having that kind of prescience, Mr. Speaker.

But not all Crown investments are successful, but at the end of the day Crown corporations generate significant revenues for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and lower the taxes that they would otherwise pay, Mr. Speaker. And that, Mr. Speaker, is no small thing for the taxpayers of this province. And that's one of the conclusions I draw about Crowns.

Mr. Speaker, also I think that one of the conclusions that people are drawing is that Saskatchewan people are fearful that if the opposition were ever, ever to form government, they would, in short, Mr. Speaker, mess with success, Mr. Speaker. And those Crown corporations are successful, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, finally a word about leadership. Mr. Speaker, I listened to the members opposite and I, you know, when the member opposite was criticizing the government, and the Leader of the Opposition has done this, that every time, every time that there's some potential source of conflict between the province and the federal government or other jurisdictions, they act in a fashion, Mr. Speaker, that reminds me of nothing but the stewardship of the province of Quebec by that separatist party, the Parti Québécois, Mr. Speaker.

That's what it reminds me of — a singular focus, a singular focus to the province regardless of the extent that you need to work with others to further your own case in this province, Mr. Speaker. They lose sight of that. It's because they are a provincial party only and they have that narrow, narrow focus, Mr. Speaker, an inability to see a bigger picture, to work with others to further our own ends, and to ensure that we do have a wide open future in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That is their great failing; that is our great strength, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's with pleasure that I take part in this debate today. And looking at this motion presented by members on the government side, it's quite interesting when you read right in there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they talk about exhibiting strong leadership. Well in my time in this legislature we have seen strong leadership, but it certainly hasn't been in the last few years, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think what we saw from the leadership from this government in the last two or three years that we can really highlight, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we now are running deficits, we are now increasing the debt in the province of Saskatchewan, and we are actually running this province into the ground, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

They talk about in this motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, inclusive participation. Well you know what that is, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's this government going out and spending taxpayers' money to compete against private business and in turn driving private

business out of the province of Saskatchewan. How on earth, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that going to grow Saskatchewan?

The one thing in this motion that I would agree with, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that Saskatchewan's future is wide open. And do you know why? Because as soon as the Premier gets the intestinal fortitude to call an election, the people on this side of the House will make Saskatchewan wide open to the world. We will lower taxes, we will show business that they can make a profit by moving to Saskatchewan, and then we will see what is meant by, Saskatchewan is wide open for business.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I only have a few minutes left but I'd like to touch on a few of the reasons I feel this province is falling behind. Our young people are leaving for Alberta and greener pastures. Look at our tax system. The past Finance minister and even the present Finance minister say, oh we've lowered taxes. We're lowest in the country.

Well that's not exactly the truth, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're probably one of the highest taxed provinces in this country, when you add in income tax, the PST (provincial sales tax), gas tax.

Look at the property tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker, between municipal and education tax. And we all know that municipalities have been downloaded on and are at wit's end on how to keep their tax base down. But what about education tax that this government has downloaded onto the property tax payer?

Then you go on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you add such things as licensing, permits, charges for ISC (Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan), that land titles now that have skyrocketed because of the mismanagement of that government blowing \$107 million on a land titles system that is now slower and more expensive than it was when they started.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is many reasons why this province is going behind, but there are many reasons coming shortly why we're about to turn the corner and take off. And that government may never be in power again after the people on this side have had a chance to display what we can do with this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — I honestly believe that the province of Saskatchewan is like a little time bomb that is about to take off but for one reason: we have a socialist government in power more often than not that thinks that you have to own everything in this province, the government has to own everything to prosper.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is totally contrary to where we go to the west to Alberta who have seen their population grow three times compared to ours. Even in Manitoba, who is very similar to Saskatchewan, is starting to rise a wee bit.

We say well, we can never compare ourselves to Alberta, and that's because we have a socialist government. That's about to

change, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We bring some optimism. We talk about the province being wide open. The party on this side of the House is actually the one with optimism for this province and actually are the ones that are going to grow this province. And very soon, with the . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. I'm having difficulty hearing the member's comments. I would ask members just to tone it down a bit for the last couple of minutes.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the other reasons I believe that this province is falling behind is because that government believes that the Crowns are the way to grow this province, and have them invest in private business. How would you like to have to move to Saskatchewan, start a business, and compete with your own money? It doesn't work, Mr. Speaker. It hasn't worked in the past and it will not work in the future — just another of the many reasons.

We look at the ethanol projects that they're talking about. Ethanol is great for the province. But it would be far better off if the government would keep its nose out of it and let private business run this business.

The hog industry, we saw this government decide they had to put \$15 million into the hog industry. What do we see? Smaller hog ventures out there; family ventures that are competing with their own tax dollar because this government thinks that's the way you grow Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, go back to The Farm Land Security Act. You know well that we took four years of private members' Bills to convince this government that we don't need restrictions in this province. It will grow if we just open it up. Remove the regulations and away this province goes. And we've already started to see land prices increase and I think that's partly due to the opening and loosening of the restrictions.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan is known across the world. It's known in the US. It's known all . . . in Europe, all over the place. But right now it's known for restrictions, regulations, and a socialist government.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will go out and sell the province of Saskatchewan, but we will create an atmosphere in this province where Saskatchewan will be able to sell Saskatchewan to investors and businesses all over this world. So the minute we have a general election in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and elect a Sask Party government, Saskatchewan will sell itself.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — There will now be a 10-minute question and comment period.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, speaking on selling out Saskatchewan, my question is directed to the member for Kindersley.

One of the very first things that the Devine administration did — without any prior discussion in the campaign leading up to it and that's why I'm asking the question — is that they sold out the coal mines which supplied coal to SaskPower. Those coal mines generate a steady return for their owners and therefore they were able to get a price for that based on that.

So my question is: can the member assure us that given the 300-plus million dollars a year that's generated by the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, can the member assure the people of Saskatchewan that his party, if they were to form the government, will not sell off or privatize any aspect of the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority?

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to answer the member opposite's question.

And first of all I'd like to state and reiterate our party's position that we will not be selling off SaskPower. We will not be selling off SaskEnergy. We will not be selling off SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) and we will not be selling off SaskTel.

Mr. Speaker, what we've said is that we would do a review of the services for the other 85 Crown corporations that have existed. And what we would do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would definitely, definitely I can assure the member opposite, not be taking taxpayers' money and investing them into businesses that compete with private enterprise. We won't be doing that, Mr. Speaker.

That drives business out of the province. It's driven it out for the last 60 years and it's prevented us from reaching the potential that this province deserves. And it will get that potential, Mr. Speaker, after the next election with a new Saskatchewan Party government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's interesting to listen to the member from Regina Dewdney's debate. Because he went on and on and on about the negative attitude of the Saskatchewan Party and he dangerously linked that to our always talking about private business.

That was very telling I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to what the NDP attitude is towards private business in our province. Now the Saskatchewan Party does believe that private business is essential to a strong economy. What is the member of Regina Dewdney's real agenda since he obviously believes that private business is a negative sector of society?

If he had a choice of establishing a Crown corporation to develop an industry or allowing private sector to establish the business on its own, which would he choose?

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the member opposite asks a very interesting question and she makes a number of innuendoes in her question.

First off I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I stand for, as do the members of government, we stand in strong support with private business and with public enterprise, Mr. Speaker. The

engines of our economy: one engine works well in some areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker; another engine works well in other areas.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my comments were about the members opposite standing for privatizing our public enterprises, not about against private business, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Private business has done a tremendous job in our province. They've built this economy, they've helped deliver 12,000 new hundred jobs year over year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they've done a great deal.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the question of whether or not a new enterprise should be in private business or as part of a Crown corporation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that would depend on what we're talking about, what specific initiative we are looking at, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Now, if the private sector can deliver that initiative, Mr. Speaker, that's fine. We believe in that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it's building an existing or expanding an existing Crown corporation then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to look at that in each and every situation. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was very troubled to hear the most recent answer by the member for Kindersley, so I want to ask a second question to him.

I want to know, given the list that the member for Kindersley has outlined of only four of the utility Crowns, of only four of our main Crowns in terms of not privatizing them, will he and his party keep their election promise to not privatize Crown corporations without first going to a referendum? I want to know whether he is prepared to keep his election promise not to privatize the Crowns without a referendum.

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm happy to rise and answer the question for the member opposite. As soon as the government sees fit to go to the polls I'm sure they're going to get a complete outline in our election platform.

But further to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said before, one of the things we have promised outright with regards to the Crown corporations in the economy of Saskatchewan is under a Saskatchewan Party government we will not be taking taxpayers' money again to be put into ventures where private industry is already existing and trying to put good, hard-working, private entrepreneurs out of business. That won't be happening under a Saskatchewan Party government.

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the member for Regina Victoria, in view of his earlier question expressing horror at the possibility that casinos might not be government operated, I'd like to ask him since when was government operation of casinos a core NDP philosophy? When did that happen? I'm not clear when that became core NDP belief, that the reason we have government is so they can run casinos.

(15:30)

And also in view of the catcalls from various ministers of the cabinet over there, the casinos must be owned by the

government. Is that to be taken then as the NDP saying that it is opposed to the SIGA (Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority) ownership and operation of casinos in the province?

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I wasn't even addressing the question of casinos; I addressed, very particularly, the question of the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, not the Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation. I think in that, with respect to casinos, we as a provincial government would want to ensure that all aspects of the Criminal Code are observed and that the conduct of gaming will be properly observed.

I just assume, Mr. Speaker, that the first opportunity that the Sask Party would have, if they ever were to form government, that they would unload the casinos in no time flat. That's my sense of what they would do, Mr. Speaker, because those . . . there's no doubt in my mind that that's they would do, Mr. Speaker. And the people of Regina will be very concerned about the fact that this enterprise in their city which generates revenues, generates jobs, will be sold off by them to who knows what sort of . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The member's time has expired.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you again, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question again is to the member for Kindersley, although he dodged answering the last question about holding to their election promises.

What I want to know, Mr. Speaker, is will that member . . . What is it the Saskatchewan Party is going to say to the thousands of people who today are working in the Crown corporations that they are going to privatize and fire? How will they deal with employees, given the intent to fire the unionized employees in the Liquor and Gaming Authority, in Crop Insurance, in every single one of the other Crowns except for those four that they have mentioned?

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad to have the member opposite ask these questions again. I would assure the member opposite, if he has heard, what the Saskatchewan Party is talking about is growth. We're going to grow this province, Mr. Speaker, by 100,000 people in 10 years, and every decision that a Saskatchewan Party government is going to make is going to be premised on whether it is going to achieve that goal or not.

And that is going to mean, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we're going to have a healthy sector of Crown corporations. And following, following the Crown review, we are going to see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is going to be no taxpayer money invested against private enterprise. And we're also going to see a complete stop to the fiasco of foreign investments — \$85 million lost last year outside of Saskatchewan. That will end, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And that's why we will be forming the next government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the province is going to grow by 100,000 people over the next 10 years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the member from Regina Victoria.

Back in the 1970s or early 1980s, the then NDP government under Allan Blakeney spent taxpayers' money advertising then the family Crown corporations. And we see that this government is also using taxpayer money to advertise themselves through this Future is Wide Open campaign. It's a blatant use of taxpayer money to promote the NDP government's election plans coming up.

As we know, the NDP went down to a humiliating defeat then and I predict that the NDP will go down to another humiliating defeat this time.

I'd like to ask the member, why is the government spending taxpayer money — I understand up to 60 per cent of the Future is Wide Open money — why are they spending taxpayer money in Saskatchewan rather than trying to promote the province to businesses outside the province?

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a good question. And my question would be, why is it the Sask Party caucus is also spending money to trash the province, Mr. Speaker, and the government, in their ads?

Mr. Speaker, the future is wide open in this province. Things are going very well in Saskatchewan. The economy is doing well in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. People know it. People are employed; help wanted ads in the stores wherever you go, Mr. Speaker, in this province. Saskatchewan is working again and it is because of the leadership provided by this government, Mr. Speaker, that is the case.

Mr. Speaker, I'll just leave it at that, Mr. Speaker, by saying that the Saskatchewan economy is doing very well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — The 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE BILLS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 301 — The Western Christian College (Amendment) Act, 2003

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to serve as the sponsor of this Bill, and I will be moving second reading momentarily.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to note that this Bill will facilitate the return to Saskatchewan of the Western Christian College, once known as the Radville Christian College. This institution of learning and spiritual development has been doing its good work since 1931.

The college moved to Dauphin in the late '80s but they are now coming back home to Saskatchewan. I know from speaking with the college's president, John McMillan, that WCC (Western Christian College) staff, students, and supporters are very excited

about the return to Saskatchewan. And I know that the people of Regina and of Saskatchewan are just as excited as well, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank all members of the Assembly for their co-operation in expediting the legislative process for this Bill to date, and I look forward to continuing on in that spirit of co-operation as we work together to ensure the successful consideration of this Bill and to ensure the successful homecoming of the Western Christian College.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 301, The Western Christian College (Amendment) Act, 2003 be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 7 — Government Environmental Initiatives

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise this afternoon to move a motion that addresses the important issue of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions globally and here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And at the end of my remarks, I'll be moving the following motion:

That this Assembly recognize and praise the many initiatives of the government and its Crown corporations, and particularly SaskPower, to create and maintain a cleaner environment and to ameliorate the environmentally harmful effects of global warming, and urge a continued expansion of actions designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet Kyoto Protocol national reduction targets.

Now, Mr. Speaker, by way of introductory comments to this motion, I want to say a few words this afternoon about the implications of global warming for the Saskatchewan economy and Saskatchewan's environment and for the global environment and the global economy, Mr. Speaker.

And let me say that I think that the consequences of global warming are very substantial, Mr. Speaker, and the environmental impacts are such that we truly need to look at changing the way in which we conduct our affairs, particularly in the energy sector of our worldwide economy, Mr. Speaker. And I think this is increasingly being recognized at a global level, Mr. Speaker, and more and more countries in the industrialized world are expressing their support for an international agreement that is designed to at least be a starting point for curbing greenhouse gas emissions, and that of course is the Kyoto Protocol.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately when we were debating the Kyoto Protocol in this Assembly, it became clear that members of the official opposition from the Saskatchewan Party are adamantly opposed to Kyoto and don't believe that the issue of greenhouse gas emission reduction needs to be taken seriously here in this province, Mr. Speaker. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is, that is, Mr. Speaker, very, very unfortunate.

And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Humboldt is disagreeing with my characterization of the Saskatchewan Party position. So I'm going to divert from my remarks for a minute and just read into the record a couple of things that the member for Humboldt had to say when we debated this issue in the Assembly in December 2002.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what did the member for Humboldt say, Mr. Speaker? And I have to say that I have a lot of respect for the member for Humboldt on some issues, which I've enjoyed working with her on, particularly around the child sex trade. But I don't agree, Mr. Speaker, with her position on Kyoto. And here's what she said. She said, and I quote:

It is not unlike the 1999-2000 . . . computer scare that turned out to be the biggest fraud in the history of mankind. This misguided Kyoto accord could easily outdo that sham.

That's what she said, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would characterize that as a comment that is not supportive of Kyoto. Now, Mr. Speaker, what else did she say, Mr. Speaker? She said, and I quote:

So what then is the Kyoto Protocol? Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not about science. It is (about) . . . old-fashioned politics — socialist politics — intent on redistributing income led by overzealous Environment department bureaucrats.

That's what the member for Humboldt said in December, Mr. Speaker, and I think, despite her protest, it's fair enough to characterize her position and the position of all members opposite as being unsupportive of the Kyoto Protocol, Mr. Speaker, and unwilling to address the critical need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this province and globally, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me return to my remarks after that intervention from the member for Humboldt and say, Mr. Speaker, that I believe that the consequences of global warming are very, very serious and need to be taken very seriously by all people in this province and by all members of this Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, those consequences are becoming more apparent as we see severe drought, not just in this province, Mr. Speaker, but in many parts of the world, as a result of increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Speaker, we see with that in this province and in many parts of the world, declining crop production, Mr. Speaker. We see, Mr. Speaker, in this province and in many, many other parts of North America, sharply increased forest fire fighting expenditures. We see declining surface water levels in many parts of the world, and we've experienced that in our own provinces over the last few years, until we had better moisture conditions this year, Mr. Speaker. For the last few years we saw our surface water levels declining. And that's not just the pattern in this province but it's a pattern right across the world, Mr. Speaker.

We're also seeing the threat of more and more tropical diseases like West Nile virus that's now come into the United States and into Canada, Mr. Speaker. And unfortunately we're going to be facing cases of West Nile virus in this province this year, Mr. Speaker.

So those are just a few examples, Mr. Speaker, of the consequences of global warming. And I believe that the future of our farm economy, our northern forest, our surface water bodies, and our recreational and tourism industry could be significantly jeopardized if global warming is not checked.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, I think it's so unfortunate that members of the official opposition, the Saskatchewan Party, are just not prepared to take this issue seriously, Mr. Speaker. And they continue to heckle across the House, Mr. Speaker. It's a clear example, the fact they just don't take this issue seriously.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these, these consequences that I mention — these consequences of global warming — are just the beginning. We also risk the escalation of other tropical diseases in Western Canada beyond West Nile virus. We risk unbearably hot summers and the premature deaths that will result, a significant loss of aquatic species, Mr. Speaker, serious damage to our sports fishing industry, more tornadoes and other extreme weather events, and the melting of glaciers in the Canadian Rockies upon which Saskatchewan rivers ultimately rely, Mr. Speaker.

Those are a few of the other consequences of global warming. And I want to continue talking about these consequences, Mr. Speaker, because we just don't seem to be able to get members of the official opposition to take the issue seriously. And they continue to heckle from their seats.

So I want to inform members of some of the other consequences of global warming, Mr. Speaker, consequences that are recognized by the United Nations; recognized, Mr. Speaker, by countries around the world but are not recognized by members of the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker.

(15:45)

So what are some of these other consequences? Well one is the prospect of more typhoons and more hurricanes, Mr. Speaker, which meteorologists across the world, Mr. Speaker, are recognizing and warning the global community are a consequence of global warming.

We face the prospect of the loss of habitat for thousands of species as temperatures rise, Mr. Speaker. We face the melting of permafrost in Canada and other northern regions with its negative impacts on buildings and other infrastructure. We risk, Mr. Speaker, and we're . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Oh, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. With leave, to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and with thanks to the member from Saskatoon Greystone whose speech I was enjoying immensely so I was very sorry to interrupt it.

But I do want to introduce to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and through you to other members of the Legislative Assembly, two guests who are seated in the Speaker's gallery. And they are Mr. Don Hanson, who is the president and CEO of Northrock Resources Ltd., which is an oil and gas company operating . . . headquartered in Calgary but actually doing an awful lot of work in Saskatchewan. And also, Mr. Eamon J.B. Hurley, who is the associate general counsel and secretary of Northrock Resources Ltd., and also a graduate of the College of Law.

Now both of these gentlemen are originally from Saskatchewan and retain very close ties to Saskatchewan. In fact Mr. Hurley advised me that he's marrying a young woman whose parents reside in my riding in Saskatoon. And undoubtedly now that he realizes that I am the member of the legislature, he'll be moving back to Saskatoon very soon.

And these gentlemen tell me that they are very pleased with the business prospects in Saskatchewan, doing a lot of work here. And we also appreciate the work that they're doing here, the jobs they're providing. And I'd like all members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming these gentlemen here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Stewart: — To introduce guests, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Leave granted.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would also like to introduce Mr. Hanson and Mr. Hurley from Northrock Resources. I know that we had a nice meeting this morning, and I know that they are interested in investing many more millions of dollars in Saskatchewan under the right circumstances.

And I welcome them here. I introduce them to the Assembly and hope that we'll see much more of them in the future.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 7 — Government Environmental Initiatives (continued)

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to add my words of welcome to our guests in the gallery, and I hope they enjoy the proceedings this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying the consequences of Kyoto for the global community and for our own province are serious indeed. And, Mr. Speaker, I was mentioning before our introduction of guests that some of the impacts include more typhoons and hurricanes, the loss of habitat for thousands of species, melting permafrost in Canada and other northern regions, rising sea levels, and coastal flooding that threatens island states and many of the world cities, Mr. Speaker.

These are some of the major consequences of global warming

and I think, Mr. Speaker, that what we're seeing in Saskatchewan, especially with respect to the position of the official opposition is that they're out of step, Mr. Speaker, with the global community in the developed nations of the world in terms of recognizing this problem and committing themselves to working together with members on this side of the House in addressing the problem.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in my judgment the negative economic consequences of global warming are enormous and far outweigh costs that will be associated with mitigating it. The negative economic impacts of global warming are the primary reason the insurance industry worldwide has been solidly on the side of backing the Kyoto Protocol, Mr. Speaker.

But while the economic issues are very important, the essence of the Kyoto debate is around ethical choices that impact enormously on human health and the health of our planet. At the heart of the matter is whether we are prepared to take truly substantial steps in a cost-effective and creative way to lighten our ecological footprint on the planet.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that most Saskatchewan people will answer yes to that question, Mr. Speaker, and our government, Mr. Speaker, has also started to very clearly say yes to that question, Mr. Speaker.

And in a moment I want to highlight a number of the important steps that we have taken over the last three years during this term of government to address the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the province of Saskatchewan. And I want to particularly highlight the initiatives that Saskatchewan Power Corporation has taken in this regard.

But before I do that, Mr. Speaker, let me just say with respect to my general comments on Kyoto, that I think we are going to find that Kyoto is just a beginning in terms of the journey that we need to take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on our planet. I'm noticing that more and more scientists in the world — in fact I think it's fair to say that the vast majority of scientific opinion in the world, Mr. Speaker — is that we're going to have to go significantly beyond Kyoto in terms of emission reductions.

But Kyoto, Mr. Speaker, is at least a starting point. And it calls upon — in the Canadian context — it calls upon the Canadian government, Mr. Speaker, and the people of Canada and the provincial governments of Canada to reduce emissions to 6 per cent below 1990 levels. And at present, Mr. Speaker, in Canada we're 19 per cent above 1990 levels. So in effect we're talking about a 25 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions being required on a national basis.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, one of the fundamental principles that needs to be addressed in the ongoing debate about how we tackle the challenge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions is ensuring that that burden of reduction is equitably shared across the country and that no one region bears an unfair share of the responsibility for reducing emissions.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased that our government has emphasized this as an important condition of supporting the Kyoto Protocol, and of course we had the debate in the House

just a few short months ago, in December of 2002.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn to the question of actions that Saskatchewan Power Corporation and other departments of government have taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions here in our own province. And I want to outline some of the initiatives that SaskPower has taken.

I'm going to start, Mr. Speaker, with one of the initiatives that I'm the most excited about, which is an announcement, Mr. Speaker, that we had in the Throne Speech of a GreenPower portfolio that Saskatchewan Power has committed itself to on behalf of our government over the next four to five years, Mr. Speaker. As a government we have looked at various options for meeting our future electrical needs, Mr. Speaker, as our demand for electricity continues to grow in the province. And of course one of the responsibilities that we ultimately have, Mr. Speaker, if we're going to substantially curb greenhouse gas emissions, is actually attempting to do more with less; in other words, curbing our total energy consumption in the province, Mr. Speaker, while continuing to expand our economy.

But as we move towards that objective, Mr. Speaker, as a transition, one of the objectives of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and one of the objectives of our government is to ensure that our additional generating capacity that's brought on-line does not add to our greenhouse gas emissions in the province of Saskatchewan. And I'm pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that through Saskatchewan Power Corporation, our government is taking some very innovative steps to achieve this objective.

And, Mr. Speaker, in the last two years, members of the Assembly and members of the public will know that we have started to invest significantly in wind power. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we've got the third-largest wind power capacity in all of Canada. And I venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that very soon, very soon, we'll have the largest per capita wind power capacity in all of Canada; we'll rank first on a per capita basis, Mr. Speaker.

And I say that, Mr. Speaker, because in addition to the two wind power facilities that have been opened in southwest Saskatchewan in the last year that in total now, Mr. Speaker, are generating some 17 megawatts of electricity with 26 wind turbines in operation, in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, our plan is to introduce another 150 megawatts of wind power onto the Saskatchewan grid over the next four years, Mr. Speaker.

By 2007, Mr. Speaker, we won't just have 17 megawatts of wind power in this province, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have 167 megawatts of wind power in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And we won't just have, Mr. Speaker, 26 wind turbines in this province, I venture to say we'll have in the range of 200 wind turbines in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It's going to be very exciting, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, the member for Rosthern is saying, well he's waiting for the quiet day after the provincial election, Mr. Speaker. And there will be a calm on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker; there'll be a calm associated with the re-election of an NDP government. And one of the things that's going to lead to

that re-election, Mr. Speaker, is the plan for 200 wind turbines in the province of Saskatchewan . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — And 150 megawatts of new wind power capacity, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's not all, Mr. Speaker. Wind power is a very important part of our green equation, but that's not all.

Because, Mr. Speaker, we are also committed, as a government through Saskatchewan Power Corporation, to soliciting on an annual basis 15 megawatts of environmentally preferred power, Mr. Speaker. And much of this, Mr. Speaker, will come with initiatives from the private sector.

And I am looking forward, Mr. Speaker, to those proposals rolling in. And I'm expecting that we'll see proposals in the area of biomass development and biogas development and wind power proposals, Mr. Speaker; more wind power proposals beyond the ones that I just mentioned that Saskatchewan Power Corporation is committed to. And I think, Mr. Speaker, we may see some plans for environmentally friendly, small-scale hydro production coming out of these proposals that are planned, solicitations for 15 megawatts of new, environmentally preferred electrical capacity each year in the province of Saskatchewan.

And that's not all, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan Power Corporation is also planning to install 25 megawatts of low-impact hydro capacity at Elizabeth Falls, Mr. Speaker. So we're going to, we're going to see another opportunity for green power through an environmentally friendly hydro power project.

Mr. Speaker, I see the member for Cypress Hills is on his feet and I'll take my seat for a minute in case he's planning to introduce guests. I see he's not going to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker, so I'll continue.

And, Mr. Speaker, in addition to these initiatives that I've mentioned, Saskatchewan Power Corporation has announced that it will be investing more, Mr. Speaker, in demand side management, particularly with a focus on not only its industrial customers, but also its residential customers, Mr. Speaker.

So these are truly exciting initiatives. And of course in addition to all of these, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan Power Corporation is inviting members of the public to make a little investment themselves in GreenPower, and is making GreenPower available for sale in the province of Saskatchewan.

(16:00)

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the response from the public has been excellent. And the wind power for instance, that we've brought on line to date, is now fully subscribed for, Mr. Speaker — with some assistance from the federal government, with some direct purchases for . . . by the Saskatchewan government for 15 per cent of our government departments, but also, Mr. Speaker, with a very significant uptake from private members, members of the public right across this province, Mr.

Speaker, who've expressed their support for these initiatives by actually going out and purchasing GreenPower on their electricity bill, Mr. Speaker. And we just want to say, on this side of the House, thank you to all members of the Saskatchewan public who've taken that initiative and expressed their support for these green initiatives through that action, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to turn for a moment to another important element of our strategy, and that is the area of energy conservation, Mr. Speaker, because this government is beginning to crank up our energy conservation initiatives. And I'm very pleased to see this happening, Mr. Speaker. And again, I think this enjoys broad public support across the province of Saskatchewan.

And one of the exciting things that's happened in the last few months, Mr. Speaker, is that we've put plans in place to open an Office of Energy Conservation in this province, Mr. Speaker. And I want to in this regard, Mr. Speaker, I want to recall what one of the first steps of the Devine Conservative government was when they were elected in 1982 — the forerunners of the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker.

One of their first acts when they were elected, Mr. Speaker, was to abolish the office of energy conservation that existed at the time. That was one of their very first acts, Mr. Speaker, and it seems to be in keeping with their position on Kyoto today, Mr. Speaker. Twenty years ago we were . . . when we were in government, we were building up the province's energy conservation programs. When they got elected to government, Mr. Speaker, they demolished the province's energy conservation programs.

It's one reason, Mr. Speaker, why I hope the people of Saskatchewan won't allow them to return to office, Mr. Speaker. But I can promise you on this side of the House . . .

An Hon. Member: — But they will.

Mr. Prebble: — I have to chuckle because the member for Rosthern says that he believes the public will. And they may in his riding, Mr. Speaker, but they won't in the province of Saskatchewan, I can assure him that.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP don't have a strong record of being elected in the member for Rosthern's riding, but we have a very strong record for being elected in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and that record will continue later this year or early next year, Mr. Speaker. I'm confident of that.

But let me say, Mr. Speaker, that we have initiated a number of important conservation programs in the last few months and I just want to outline some of them for members of the Assembly and members of the public who are listening this afternoon.

And one of the first things we've done, Mr. Speaker, is to practise what we are preaching in terms of government buildings and trying to reduce the amount that taxpayers have to pay in energy bills on government buildings, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, we're undertaking extensive energy conservation retrofit work in 70 provincial government buildings across the

province. And, Mr. Speaker, the indications are that this work will pay for itself just through the energy savings, Mr. Speaker. So it's good news for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. And when the projects are paid off, of course we're looking at significant reductions of energy bills, both on the natural gas and the electricity side.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we're trying to practise what we preach in terms of our seniors' housing portfolio. And in the last year we've made a decision to do an energy efficiency upgrade in the 11,000 seniors' housing units in the province of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, the results again are looking very promising. We're investing \$1 million a year over a five-year period, Mr. Speaker. We're in the second year of this project now and we're on track to achieve, Mr. Speaker, energy savings of \$1 million a year after five years of investment.

And we expect, Mr. Speaker, that the savings are starting this year. They're a little less than 300,000, and they'll continue to grow every year as we invest more. And once, by year seven, Mr. Speaker, we anticipate that this project will have completely paid for itself, that the \$5 million that's been invested will have been recaptured in energy savings, and everything after that will be savings to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan because it's the taxpayers of Saskatchewan who pay the utility bills on the 11,000 seniors' housing units in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report to the Assembly that Saskatchewan Power Corporation has continued to step up its energy performance contracting service, and this has helped many institutional customers and commercial customers in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. A total so far, Mr. Speaker, of \$21 million has been invested.

And the member for Rosthern was heckling me a few moments ago, Mr. Speaker, and I want to report to the member for Rosthern that in fact, despite his opposition to these . . . to some of the work that SaskPower is doing, we're investing in his constituency as a government. And I want to give an example of what we've done, Mr. Speaker.

We have retrofitted the 18 schools in the Saskatchewan Valley School Division which is the Osler, Martensville, Rosthern area that the member for Rosthern represents, Mr. Speaker. And as a result of the investment that's been made, those schools have reduced their energy bill by \$161,000 a year, Mr. Speaker — \$161,000 a year. And there's been local employment opportunities created in the member for Rosthern's constituency as a result of that initiative, Mr. Speaker.

We've also retrofitted eight schools in the North Battleford Catholic school division. And there we're achieving energy savings as a result of those investments, of \$63,000 a year. Mr. Speaker, we have . . . SaskPower is helping the city of Regina to do an energy efficiency upgrade on seven of their facilities and the projected energy savings are \$277,500 a year, Mr. Speaker.

So these are just three little examples, Mr. Speaker, of the energy savings that are being achieved for the operators of local buildings, Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's performance contracting service, Mr. Speaker.

And all of these projects are being fully paid for, Mr. Speaker, through the energy savings, including the interest charges on the capital investment, Mr. Speaker. And I think that's good, common sense for the people of Saskatchewan — a wise use of tax dollars for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, on every one of these projects at the same time that we're saving energy, we're reducing greenhouse gas emissions. So it's good news for the environment as well, Mr. Speaker.

Another example of one of the initiatives that our Crowns have taken is an investment that Saskatchewan . . . that SaskEnergy has made in terms of facilitating residents of this province replacing their natural gas furnace with a more energy efficient furnace, Mr. Speaker. And there again has been a lot of interest in this program. And 6,400 people in this province, Mr. Speaker, have taken advantage of a prime rate loan to invest in a new, more energy efficient natural gas furnace. And more than \$20 million of loans have now been approved, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm pleased to say that on average customers are experiencing a reduction in their annual energy bills in the range of about \$300 a year. So again, that is very good news. And at the same time, Mr. Speaker, they are reducing on average the emissions, the greenhouse gas emissions, from their own home by 25 to 30 per cent.

So this is a very concrete, practical way of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It just shows how it could be done, Mr. Speaker. Just through the installation of a high energy efficient furnace, the average resident of this province who's got a furnace that's, say 30 years old, can reduce their greenhouse gas emissions from their own home by about 30 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Just that one act, Mr. Speaker.

And through this prime rate loan program, they can recapture their investment in their furnace, Mr. Speaker, in a period of six, seven, eight years, just depending on the individual situation. So I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is a very concrete example of how the national targets that we're going to need to achieve to meet our obligations under the Kyoto Protocol, a 25 per cent reduction on average across the country, can be achieved by the average homeowner just like they could be achieved by governments, Mr. Speaker, when they invest in helping to upgrade the energy efficiency of schools or when they help to upgrade the energy efficiency of city facilities, Mr. Speaker. The principles apply at the macro level and at the micro level.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I was mentioning, another of the initiatives that we're undertaking is the opening of an Office of Energy Conservation. And one of the practical things that that office is going to be doing, Mr. Speaker, in addition to obviously providing members of the public with information about how they can upgrade the energy efficiency of their own commercial buildings and farm operations and their own homes, one of the practical things that that office is going to be doing is giving support to local municipalities in the province of Saskatchewan to apply for federal dollars that will assist them in upgrading municipal infrastructure and particularly municipal buildings in their home communities, Mr. Speaker. And I'm looking forward to that initiative getting launched in

the very near future.

Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on a couple of other initiatives that are being undertaken in the energy conservation area, and one of them is that SaskEnergy and the Office of Energy Conservation are assisting with the implementation of what's called the federal EnerGuide for homes program, Mr. Speaker. And this is a program that provides an energy audit service for Saskatchewan homeowners.

A very highly qualified person is available to come into a Saskatchewan resident's home, assess their energy use, assess where their home is losing energy, Mr. Speaker, look at . . . estimate their greenhouse gas emissions from their own home, and provide them with advice about where they can best invest their money in a cost-effective way to reduce their energy consumption, Mr. Speaker. That's what this EnerGuide for home service is all about.

And SaskEnergy is actively promoting that program, Mr. Speaker. And the Office of Energy Conservation is providing assistance to the program to offset rural travel costs so that residents of rural Saskatchewan as well as our cities can access the service, Mr. Speaker. Because I think it's a very worthwhile service. And, Mr. Speaker, this initiative by the Office of Energy Conservation is going to, in a very practical way, be helping the constituents of members opposite who are representing rural Saskatchewan ridings.

Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on some of our other energy conservation initiatives. One is that Saskatchewan Agriculture is operating a conservation cover program. And of course the primary objective of that program, Mr. Speaker, is not energy conservation; it's to attempt to transfer marginal cropland, Mr. Speaker, into perennial forage cover. But it has the additional advantage, Mr. Speaker, of reducing energy consumption on the acreage that is converted, Mr. Speaker. And so in a not-so-indirect way it also has a positive impact in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

I'm also pleased, Mr. Speaker, to point out that SaskPower contracts with Destination Conservation, a project of the Saskatchewan Environmental Society, to undertake educational work in Saskatchewan schools on energy conservation. And this work is heavily focused, Mr. Speaker, on schools where energy conservation retrofit work is being undertaken.

Both SaskEnergy and SaskPower in the last 15 months, Mr. Speaker, have established Web sites where consumers can come and get advice on energy conservation measures that they can undertake in their own homes and can also do an audit on their own home on the Web, Mr. Speaker. And we've had a lot of interest expressed in this, with over 7,000 people utilizing the service.

SaskEnergy is also offering furnace maintenance services through its network of service providers to help furnaces run safely and efficiently, Mr. Speaker. And the Saskatchewan Research Council is providing advice to ice rinks in managing their energy costs.

(16:15)

Saskatchewan Power Corporation is working, Mr. Speaker, at identifying a community that would be interested in taking a fairly major initiative around energy conservation in municipal facilities. And we're now actively looking for a community between 1,200 and 3,500 in population that wants to undertake energy conservation retrofit work simultaneously on an array of buildings in its community, Mr. Speaker. And a number of communities have been expressing interest across the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, on the energy conservation front, those are some examples of initiatives that are being undertaken.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to move off energy conservation and look at some of the other steps that the province of Saskatchewan is doing to . . . with a view to both building our economy and at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Because one of the fundamental messages that I want to get across this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and one of the areas where we differ most from the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker, is that members on this side of the House believe that there are many opportunities for cost-effective investment in areas like energy conservation that in a very practical way will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and at the same time make our economy more competitive, Mr. Speaker.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that we need to stop viewing the obligations that we have under Kyoto, Mr. Speaker, as a burden for our economy and start viewing them, Mr. Speaker, as an opportunity for creative economic development in this province that will also better the environment, Mr. Speaker.

And one of the areas, Mr. Speaker, that we're looking at now, in addition to the ones that I've already mentioned around green power and energy conservation, with a view to achieving this objective is the area of ethanol and the development of ethanol-blended fuels.

And, Mr. Speaker, you will know that this legislature, at the initiative of the NDP-Liberal coalition government, has established a provincial mandate requiring the sale of ethanol-blended fuels in Saskatchewan and we're anticipating, Mr. Speaker, to create a demand for approximately 135 million litres of ethanol-produced fuel in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that it's well recognized across the country that ethanol-blended fuel will offer some gains, Mr. Speaker, in terms of reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector of our province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have to be careful in how we develop this industry because one of the things that also is being looked at as a significant employment opportunity is the development of an intensive livestock operation . . . operations around the ethanol plants. And that, Mr. Speaker, that has significant promise.

But it also brings with it a caution, Mr. Speaker, and that is that we have to be careful that when we develop those livestock facilities that we recapture the methane from the livestock waste. Because if we don't, Mr. Speaker, the gains that we're

making in introducing ethanol in the province will be offset by the increased methane emissions from the intensive livestock operations.

So we have to be careful, Mr. Speaker, that we develop this package in a way that is environmentally friendly. And I hope the member for Rosthern, who's enjoying heckling me, again will agree with this comment. I don't know whether he does or not. We'll have to wait and see, Mr. Speaker. We'll give him an opportunity to get up in this debate in a few moments if he would like to.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that the ethanol initiative holds considerable promise for the province of . . . for not just the province of Saskatchewan but for all of Canada, Mr. Speaker. And I'm pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that we are the first government in Canada to pass legislation in the Assembly giving cabinet the authority to mandate the use of ethanol-blended gasoline here in our province, Mr. Speaker. And I hope there will be many other provinces in Canada that will follow suit.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to, I want to touch on another area where we're moving forward in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and that is through the use of the Canada-Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program which is providing funding for a number of creative municipal projects, Mr. Speaker, that include . . . And many of these I'm pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, are green projects.

And some of them involve reducing energy consumption in local communities, Mr. Speaker. Some of them involve recycling initiatives. Some of them involve upgrading our water quality and water management systems in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Not all of these projects will involve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, but many of them will, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to see our provincial government co-operating with the federal government and municipalities across our province in launching these initiatives. So it's another area, Mr. Speaker, where we're making progress.

And the key is the collective effort, Mr. Speaker, that's being made across many departments of government to begin the process of curbing our greenhouse gas emissions in this province. And we have a long way to go, Mr. Speaker, but we're making a start.

I want to touch on three or four other initiatives that we're undertaking, Mr. Speaker, before I formally put the motion that I'm debating this afternoon before you and formally move it, Mr. Speaker.

But one of the items that I want to touch on is some of the pilot projects that we're undertaking through SaskPower and SaskEnergy that I think will hold promise for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the future.

One of them is that SaskPower and SaskEnergy are proceeding with a pilot project to research the feasibility of using flare gas from oilfields to power a microturbine to produce electricity. And that project, Mr. Speaker, is now underway in the Weyburn

area and I think I'm really looking forward to seeing the results of that pilot initiative, Mr. Speaker.

Another, Mr. Speaker, is one that I had the pleasure of attending with the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker, at Regina General Hospital where we're experimenting, Mr. Speaker, with generating electricity. And the steam, Mr. Speaker, is being used by the laundry system in the hospital. And the microturbines in the hospital that have been installed, Mr. Speaker, are feeding surplus electricity into the grid. It's like a miniature cogeneration project, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to see SaskPower undertaking it.

We are also experimenting in this province, Mr. Speaker, with a number of sequestration projects that are very exciting. And one of them is that SaskPower has worked very, very hard with Saskatchewan Environment to look at investing in the representative areas program in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And that's the program, Mr. Speaker, that sets up . . . essentially provides long-term protection to forest areas of the province.

And a good example, Mr. Speaker, is an area that is very important to me. It's one of the really beautiful areas of the province. The Dory Lake area of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, has recently been designated as a representative area and it's received protection. And there's 23,000 acres now, Mr. Speaker, in the . . . around Dory Lake, north of Dory Lake and around the northern shore of the lake, that have protected status under the representative areas program.

And Saskatchewan Power Corporation, Mr. Speaker, is investing in those representative areas and in monitoring stations in those representative areas.

And in exchange, Mr. Speaker, for investing in a significant number of representative areas, it is earning credits that have been formally recognized by a North American accreditation group that has been pulled together and in effect is testing out our ability to achieve a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by protecting our old-growth forest, Mr. Speaker, and is at the same time certifying those credits so that they can be recognized by the Kyoto Protocol when Kyoto comes into effect.

And I think that this kind of a pilot, Mr. Speaker, is a very, very positive initiative by Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and I think will be widely appreciated by the environmental movement across the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to provide time for other members to enter into this debate. So I'm going to close by saying that I hope the Saskatchewan Party will revisit their position on Kyoto, Mr. Speaker, on the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this province, Mr. Speaker, and will rethink their position, Mr. Speaker.

And I just want to say one other word about their position before I close. And it'll give members of the television audience who are listening to the debate this afternoon an opportunity to assess them, Mr. Speaker, because in November of 2002, here's what their leader, Mr. Speaker, the member for Rosetown-Biggar, had to say about the Saskatchewan Party

government position.

He said, Mr. Speaker, and I quote — and this is from *The StarPhoenix* November 8, 2002 — the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party said that he:

. . . “would use every possible means available to fight the ratification of the Kyoto protocol in its current form.”

That's what he said, Mr. Speaker. That's what he said.

And, Mr. Speaker, I say, Mr. Speaker, that while Kyoto's not perfect and while this government intends to negotiate hard with the Government of Canada to make sure that we get a fair deal in Saskatchewan in terms of the sharing of responsibility for greenhouse gas emission reductions, Mr. Speaker, that the need to implement an international protocol that will reduce the impact of global warming should be obvious to every citizen on the globe, Mr. Speaker.

And I am proud, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon to move the following motion:

That this Assembly recognize and praise the many initiatives of the government and its Crown Corporations, and particularly SaskPower, to create and maintain a cleaner environment and to ameliorate the environmentally harmful effects of global warming, and urge a continued expansion of actions designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet Kyoto Protocol national reduction targets.

I so move.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorjé: — I am very pleased, and I feel incredibly and immensely privileged to enter into this debate.

The Speaker: — Order. I would just ask the member to wait for a moment until I get the motion to put it on the record.

Ms. Lorjé: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I said a moment ago, and I want to repeat it, it is a privilege for me to be able to enter into this debate. And why is it a privilege? It's a privilege, Mr. Speaker, because I am following after the member from Saskatoon Greystone who is, I would suggest, probably one of the foremost authorities on climate change amongst politicians in North America and probably all across the world.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Greystone many, many years ago recognized the urgency that we have in this planet, of getting it right and making sure that we have a decent, clean earth to pass on to our children and grandchildren. He, having recognized the urgency of the environmental fouling that we as humans have been doing to this planet, set about to inform himself of the issues and to ensure that he was making his arguments and his debates based on solid facts and solid evidence.

(16:30)

It's a rare politician, Mr. Speaker, that actually takes the time to research an important issue such as this in such detail as has the member from Saskatoon Greystone. It is a rare and a talented politician, Mr. Speaker, who is so consistent and so passionate about this major issue.

And I think that all of us in this House, on both sides of the House, owe an immense debt of gratitude to the member from Saskatoon Greystone for his passionate, compelling, and consistent arguments that he has put to convince all of us that climate change is an important issue that affects us now, that will affect us tomorrow, and that will continue to affect us unless we get the right solutions implemented. So I do want to thank him.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorjé: — Mr. Speaker, I spoke about the sense of urgency. It's a sense of urgency that has been created by members such as the member from Saskatoon Greystone and many, many individuals all over the world, understanding that things are changing.

There's mounting evidence that the earth's climate is changing and that this change in climate is linked to an increasing concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. That carbon dioxide in the atmosphere traps heat and creates the greenhouse effect. The greenhouse effect in turn affects rainfall patterns, prevailing winds, ocean currents, temperatures, plants on this earth, animals, people, and especially those people dependent on agriculture and forestry.

Many people go around and they say, oh climate change, that means global warming. That means that we're going to have longer summers and everything is going to be wonderful. And it means we're going to have warmer winters and so we won't have to wear such heavy parkas and so forth. They see . . . They make a joke of it and they see climate change as a positive thing.

Mr. Speaker, there is increasing and compelling scientific evidence that this is not a positive thing. We already are seeing warming of temperatures — average temperatures — from one to one and a half degrees centigrade in northern Saskatchewan in the last 100 years.

You know, if the current trends continue, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is going to experience earlier springs and later falls. We're going to have more and wetter snow falling during a shorter winter. The nighttime winter temperatures may be up to 10 degrees higher due to increased cloud cover. Now that sounds like a balmy Palm Springs winter perhaps, but what it is actually going to be is something that will be incredibly disastrous for our Saskatchewan economy.

And I want to just, as one evidence of that and a recent bit of evidence, I want to quote from the springtime 2003 edition of *The Third Degree*. Mr. Speaker, *The Third Degree* is a magazine put out by the University of Regina alumni, and it talks about good and contributing alumni from the U of R (University of Regina), and it also talks about new people who

are at the University of Regina.

And one of those new people is Joe Piwowar from the department of geography. He got his Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) in 1996, and ever since then has been using remote sensing and geographic information systems to look for ways that our planet is affected by global warming.

And someone asked him the question, why aren't there any big trees on the prairies? Well he says, and it's fairly obvious common sense, that there's no big trees on the prairies because growing big trees is primarily a function of adequate rainfall.

But, Mr. Speaker, he says that the mean summer and winter temperatures over the central prairies are expected to rise by 2.5 degrees centigrade within the next 45 years and by 5 degrees centigrade by the next century. At the same time, because the temperatures are going up, the summer precipitation amounts are expected to probably drop slightly. And if this happens there's going to be a net loss of available moisture due to enhanced evapotranspiration rates.

Now what does a drop in moisture mean, Mr. Speaker? Less moisture means trees — even the smaller trees that we have here now — trees will not be growing here any time soon if we don't do something about climate change.

Mr. Speaker, this is a major, major issue that will affect all of us. And I share the sense of urgency that the member from Saskatoon Greystone has already communicated to this House. I also am very proud that I am part of a government that has recognized the urgency of the situation and has been doing various initiatives to deal with that situation.

The Legislative Secretary on energy conservation, the member for Saskatoon Greystone, talked about many of those initiatives. The one thing — and I won't repeat all the things that he said — but the one thing he did not mention was the fact that the schools themselves are doing various initiatives. He talked about the retrofitting in the schools in the member from Rosthern's riding, but I think he could have also mentioned the fact that the schoolchildren, the pupils themselves, have realized how important this issue is. And how important, Mr. Speaker? Well last week when the St. Luke School came to this legislature from my constituency to tour the legislature, I challenged them to talk about the importance of maintaining a cleaner environment.

Mr. Speaker, I received essays from some two dozen students talking about the importance of this issue. Now this issue is important, Mr. Speaker, and the students recognize it and we as politicians would be serving the people of Saskatchewan very poorly if we did not recognize their passion and their sense of the importance of coming to grips adequately with the environmental problems that we have created through pollution and environmental fouling.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read into the record some of the comments from the students. Desiree Wagner said:

In our society I've recognize the amounts of waste and garbage we create. It is very unhealthy for us. Unhealthy for humans, animals and plants.

She goes on to say:

Most people don't even realize what they are doing to the environment and the ozone layer. Most of all they are creating a hazardous environment for themselves. If they could understand and care, they could make a difference in the community by caring and nurturing their environment.

By caring and nurturing their environment, Mr. Speaker. We as politicians would be well served to listen to the wisdom of those grade 7 students.

Morgan Hedman, also a grade 7 student at St. Luke School, goes on to say:

We have to stop pollution and littering. It can make a difference. If we don't, our ozone layer will break and we will all die.

Mr. Speaker, these students recognize that it is imperative that we get it right, that we have the ability to pass on a relatively clean planet to the generations of the future. They recognize the seriousness of the situation as reflected in the words of Brad Huber who says, quote:

I think that the environment will get worse if we don't do anything about cleaning this valuable land that God gave to us. If we don't do anything about it there could possibly be diseases going around. The world will all be dirty and it needs cleaning just like anything else (just like) a room, a house (he says). The point is, is that if we don't do anything about it the environment will affect who we are.

This young man is very much attuned to understanding that who we are as human beings is directly reflected by the kind of environment we live in. If we don't live in a clean environment, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be much more unhealthy.

St. Luke School, I should say here, Mr. Speaker, is a green school. It's one of those schools that have done all the environmental projects that a foundation, the SEEDS (Schools for Educational Evolution and Development) Foundation, asks that students do in order to become an environmental green school.

The SEEDS Foundation promotes student literacy and active personal and social responsibility for energy, sustainability, and the environment. And schools are very proud to attain their status as a green school.

St. Luke School is a green school. And so Kaitlynn Sarauer, bragging a little bit about her school, says:

One of mine and my school's bigger concerns are that of the environment, and how we must try to keep our area clean. This concern is also high in our city and province, and we should lower the amount of waste we create. For example, you could recycle newspapers, cans, bottles, etc. We have to think of our trees, and we must recycle, reuse, reduce.

This young woman already knows the three R's (reduce, reuse, recycle), Mr. Speaker.

Scott Bowell, also a student at St. Luke, goes on to say:

At our school (he's bragging about) St. Luke Elementary, once a year (we) takes some of the day to clean all of the school yard. (He says) I think that we need to have a day once a year that everyone cleans up the area around there house or community.

Mr. Speaker, what he's doing is challenging all of us to have a sense of responsibility to maintain a clean environment.

And one of his classmates, Darran Fusick, also agrees with that challenge, and says:

To prevent from making the environment dirty you can not throw (out) garbage and don't pollute things and (he says above all else) be careful.

Danielle Spilchen, also bragging about her school, says, and this one I find quite, quite funny, but she says:

I find that kids these days spend (way) too much time on their computers and T.V.'s (and) . . . they don't realize that they are hurting the environment.

I think she's probably referring to the fast food and so forth that people tend to consume when they get on the . . . start watching TV.

Mr. Speaker, these students recognize that maintaining a cleaner environment is everyone's responsibility.

Danielle Guinan writes to me. She says:

To maintain a clean environment, everyone should try harder to recycle as much as possible so (that) we can all work together . . .

She says:

I believe if we all work hard together we can make a greater difference.

And, Mr. Speaker, we are making a greater difference, as the member from Saskatoon Greystone clearly demonstrated in indicating all the many things that the Government of Saskatchewan is doing in co-operation with the people of Saskatchewan.

Sarah McCrea writes to me and says:

I think most people in the world don't realize just how serious (is) . . . littering, (and) pollution, & (the) other things that aren't environmentally friendly . . .

Again she emphasizes the theme of working together to provide a safer world and safer communities.

Alex Tall also talks about this and says:

Some ways (that) I have maintained a clean environment would be recycling at home . . .

I'm sure that his mother would be very pleased to know that he's doing that. He recycles at home and at school, and above all else he says he makes sure that he doesn't "throw garbage on the ground."

A simple measure, Mr. Speaker, but a measure that all of us would do well to imitate.

And Matthew Wingerak says — these students are getting very prescriptive in the things that we need to do — he says:

To have a cleaner environment you must not litter and you have to watch what you do to the living plants and (to the) animals.

Mr. Speaker, those are very wise words coming today as we look at the disaster in our agricultural economy that has been created by the BSE crisis.

And, Mr. Speaker, Reanne Derksen picks up that same theme and says:

The community and our local school have to create a cleaner environment by taking part in recycling, and it's our duty to pick up any garbage that we see laying around.

(16:45)

Mr. Speaker, these students in . . . I challenged them in just . . . I gave them about half an hour to write out suggestions. And they not only wrote out suggestions, they wrote out causes that they thought . . . what they thought had caused the problem, what they thought were solutions.

Time does not permit me to read all of their essays, but I do publicly want to acknowledge and thank Melissa Dash, Jordon Piecowye, Mitchell Stretch, Joel McClarty, Danielle Coates, Janelle Lambert, Kelsey Graff, Brayden Odishaw, Kelsey Schmit, Kara Engele for helping me to clarify my thoughts on the importance of sound environmental issues that will enable us to have a clean planet today and a clean planet to pass on to our children and grandchildren tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion so that other speakers can also speak on this, I want to just read into the record two final essays from the students. First of all from Roanne Toovey, who writes to me. She says:

Our society, and community need to ensure the cleanliness of our environment. Our environment is a gift from God, and it is our job . . . and responsibility to look after it. We are provided with so many opportunities, such as recycling . . . and we need to make use of it. We need to plan for the future. We can't leave our environment unclean and we need to ensure a healthy lifestyle for all the citizens in our community. Everyone needs to work together, to make our world a safer, healthier and . . . more enjoyable place.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, Courtney Sperling writes this, and I hope that all members of this legislature will take these words to heart and will act on them. Courtney writes:

Keeping a clean environment is a major concern in today's

society. Pollution and littering are just a few of (the) many hazards that are harmful to our environment.

When we work together, we are helping (to) make the world a safer place. It's a good habit to be environment-conscious, because we are aware of the damages to the environment.

Courtney finishes off by saying:

Maintain a clean environment, have a healthier future.

And to that, Mr. Speaker, I must say I totally and heartily agree with those thoughts.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take my place now so that other members may speak on this very important issue. And I just want to finish by seconding the motion from the member from Saskatoon Greystone:

That this Assembly recognize and praise the many initiatives of the government and its Crown corporations, in particular SaskPower, to create and maintain a cleaner environment and to ameliorate the environmentally harmful effects of global warming, and urge a continued expansion of actions designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet Kyoto Protocol national reduction targets.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well it's a pleasure to be able to speak. I see that the government has tried to stifle debate by nearly talking out the clock and it's unfortunate because we have many things to discuss on this issue. And it's unfortunate we're not able to continue the debate.

Generally what the member from Saskatoon Greystone has said — and he took what, 40 minutes to an hour to say it — but what basically he has said concerning this issue is he's going to have the taxpayer and the government fund everything. The taxpayer of this province is going to look after all the problems in the world and everything will be fine.

But the member misses out on some very critical points, Mr. Speaker, that the taxpayer has only so much money but this government seems willing to just throw that money out the window every chance it gets.

What we have to do, Mr. Speaker, is to encourage personal initiative, to have the individual and society, the individual, the families of society in Saskatchewan, also the small businesses and big businesses in this province take the initiative to look at the concerns around climate change, environmental problems because at the end of the day if we don't have individuals and families and small businesses on board, all the money in the world, all the regulation in the world, Mr. Speaker, isn't going to help, Mr. Speaker.

So it's not a matter of just throwing money, hard-earned taxpayer money, at an issue. It's a matter of doing the right things in co-operation with families, with individuals, with

small and large business in the province, in the country, to deal with these issues, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day what we need is a province to grow economically. We need more taxpayers in this province. We need thriving businesses. We need individuals with money in their pocket so that we can deal with issues like the environmental issue.

And the Saskatchewan Party of course has a plan to grow Saskatchewan, unlike this province which just runs around the province and the country spending taxpayer money on their advertising program. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, all they're doing is using most of the money to advertise in the province, and as we know that's just a pre-election gimmick to try to get some support for the NDP Party in the upcoming election, Mr. Speaker.

Now there isn't much time and there's another member would like to say a few words on this very important issue. But I think what we have to emphasize is that we need to grow the economy. We need to have a sustainable economy with a sustainable environment for the future of our family, for the future of our province, and for our grandchildren in this province.

And one glaring omission from the member is any mention of any . . . any mention of nuclear power and the potential nuclear power has to our economy. We need to at least discuss the issue on a level-headed basis; we need to sit down with all the stakeholders in the province to discuss the issue around nuclear power. At the end of the day if the people of Saskatchewan do not want nuclear power generated in this province, so be it. But, Mr. Speaker, at least we have to discuss the issue and come to a consensus on it.

In many other areas we need to get the government out of the face of business and other areas where SARCAN and the waste management . . . regional waste management areas, where there are private people that want to take the initiative and look after those areas on a private basis and will do it much economically than government can.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to move an amendment to the motion. Moved by myself, and seconded by the member from Cypress Hills:

That all the words after "initiatives" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

of the people, employers, and the workers in Saskatchewan and recognizes their commitment to growing our economy and to sound environmental stewardship.

I so move.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's late in the day and I won't take a lot of time to elaborate on the many comments of this particular motion that I had prepared. But I do want to say right off the top that this motion is so blatantly self-congratulatory that the writer must have sustained serious injury from patting himself on the back.

Mr. Speaker, you know, while I looked at this particular motion as being non-provocative at first, I listened to the words of the mover of this motion and the seconder and I can't help but say that what I heard really was a Chicken Little speech — the sky is falling in. And, Mr. Speaker, while I laud some of the ideas that the government is proposing in terms of conservation and environmental impact, I do think that it's a little bit much to go to the point where we say that if we don't do something today, we're all going to burn in a few years.

You know, we're at a point where environmental education is an important part of our curriculum — it's an important part of moving our society forward. But to get to a situation where we would inculcate youngsters in school with ideas that their lives are at stake this very day by not making the kinds of environmental changes that are being proposed is a little much.

I think we need to ameliorate that message somewhat. We need to make youngsters cognizant and fully aware of the importance of environmental activity and sustainability, but not threaten them with certain death if they don't comply. I think the case was dramatically overstated.

I was quite interested to see that we had a lot of talk about the Kyoto accord in the presentation by the mover of this motion and the seconder. But my concern, Mr. Speaker, is that the Kyoto accord, while it might be well intentioned, will have disastrous consequences potentially for this province. And I think what we needed was a made-in-Saskatchewan solution to a problem that does exist.

And I think that we as a official opposition have asked the government to look more carefully at the deliverance of a program that would meet the specific needs of the people of this province, the businesses of this province, and the environmental challenges that face this province. So, Mr. Speaker, to characterize our opposition to the Kyoto accord as completely uncaring about the environment is simply inaccurate and it misrepresents the true intent of our position.

Mr. Speaker, the Kyoto accord is not much more — in the instance of Canada as a nation — is not much more than an attempt by a desperate Prime Minister to find a legacy for himself. And this province bought into that effort. I think that's seriously misintentioned. I think it's unfortunate that that happened and I really regret that Saskatchewan is now going to be faced with the consequences of this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there is so much more that I would like to say. There is little time to do it today. So I would just like to conclude the comments that the official opposition has in regard to this particular motion by saying that I am here to second the amendment and I would like to move that we adjourn.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Gantefoer	1393
Elhard	1393
Stewart	1393
Harpauer	1393
Eagles	1393
Huyghebaert	1393
Dearborn	1393
Weekes	1393
Allchurch	1394

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk	1394
--------------------	------

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Brkich	1394
Bakken	1394

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Stewart	1394, 1415
Atkinson	1394
Cline	1414

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Prince Albert Regional 4-H Finished Beef Show and Sale	
Lautermilch	1395
Indian Head Rural Sports Hall of Fame Induction Dinner	
Toth	1395
Holy Cross Collegiate Wall of Honour	
Junor	1395
Prince Albert Finished Beef Show and Sale	
Wiberg	1395
Kidzone Child Care	
Thomson	1396
No. 23 Elementary Flight Training School Dedication Service	
Brkich	1396
Future Links Prairie Championship in Saskatoon	
Lorjé	1396

ORAL QUESTIONS

Consequences of Occurrence of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy	
Harpauer	1397
Serby	1397
McMorris	1398
Higgins	1398
Supply of Health Care Workers	
Gantefoer	1398
Nilson	1398
Support for Law Enforcement	
Heppner	1399
Cline	1399
Children in the Sex Trade	
Julé	1400
Hagel	1400
Cline	1401

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker	1401
-------------------	------

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Yates	1401
The Speaker	1401

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Promotion of Saskatchewan	
Yates	1401, 1411
Jones	1403
Dearborn	1405, 1411
Heppner	1406

Hagel (point of order)	1408
The Deputy Speaker (point of order)	1408
Van Mulligen	1408, 1411
Bjornerud	1410
Harpauer	1411
Thomson	1412
Hillson	1412
Weekes	1413

PRIVATE BILLS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 301 — The Western Christian College (Amendment) Act, 2003

McCall	1413
--------------	------

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 7 — Government Environmental Initiatives

Prebble	1413
Lorjé	1420
Weekes	1423
Elhard	1424