



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

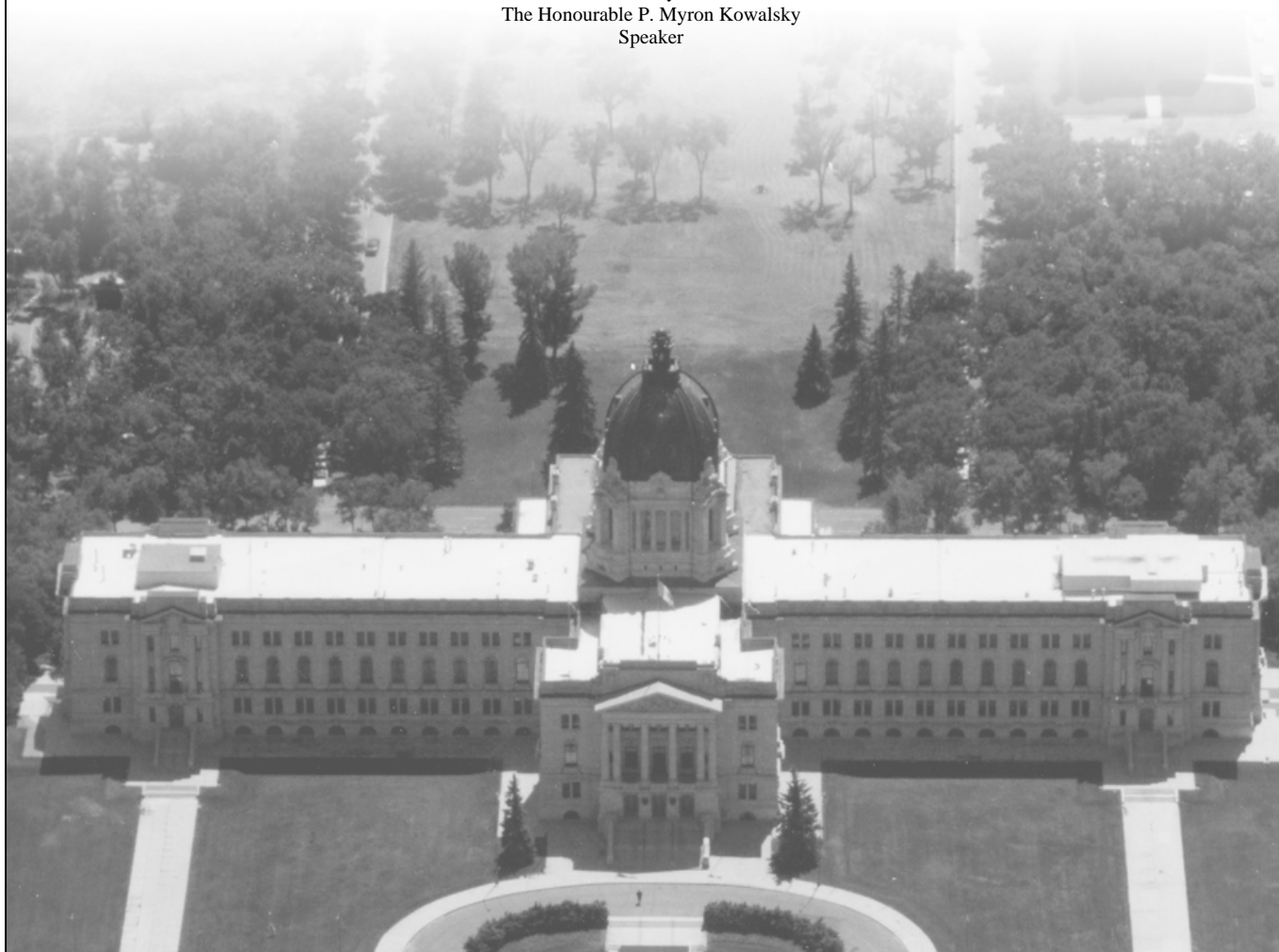
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky
 Premier — Hon. Lorne Calvert
 Leader of the Opposition — Brad Wall

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Addley, Hon. Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornrud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Borgerson, Lon	NDP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Calvert, Hon. Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, Hon. Glenn	NDP	Moose Jaw North
Hamilton, Doreen	NDP	Regina Wascana Plains
Harpauer, Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Higgins, Hon. Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Kowalsky, Hon. P. Myron	NDP	Prince Albert Carlton
Krawetz, Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lautermilch, Hon. Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
McCall, Hon. Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Ted	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Morgan, Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, Hon. John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Prebble, Peter	NDP	Saskatoon Greystone
Quennell, Hon. Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Serby, Hon. Clay	NDP	Yorkton
Sonntag, Hon. Maynard	NDP	Meadow Lake
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Hon. Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Thomson, Hon. Andrew	NDP	Regina South
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Hon. Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wakefield, Milton	SP	Lloydminster
Wall, Brad	SP	Swift Current
Wartman, Hon. Mark	NDP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney
Vacant		Martensville

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure again to stand in this Assembly and to present petitions to the Assembly from residents of the communities of Esterhazy, Whitewood, and Broadview. And I read the petition of the prayer. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement a strategy that will see a dialysis unit placed in Broadview Union Hospital.

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

I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I present a petition on behalf of constituents of the Cypress Hills area concerned about conditions of highways in the region, particularly Highway 18:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to ensure that Highway 18 from Claydon to Robsart is repaved at the earliest possible time to ensure the safety of drivers in the area and so that economic development opportunities are not lost.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, again today this petition is signed by individuals from the community of Maple Creek. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a petition to present on behalf of citizens of the province regarding the funding of the drug Avastin. 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 actions to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from Carnduff,

Gainsborough, and Glen Ewen. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present petitions on behalf of the constituents from Carnduff. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

These petitions come from the communities of Carnduff, Carievale, Gainsborough, Glen Ewen, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I again present a petition on behalf of people concerned about the condition of Highway 5 between Humboldt and Saskatoon. 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 action to upgrade and widen Highway 5 from Humboldt to Saskatoon.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures to this petition come from the communities of Allan, Humboldt, Vonda, Saskatoon, Lintlaw, Wadena, Endeavour, Preeceville, and Sturgis. And I'm glad to present on their behalf.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It won't come as any surprise that I too have a number of pages of petitions of citizens that are concerned about the safety on Highway No. 5:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to upgrade and widen Highway No. 5 from Humboldt to Saskatoon.

And again it demonstrates how well travelled this highway is, Mr. Speaker, because the signatures are from Humboldt, Meacham, Saskatoon, Big River, Colonsay, Macklin, Rose Valley, Lake Lenore, Preeceville, St. Gregor, Swift Current, St. Brieux, and Yorkdale. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I rise to present a petition on behalf of people concerned

about the Estevan Daycare Co-operative. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to review the decision to deny the requested spaces for the Estevan Daycare Co-operative.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by folks from Estevan, Macoun, and Swift Current. I so present. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition for the safe driving conditions on Highway No. 3. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to resurface and properly maintain Highway No. 3 from Fairholme to Turtleford and the Livelong access road.

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

Signed by the good citizens of Livelong and district. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition on behalf of people across Saskatchewan who are disappointed that Saskatchewan and PEI [Prince Edward Island] are the only provincial jurisdictions in Canada that do not have a dedicated children's hospital. The prayer of the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement an allocation of financial resources this year to build a children's hospital in Saskatoon.

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

Today the petitioners, Mr. Speaker, live in the constituencies of Saskatoon Silver Springs and Saskatoon Sutherland. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly today to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of Saskatchewan. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement a strategy that will see a dialysis unit placed in Broadview Union Hospital.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures of this petition are from Whitewood and Broadview. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to maintain the Department of Highways section shop in Watrous:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Department of Highways section shop in Watrous remain open so as to ensure the safety of all motorists and Saskatchewan Highways employees who would be affected by such possible closure.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

This particular petition is signed by good citizens from Watrous and Lockwood. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kindersley.

Mr. Dearborn: — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise in the Assembly today and present a petition on behalf of citizens regarding the cancer drug Avastin. 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 action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by the citizens of Carnduff and Gainsborough. And I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition that this is the first time in the province's history that the government has denied coverage of a cancer drug recommended by the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

From the good people of Carnduff, Saskatchewan. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to rise in the House to present a petition calling for the widening of Highway 5. Mr. Speaker, Highway No. 5 passes through my constituency of Saskatoon Southeast. It's my privilege to read

the prayer for relief:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to upgrade and widen Highway No. 5 from Humboldt to Saskatoon.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Saskatoon, Lake Lenore, and Viscount. I so present on their behalf. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order petitions tabled at the last sitting have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 15(7) are hereby read and received.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I give notice I shall on Thursday move first reading of Bill No. 206, An Act respecting Bio-diesel.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 13 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Immigration: for the fiscal year 2005 and '06, what is the average process in time for each category of the Saskatchewan immigration and nominee program from the point he or she applies to the point that he or she is considered nominated?

Also the same question for . . . [inaudible] . . . and to date, Mr. Speaker.

Also I'd like to ask:

To the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation: how much money did the department provide to the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism for the fiscal year 2006 and for the two previous years?

And also, Mr. Speaker, I shall give notice I shall on day no. 13 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation: how much money did the department provide to the provincial youth advisory committee for the fiscal year 2006 and for the two previous years?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I

shall on day no. 13 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Investment Saskatchewan: how many employees of Investment Saskatchewan have moved to Victoria Park Capital, and what are their names?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Members, it was 40 years ago in 1966 that the first female Pages were hired in a Canadian legislature. Those Pages worked here in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. I understand it was five years later before any other legislature followed our lead.

Today seated in our Chamber where she once served as one of those first female Pages is Ms. Joan (Seeley) Mushka and Ms. Vicki Brooks, who is deceased, were working as guides for Wascana Centre Authority when they were recruited to serve as Pages in the House for the fall emergency session in 1966. They are listed in "Page Boys of Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly," as numbers 159 and 160 respectively for 1966, which was a second session that was a special session to deal with a strike by SaskPower workers.

Vicki Brooks was hired at the same as Joan, so she shares this very first honour. Ms. Mushka is accompanied by Joe Moran and Jan Beadnell. Joe Moran was the head of the Wascana Centre Authority, and Jan Beadnell was the supervisor when Joan and Vicki worked there prior to being hired to work as Pages.

I'm sure that all members will want to extend a welcome to these special guests and a very special welcome back to Joan (Seeley) Mushka, as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the first female Pages hired in Canada. I hope your visit here today brings back many, many happy memories. Welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to join with you on behalf of my colleagues and members of the opposition, in welcoming Ms. Joan (Seeley) Mushka back to this Assembly. As one of the first female Pages that served on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, we're pleased to welcome you back. And we want to let you know that over the past number of years and the years that I have served in this House that people have learned very well from your presence as a Page in the Assembly. We certainly want to say thank you to the current Pages and the many Pages through the years for the kind work that they have done for the members of this Assembly.

A special welcome as well to Ms. Jan Beadnell and Mr. Joe Moran. Welcome back to your Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Moose Jaw North.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I

would like to join with you and the opposition in recognizing Ms. (Seeley) Mushka back to her Legislative Assembly. We will all recognize that when young people come to serve as Pages in this place that it starts with a significant amount of trepidation about what's occurring here, but by the time you come to the end of the session, it has become a part of your secret history which you are not allowed to share in full bloom with others.

But I also want to inform Ms. (Seeley) Mushka, Mr. Speaker, that those who have come after her and 40 years later continue to serve the Legislative Assembly and the members here very well. And I know that she would take personal pride in the descendants of a great tradition that she began, being part of a change in history. And we welcome her back here today as well.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, if I may make another introduction. Mr. Speaker, to you and to all hon. members, I'd like to introduce a special guest who is seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce Lucille Parkinson who is president of the Calgary chapter of Dreams Take Flight. Dreams Take Flight is a special needs children's charity that is 100 per cent volunteer run. And over the past 14 years, Dreams has taken 1,813 special needs kids on a one-day dream trip to Disneyland.

Ms. Parkinson is originally from Shellbrook and is an in-charge flight attendant of 35 years with Air Canada. She was Saskatchewan homecoming queen for northern Saskatchewan back in 1972, but more recently she was voted Woman of Vision for Alberta in 2000 and Calgary Citizen of the Year in 2002 for her work with special needs kids.

In 1994 together with Brian Sklar, Ms. Parkinson created the idea for an annual fundraiser during Calgary Stampede week called Black Tie & Blue Jeans Dance and Silent Auction. Mr. Sklar and his band have played for the event every year since, and it's a unique event where no one accepts any payment for their services. Every single penny goes to the kids — a total of over \$1 million raised with 200,000 of that raised in this last year alone.

Mr. Speaker, as I look to the gallery, I see she is also accompanied by someone that we will recognize: world-famous accordion player and polka king, Walter Ostanek, as well as Brian Sklar. I'll ask all hon. members, Mr. Speaker, to join together in saying welcome to Ms. Lucille Parkinson.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the members, I am pleased to introduce — though he's already been named — one of Canada's most decorated entertainers, Walter Ostanek.

Walter has 19 Grammy nominations; three Grammy wins; a star on Toronto's Walk of Fame; memberships in every polka music hall of fame in Canada, the United States, and Europe; is a fellow in the Order of Canada; and was recently featured in a one-hour special on the Bravo television network entitled *The Cult of Walt*.

Mr. Ostanek is currently touring in Saskatchewan with Saskatchewan's Western Senators. Last Friday the group played to a sold-out Oktoberfest in Windthorst and to a packed hall in Swift Current on Saturday night. This coming Friday and Saturday Saskatchewan's legendary Danceland at Manitou Beach welcomes Canada's polka king. Mr. Ostanek currently has 82 albums and is working on number 83 and a new television series to be shot at Casino Regina in May 2007, again with Saskatchewan's Western Senators.

Please join me in welcoming everybody's Uncle Walter, Canada's polka king, Walter Ostanek.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cumberland.

Accomplished Great-Grandmother Honoured for Academic Excellence

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — Mr. Speaker, Bernadette Nancy Hillier is an exceptional kokum from Denare Beach and a member of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. Recently she was honoured for academic excellence at the University of Regina.

Bernadette works at the Deschambault Lake Health Centre, helps out at the Flin Flon Women's Resource Centre, teaches Cree language skills and traditional beading at the local friendship centre. Still she maintained the highest possible academic standards. Ms. Hillier scored the highest grade point average of her class in social work.

She convocated from the University of Regina, winner of the University Prize in Social Work, along with almost 500 of her peers. And, Mr. Speaker, she did all of this as the grandmother and great-grandmother of 15.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite all members to join with me in congratulating Bernadette Nancy Hillier. Her dedication to her family, her culture, her community, and to academics is truly inspiring. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Children's Health & Hospital Foundation's Annual Champions Luncheon

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today the Leader of the Opposition along with the members from Indian Head-Milestone, Saskatoon Southeast, and Regina

Elphinstone-Centre and I the opportunity to attend the Children's Health & Hospital Foundation of Saskatchewan's annual champions luncheon.

The CHHF [Children's Health & Hospital Foundation of Saskatchewan] was founded on the belief that children in this province deserve the finest health care. The CHHF is committed to optimizing the safety, health, and welfare of our children by supporting programs in the areas of pediatric patient care, disease and injury prevention, pediatric health education, and research.

Today we were introduced to a terrific young girl from Regina, Micaella Fiacco. Micaella is the 2007 CHHF Champion Child. She is 14 years old. At the age of 11, Micaella was diagnosed with familial adenomatous polyposis, FAP for short, a disease which sees many tumours form throughout the abdomen. Micaella has had six surgeries in the past two years.

Mr. Speaker, the CHHF is dedicated to bringing a children's hospital to Saskatchewan children. After meeting Micaella, it is easy to see why Brynn Boback-Lane and the entire CHHF are working so hard to make that happen. Today's luncheon also serves as the kickoff for the fourth annual Regina Cares for Kids Radiothon. The CHHF, in partnership with Harvard Broadcasting stations, will be broadcasting live from the Northgate Mall tomorrow through Friday. You can hear amazing stories from children and their families and pledge your support.

Mr. Speaker, through you I ask all members to wish Micaella Fiacco well as the 2007 Children's Health & Hospital Foundation of Saskatchewan's Champion Child.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Eastview.

Osteoporosis Canada Opens Its Saskatoon Office

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. November is Osteoporosis Month, so it was with great pleasure that I participated yesterday in the grand opening of the first office of the Saskatoon chapter, Osteoporosis Canada.

The new office is in Market Mall in my constituency of Saskatoon Eastview. This is a great location as I have been told that this constituency has the highest concentration of seniors in the country.

Congratulations to Elda Clarke, executive Chair, Saskatoon chapter, and the many dedicated volunteers who work so diligently through education, advocacy, patient support, and research to aid those suffering from this disease.

Mr. Speaker, osteoporosis is a silent disease that can go undetected in its early stages. The society's website, speakers, information line, books, videos, brochures, and fact sheets help identify those at risk and suggest lifestyle changes that could prevent injuries. Mr. Speaker, the osteoporosis society's emphasis is on treating the patient rather than the disease, involving those affected in their own treatment.

Mr. Speaker, because of the efforts, dedication, skill, and commitment of the society's volunteers and staff, the deterioration of the quality of life associated with osteoporosis is no longer inevitable and unavoidable. Congratulations to the Saskatoon chapter and their volunteers, and thank you for all that you do.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Moosomin.

Langbank Manufacturer to Expand Facility

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently Seed Hawk manufacturing of Langbank announced plans to expand its plant and sell a minority share to a Swedish agricultural company, Vaderstad-Verken. The new manufacturing plant will be constructed close to the existing facility just north of Langbank on No. 9 Highway. This new plant will mean many more jobs for the Langbank area.

Pat Beaujot, president of Seed Hawk, says this agreement will give them instant access to international markets. Vaderstad-Verken is a well respected European agricultural company. Their investment in Seed Hawk as well as the expansion project will benefit both Seed Hawk's international customers as well as their domestic ones.

Mr. Speaker, Seed Hawk has been developing direct seed equipment since 1992 and have marketed their drills in Canada and throughout North America. Recently, in fact this past August, Seed Hawk sold three direct seed units to the country of the Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Seed Hawk on this most recent announcement.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Book Chronicles Long-Distance Runner's Triumphs and Challenges

Hon. Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A short time ago I had the honour of attending the launch of a book entitled *Never Give Up: Ted Jaleta's Inspiring Story*. The book is a powerful chronicle of the triumphs and challenges of this outstanding Saskatchewan citizen.

Mr. Speaker, Ted Jaleta's accomplishments as a long-distance runner both here in Saskatchewan and around the world are legendary. This year alone, at age 51, Ted Jaleta won the Fort Qu'Appelle Echo Lake Road Race for the 11th time, and he came in first overall at the SGI CANADA Charity 10 K Road Race.

But, Mr. Speaker, the story of the victory that this book is really about, is Mr. Jaleta overcoming imprisonment and torture in his native Ethiopia, overcoming four years in refugee camps, triumphing over the trials of adapting to a new culture and

country after arriving in Canada in 1982, and transcending all of those challenges to become an outstanding Canadian citizen, a runner worthy of the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame as well as a coach, a motivational speaker, and a tremendous role model.

Mr. Speaker, Regina-based author and journalist Deana Driver worked with Mr. Ted Jaleta to tell this story of triumph over great adversity. Peggy Collins also paid a critical role in telling this amazing story, and I want to thank them both. Also the book is dedicated Mr. Jaleta's sister, his angel, Sadate, who died of breast cancer in 1993. And in her memory, \$1 from the sale of each book will be donated to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

Ted Jaleta says that Canada gave him a second chance. Well let me thank Ted Jaleta on behalf of this Assembly for giving so much to Canada and Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

The New Democratic Party and Traditional Supporters

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Friday's *Leader-Post* had an interesting headline. It said, "Labour upset with NDP." Imagine that, Mr. Speaker. It appears that some of the NDP's [New Democratic Party] traditional supporters are getting tired of this government's antics. Maybe it's because the NDP keep adopting the Sask Party's ideas. I wonder if the NDP will try to pacify the labour leadership with an agreement crafted on a napkin on the eve of the election like they did in 2003. After all it was the member from Regina Lakeview that said this is how this government operates.

The only problem, Mr. Speaker, is after the 2003 election, the NDP took the money back. It gave workers increases then asked them to return thousands of dollars because someone decided they weren't worth the raises they had been promised and received.

Now labour is threatening the NDP. One delegate at the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] convention told the Labour minister, we'll take you down. In adopting the Sask Party's policies in a desperate attempt to turn around the polls, the NDP is driving a wedge between the traditional supporters. As for everyone else, they see through the NDP charade.

This government has a history of trying to buy votes by bouncing the PST [provincial sales tax] up and down like a yo-yo. Three times the NDP government has reduced the sales tax before an election to raise it after.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are smarter than that and they are tired of this government trying to buy votes with taxpayers' money. They've seen these tricks before. To quote The Who, "Won't Get Fooled Again."

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for

Saskatoon Fairview.

Internet Service for Northern Communities

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member from Humboldt is apparently confused about the purpose of the SaskTel tower at Dore Lake and I just want to take this opportunity to clear things up for her.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, the member opposite seems to think the tower in question was built to provide Internet services. If she had done her homework, she would know that it actually was built to replace an old tower to enable the delivery of basic local voice services.

She would also know that SaskTel's wireless Internet service and cellular service is delivered using entirely different technologies than those used to deliver basic local services.

Now having said that, I am very pleased to say that SaskTel has announced that high-speed Internet service is via DSL [digital subscriber line] technology and is available to the people of Dore Lake as part of the northern broadband network initiative. This initiative is separate and distinct from the CommunityNet II program, and will install the infrastructure and deliver high-speed Internet service to a total of 35 First Nations and northern communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend SaskTel and its employees for continuing to lead the way in providing high-speed Internet to more rural locations than any other company in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Coverage for Out-of-Province Medical Care

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Health had the opportunity to meet with Crystal Bonderud, Doug Bonderud's widow.

Despite this meeting, there are still many unanswered questions around the communication and coordination of Doug's care. Crystal feels she is being denied out-of-country coverage from this government for Doug's surgery at the Mayo Clinic because her oncologist didn't follow Saskatchewan Health policies and procedures. However, she spoke to three different officials in the Department of Health and no one guided her as to how she should obtain or could obtain out-of-province coverage, Mr. Speaker. Simply telling the patient that prior approval is needed is not enough.

Mr. Speaker, the question to the minister is this: what steps is he taking in the wake of this case, in the wake of the baby Paige case and many others that are brought before his attention, what steps is he taking to ensure that officials in his department in the health care system are properly communicating to patients about their options for out-of-province travel and

out-of-province treatment, especially when literally lives hang in the balance, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. The Leader of the Opposition is correct. Yesterday I had the opportunity to review the case as presented again by Mrs. Bonderud.

I want the House and people of Saskatchewan to know that this I thought was a very productive meeting, although at the end there wasn't agreement on the exact nature of what we should do to go forward. But Mrs. Bonderud is a loving, caring, compassionate, committed, and dedicated individual who's doing her husband very proud. And she's carrying the message loud and clear. She promised her husband, Mr. Speaker, that she would do all she could to ensure that what happened to her husband would not happen to anyone else.

Mr. Speaker, I take that request and direction very seriously. We have taken action in the past. The list is too long for me to enunciate it in the seconds available. We have taken action in results of the baby Paige case, and we are certainly looking at this particular case with ways to ensure that indeed some of the things that happened will not happen again.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, it's true that Crystal, and Doug's friends and family, are doing their job with respect to making it better for others. The family of baby Paige did the same. The families of other patients whose cases have come before this minister have done the same. We're waiting for this NDP government and for this minister to do his job in this regard, Mr. Speaker. It's not happening yet.

When the doctors at the Mayo Clinic began the surgery on Doug, they found that he was bleeding internally. They said he would have required emergency surgery in days. The choice that he was left with was to stay and have the surgery, or come back to Saskatchewan and wait. No guarantees were given as to the care he would receive in Canada, or when he would get it, Mr. Speaker. The reality is, is without immediate surgery Doug may not have survived the trip home. Because of the emergent nature of this case, why is Sask Health still denying coverage for urgent surgery, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think, as the member knows, there a number of options available to individuals and families when certain things appear not to go correctly within the health system. Mr. Speaker, in the meeting yesterday, I was able to outline for Mrs. Bonderud a number of options that she can take and the family can take in order to ensure that the various pieces of this . . . the various questions that she's asking get answered.

Mr. Speaker, for the majority of individual questions that are specific to this case, Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite is very much aware that for privacy, legal, and jurisdictional reasons, I cannot make specific comments on some of the specific questions. But in general, there are procedures in place that can help to answer those questions.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Crystal and Doug Bonderud felt that they had to navigate a very complex health system on their own and under very, very stressful circumstances. Perhaps the outcome of Doug's illness would have been different had this couple been given the time of day when they first entered the health care system in the province of Saskatchewan.

You see, Mr. Speaker, there should have been options prior to Crystal having to come to this Legislative Assembly, prior to her having to bury her husband. But, according to Crystal, no support was offered by the system. When they decided to get a second opinion at the Mayo, they spoke to the provincial quality care coordinator. They spoke to the head of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. They spoke to a medical consultant at Saskatchewan Health. And no one told them that their oncologist had to write a letter to Sask Health requesting out-of-country coverage, Mr. Speaker. Why is that happening in the health care system today, and what is the minister doing to fix it, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of questions in what the Leader of the Opposition proposes. In those questions, Mr. Speaker, there are quite a number of processes and procedures that are being addressed by the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and the regional health authority — not just today, Mr. Speaker, but in the past.

Every physician, every specialist, every clinical head of every department in Saskatchewan Health, Mr. Speaker, is aware of the out-of-country policy. And, Mr. Speaker, why certain things do not get communicated — if in fact they were not communicated, Mr. Speaker — there's a process in place to answer those questions. It has been in place for some time because this government has realized, and the system has realized, that on occasion, Mr. Speaker, certain questions don't get answered.

So how can we best deal with that, Mr. Speaker? The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency is currently taking steps, has taken steps to ensure that those issues are addressed.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, that minister is responsible for the health care system in the province of Saskatchewan. They spoke to the provincial quality care coordinator, the head of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, and a medical consultant at Sask Health, and no one told them of the steps that they needed to take to get a referral for out-of-province treatment.

The Premier has been listening to this exchange. He will know well the story of the Bonderuds. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the Premier would meet with Crystal — she's here again today — to hear from her directly about this example — which is not unique; we have brought them before this Assembly before. This government is not doing what it needs to do to communicate the process that it itself has put in place, to patients, Mr. Speaker.

I would note that in the meeting yesterday, the minister even intimated that somehow it might have made a difference that Crystal and her family could afford this trip to the Mayo — which, by the way, they cannot.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: will he meet with Crystal today? Will he get first-hand a report from her about what has happened in the case of her husband, of her husband's death, and then will he commit to fix the health care system, to do something about it, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Not to defer from the importance of the subject matter in front of us, but the member, the Leader of the Opposition, and other members across the way have frequently cast aspersions upon things I may or may not have said when quite frequently, Mr. Speaker, I have not said the things that they have attributed to me. And in this case, Mr. Speaker, I would not have even intimidated anything along those lines.

We have very specific policy, Mr. Speaker, and that policy is directed specifically towards ensuring that the overall health care system is sustainable.

The members opposite have frequently raised questions in this Chamber that show they have no interest in sustainability, Mr. Speaker. They talk about changing policy on out-of-country expenses without any criteria. Mr. Speaker, they talk about funding new drugs, Mr. Speaker, without any reviews. They talk about funding regional and district construction without any . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed. The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the question is simple. To the minister, without any preamble: what steps is he taking now to ensure that patients, that families, that people like Crystal Bonderud are given all the information, all of their options so they know that they can seek and receive out-of-province treatment that literally could save lives, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Communication is very important in the health care field. I understand that, Mr. Speaker. The members on this side understand that. And certainly the details of this case have brought to the attention that on occasion within the system perhaps the communication needs to be enhanced.

But, Mr. Speaker, let it not be forgotten that out-of-province coverage has benefited close to 1,500 people in the last year, and this government has committed, over the course of the last 12 months, over \$10 million to cover out-of-province expenses. Mr. Speaker, this is not a secret to the physicians, the specialists, or the people of Saskatchewan. But on occasion if the communication isn't there, the people at the agency, the regional health authority, and certainly in my department know we've got to spend more attention to that.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Supply of Emergency Room Nurses

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Friday the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses released a damning report on the shortage of emergency room nurses and the associated risks to patients. The report says, and I quote, “. . . many of the province's Emergency Departments are overcrowded, understaffed and under-resourced.”

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses say that there are 64 emergency room nurses short right now to have a full complement, Mr. Speaker, for a full staffing complement in our emergency rooms. This spring the minister said filling vacancies was priority number one for him. Well, Mr. Speaker, we're not seeing his priorities filled.

Will the minister agree with the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses that today we are 64 nurses short, just in the emergency rooms in our province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And again I appreciate the question. And indeed I and Saskatchewan Health welcome the work that the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses have done in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, what the proposal brought forward by SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] suggests is there are 41 vacant positions, and they suggest there should be an additional 23 positions put in place.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed as the focus of our efforts over the next little while, through the recruitment and retention initiatives that we have announced, to fill the vacancies within our regional health authorities and the facilities operating throughout the province. Mr. Speaker, I will not argue with the member opposite or Saskatchewan Union of Nurses about total numbers that may or may not be required. Every single vacancy we fill with the programs we put in place is a step forward to improving the quality of care for Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the report goes on to say that

over 345 work-situation reports were documented, Mr. Speaker, that put patient care in jeopardy; 95 per cent of those documented cited adverse effects of inadequate staffing levels, Mr. Speaker. Patients are being jeopardized in our emergency rooms because staffing levels are short. The report goes on to quote a number of the nurses that are working in emergency rooms and here are some of the quotes:

Patient and nurse safety compromised due to nurses working alone in the department on nights and weekends.

Another quote, get this:

Adult patient routinely placed in beds reserved for children so pediatric admissions are seriously delayed.

Lack of senior nurses . . . another quote:

Lack of senior nurses to work with junior nurses. At times all nurses on a shift are junior nurses [only].

Mr. Speaker, this is no way to run the emergency rooms in our province. When is he going to start filling his priorities and commitments and fill the emergency rooms with a proper complement of nurses?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows that's exactly what I'm doing and what Saskatchewan Health is doing and the regional health authorities are doing. Mr. Speaker, we even committed — just a little over a month and a bit ago — \$25 million for recruitment and retention. And, Mr. Speaker, over the last month and a half the chief provincial nursing officer has been meeting with emergency room nurses around this province even before we had the information brought forward by Saskatchewan Union of Nurses.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday of last week the nursing committee of the recruitment and retention initiative had a meeting and discussed the proposal brought forward by the emergency room nurses in the city of Regina. Mr. Speaker, we are doing exactly what we said we'd do. Our focus is certainly on filling vacancies. Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of the dollars and the commitments is on nurses, although we are also looking at affiliated health professionals. Mr. Speaker, we are dedicated and determined to filling those vacancies and in fact, Mr. Speaker, we will be doing do.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we know this minister is dedicated to talking about the problem. The problem is he doesn't do anything to fix the problem, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's a shortage. The shortage discourages experienced nurses from continuing to work in the emergency room.

The nurses' union says degrading professional practice environment and the destructive effects of this cause experienced nurses to not want to work in the emergency room. The common theme identified by the union is, and I quote — this is what nurses are saying:

Why would I stay and work in . . . [an] environment, when I can work in other departments with significantly less workload and a realistic pace [Mr. Speaker]?

The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses and nurses across this province in emergency rooms, and especially the experienced ones, are getting fed up with the shortage of staff in our emergency rooms, Mr. Speaker.

This minister said that he's been working on it, but he hasn't done anything, Mr. Speaker. When will the minister start filling the vacancies in this province and quit just talking about it?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, \$25 million, two committees of dedicated individuals providing advice — and I'm acting on that advice, Mr. Speaker. We've already put in place a recruitment agency. We've already put in place programs to attract nurses and others to this province. Mr. Speaker, we've got bursaries in our education system. And, Mr. Speaker, the retention initiatives that we put into the graduating classes have produced 90 per cent of those graduating classes working in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Not only, not only am I talking about it, Mr. Speaker, but I've pulled together people to make this work. They're happy to work with us. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, it is working — unlike the members opposite who can't take sustainability, can't use the word sustainability in a sentence.

As I indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, they're talking about funding additional nurses and physicians and specialists without any stated guiding strategy. Mr. Speaker, they talk about building a children's hospital without doing any planning. Mr. Speaker, they talk about funding new drugs without any review.

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Procedure at Public Accounts Committee

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, time and time again the Minister of Community Resources had told this Assembly that he welcomes scrutiny. Unfortunately other members of his caucus don't appear to be on the same page.

Despite a unanimous motion to have the former deputy minister appear before the Public Accounts Committee, members of the

government side did a complete reversal. The former deputy minister was not allowed to answer questions directly. Mr. Speaker, can the minister instruct his colleagues that it is the minister's policy to welcome this public scrutiny?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, as House Leader I'm happy to take the question which is about procedure. The member opposite, Mr. Speaker, makes reference to the procedure in the Public Accounts Committee today. And there had been, Mr. Speaker, a motion to have the former deputy minister of the Department of Community Resources attend. She was there.

There was also, Mr. Speaker, a decision made by the committee, democratically made by the committee that the long-standing tradition of the current deputy minister responding on behalf of the committee which appears before the Public Accounts would be the person who would speak for the department. The former deputy was there, was there to provide advice on the answers.

The members opposite may not have liked the answers, Mr. Speaker. But it's about seeking information. Information was provided. And the proper procedures were followed by the committee today, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, she was called as a witness. That was unanimously agreed by the committee. Yesterday the former minister of Community Resources said she wouldn't even be there today because she was sick, yet she showed up. And, Mr. Speaker, what did they do — a bait and switch.

Everyone agreed to it. Suddenly a legitimate line of questioning was shut off. Suddenly the woman who's at the storm when serious allegations were made about the safe house, were surfacing, is no longer available for questions.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: why is this government frustrating efforts to get to the bottom of this serious issue?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that the hon. member's questions are somewhat misleading. You listen to his statement. He establishes the fact, Mr. Speaker. He said the deputy minister was there. That's what I said. She was there. She was there, provided information for the answers that were asked by members of the committee, Mr. Speaker.

The committee has the right to determine its own procedures. Its procedures asked her to be there; she was there. It defended the long-standing tradition, Mr. Speaker, of the current deputy of the department being the one who would provide the response to the members of the committee. That was done. Questions were asked, answers provided. They may not have

liked the answers, Mr. Speaker, but the answers were provided.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Oyate Safe House

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, if she was there, she might as well have been in a different part of the building. Mr. Speaker, she never answered one question.

This government doesn't want the truth to come out. This government wants this whole mess to go away. This government doesn't welcome scrutiny, and neither does that minister who won't even get up today and answer the questions.

Mr. Speaker, just yesterday I was presented a list of meetings between the department and the Oyate board. There were two meetings where the minutes were not provided. These were also the two meetings where the minister attended. Now isn't that pretty convenient? Mr. Speaker, the minister, he says he welcomes public scrutiny. Will he commit to this House by the end of the day to produce the minutes of those meetings that he attended that there's no minutes given for?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, I once again want to reiterate that I welcome scrutiny on this particular file, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to welcome the scrutiny because, Mr. Speaker, the truth will always rise to the surface. And, Mr. Speaker, we have always maintained open communication on this file. We let people of Saskatchewan know exactly what is happening.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the people of Saskatchewan this: the facility is closed, the children are being looked after and, Mr. Speaker, what we have right now is an irresponsible opposition that not only have they misquoted me, not only have they made irresponsible statements, all they have created, Mr. Speaker, is negative headlines. And now they're going after a long tradition of deputy ministers responding to their particular portfolio. Now they want to circumvent that, Mr. Speaker. Nothing but negative, negative, doom and gloom and fear, Mr. Speaker.

Saskatchewan doesn't want that. We want solutions. We plan on implementing those solutions, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, he didn't answer the question. He attended two meetings with the Oyate board which were the only minutes that were not produced to this committee. Would he stand in the House today and explain why that is?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that we have had discussions with the Oyate board on an ongoing basis. We advised them that there is some problems and, Mr. Speaker, on every occasion that we've advised them that there are some problems, actions were taken by the board.

Mr. Speaker, I'll again point out that we have absolutely nothing to hide. We have been very forthright with the information, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue providing that information. Ninety-nine point nine per cent of the quotes that that member used in this Assembly were statements that we presented to them and evidence that we put on the table so that they have the courtesy of knowing what was done when, Mr. Speaker.

But once again I go back to the opposition. Not only do they accuse the chiefs of using the race card, Mr. Speaker, but last year, a couple of years ago, they also said, we're going to cut \$50 million from Social Services' budget. That's their solution, Mr. Speaker, cut Social Services' budget. And, Mr. Speaker, where would the children be today if those guys got in power? Nowhere, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, where would the children be today if it wasn't for the advocate, the auditor, and a newspaper that reported this? They'd still be in the same environment and he'd have done nothing about it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, according to the list provided to me yesterday, there were no meetings between the Oyate board and the department officials from February 7, 2005 to January 27, 2006. During this period allegations were made concerning financial irregularities, nepotism, and the inability to provide proper services to these vulnerable children. Yesterday the minister said the allegations of nepotism and financial irregularities were investigated and no evidence was found. Mr. Speaker, can this minister explain how these investigations were conducted without any meetings of the Oyate board?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy now the member has finally been able to pronounce Oyate correctly. He's been, oh-yitti, oh-yaddi . . . Now it's Oyate. So finally, Mr. Speaker, he's able to pronounce the name correctly. And that goes to show how much they have researched this particular file, Mr. Speaker.

Every bit of information that they have quoted in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, they have got from my department. We're forthright, open, honest, and accountable, Mr. Speaker. And again I point out we're not going to listen to the negative message of the Sask Party. We're not going to continue looking at the problems that occurred two or three years ago, Mr. Speaker.

We have a go-forward plan, Mr. Speaker, that talks about accountability. We have a go-forward plan that talks about making sure that First Nations are involved, Mr. Speaker. And above all else we have a go-forward plan that's going to solve the problem and help these kids off the street so no longer are they exploited for sexual purposes, Mr. Speaker. That's our plan. We're going to stick to it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 4 — The Education Amendment Act, 2006 (No. 2)/Loi de 2006 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation (n° 2)

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Learning.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 4, The Education Amendment Act, 2006 be now introduced and read for the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Learning that Bill No. 4, The Education Amendment Act, 2006 (No. 2) be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the minister.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 22 — The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2006

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 22, The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2006 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Industry and Resources that Bill No. 22, The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2006 be now introduced and read for the first

time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the minister.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 23 — The Securities Transfer Act

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 23, The Securities Transfer Act be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Industry and Resources that Bill No. 23, The Securities Transfer Act be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the minister.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — On behalf of the government, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table responses to questions no. 11 and 12.

The Speaker: — Responses to questions 11 and 12 have been submitted.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Trew, seconded by Ms. Hamilton.]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly a privilege to stand and enter into the debate on the Speech from the Throne. I don't know if I've ever stood right after question period to enter into debate because what I really would rather do is just talk about what the minister just answered and the lack of answers from the Department of Community Resources and Employment and how they're absolutely stonewalling. He says they want scrutiny, and they don't want scrutiny. And he says there's minutes, but he won't provide them and all of those things.

But that really wasn't what I wanted to talk about. It's what you really want to gravitate to when you first stand up after question period, but certainly there are a number of things that I want to talk about regarding the Speech from the Throne and some of the comments that were made on that side of the House as we've gone through this past six or seven days on replying.

But before I get to that, there are a number of thank yous that I want to also express, and it starts with the constituency and the constituents of Indian Head-Milestone and how fortunate I am to represent such a fine group of people. Every year as we travel our constituencies — which I know members on both sides of the House spend a lot of time doing — you get to meet and renew friendships that you've made in . . . over past years and meet new people. And I can tell you that every year that as I travel my constituency I'm impressed by the work ethic and the commitment to our province, Mr. Speaker. In spite of the government that's in power right now — and I hear that an awful lot — in spite of the government that's in power they still are committed to the province and want to remain here and raise their family and work.

[14:30]

We've been fortunate for the most part in the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone which is mostly agriculture. The small area along the Qu'Appelle Valley of course is more geared towards tourism, that type of thing, around the Fort Qu'Appelle area, but the majority of the constituency is based in agriculture.

And I can say that we have been fortunate over the last two years to have two pretty darn good harvests. It could always be better, but they have been overall a good average crop. Of course last year we battled the low commodity prices, but right now there is a certain amount of optimism as the prices are moving up. You know, you're seeing the canolas and the canary seeds and flax and lentils rising in price. It's interesting that none of which are marketed under the wheat board, but they are actually rising in price. And I know we're going to have certainly a chance to talk about the wheat board issue as we go on.

But the constituents of Indian Head-Milestone, and I can honestly say, are hardworking individuals that, you know, when it comes to issues such as agriculture I tend not to get a lot of phone calls because they feel that, you know, they're taking it upon themselves and working through the problems such as crop insurance with low coverage and high premiums and things like that. They're dealing with that for the most part on

their own.

The other . . . a number of other thank yous of course is to my family and all the support that I've had from my wife, Cindy, and our two boys, Craig and Mark, and their busy lives whether it's . . . it seems to be all into the boarding sports now. They're into wakeboarding and snowboarding, but they certainly understand when I can't be around at times. They still support me in what I am doing.

The other person and individual that I really wanted to thank . . . And most of the MLAs have talked about their constituency assistant. I too have what I think is probably one of the strongest, if not the strongest . . . I guess every MLA would say that. Well yes, I think everybody's agreeing with me that my constituency assistant, Vonni Widdis, does an excellent job for me in our office in Balgonie dealing with constituents from the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone.

But since I have taken on the . . . have been asked to take on the role as Health critic, I know the workload for her has certainly gone up. Because you don't . . . We don't just have health concerns in the area I represent. There are health concerns throughout the province and she fields a number of those phone calls — in fact an awful lot of those phone calls — and deals with the issues that are presented to us. We try and deal with as many of them as possible by going through the steps that the minister has laid out, whether it's the quality care coordinator or the cancer advocate or professionals like that.

But there are times when results just don't come the way they're supposed to and where people are waiting extremely long time . . . And some of those people want to go public, and certainly Vonni has helped them with that.

Along with our researchers here in the building, Terry Gudmundson and her research staff have done an absolutely excellent job sorting through the mounds and mounds of health concerns that we have come through this office.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Madam Deputy Speaker, and I can only say, thank you and thank you and thank you. Because of all the cases that we have brought forward, you know, we've never had any that have been misquoted by us. And, Madam Deputy Speaker, the research that has been done on each and every one of those cases has been ideal. And when they come to the floor, Mr. Speaker, they are because this is where . . . this is their last resort, and this is where they had to be, Mr. Speaker.

I want to congratulate — as a number of the members on our side have done — congratulate the new member from Weyburn-Big Muddy who just did an absolutely wonderful job, not just during the election but in the lead up to the election. It was a hotly contested nomination, and for the NDP, what that means, there's more than one candidate running for a position.

It was a hotly contested nomination in which our successful candidate beat out two other strong candidates. And I wanted to thank both those other candidates, Audrey Trombley and Mrs. Young, for putting their names forward because we certainly knew that whoever won that nomination race would be a very

good representative in this legislature because that would be the next step.

As is usual, on our side of the House anyway, the toughest part of getting to this place is winning the nomination because it's usually the general election or the election of a . . . a by-election is maybe not nearly as hard as winning the nomination race. So congratulations for Dustin for a great . . . or for the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy for a good job in the nomination race, but more importantly a wonderful job in the election.

I know when we were sitting in the House and bantering back and forth — the Deputy Premier and I would talk back and forth — and I remember saying that I believe, I have the feeling that this NDP government and their candidate, who is the local candidate, will be finishing in third place. I believe that he'll be finishing in third place.

Well the deputy minister, the member from Yorkton, said ah, that could never . . . that will never happen. There is no way that we will finish in third place in Weyburn-Big Muddy, the home of Tommy Douglas. There is no way that we could finish third. Well lo and behold, lo and behold, to the Deputy Premier, I wish we would have put. . . To the Deputy Premier, I wish we would have put a little wager on that as to where they would finish, Madam Deputy Speaker. Because I said they'd finish third, and lo and behold they finished below the Liberals. And in Saskatchewan just after a federal election that is pretty tough to do, is to finish below the Liberals. But, Madam Deputy Speaker, the NDP are able to do that.

The other person that I would like to thank and compliment on the work that she has done in this Chamber is our Clerk, Gwenn Ronyk, who has been here. . . I have been here for seven years. I know she was here for a few more years than that and has done absolutely wonderful work in this Chamber.

I can tell you that when I was elected in 1999 some of the first orientations that were done she led and really did, really. . . The first thing that I was so impressed was the professionalism that was put forward. But also with professionalism was a feeling of being comfortable, and knowing that if we had questions on how the system worked and issues around what went on in the Legislative Assembly that we could go to her and talk to her.

And the reason that I am saying that is because I believe that this is the last session that she will be the Clerk. As of December 31, I believe she will be retiring and she will be missed. And so thank you on behalf of myself, and I know members on this side of the House, for a job well done over the years that she has been here.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, what I really want to get to is what I have been hearing in this Chamber over the last six or seven days, the replies from the Speech from the Throne. And I can say that many members on our side of the House really hit some points that were well researched and certainly caused one to think about this Throne Speech and how effective it was.

But I also listened to replies from that side of the House. And I was interested . . . I think if a person really didn't know where we were on the electoral cycle — if it was first year, second year in — I think after listening to some of the speeches on that

side of the House we would definitely know where we are in the electoral cycle because many of those speeches were nothing more than political tirades getting ready for the next provincial election. I remember two years ago after the Speech from the Throne it wasn't nearly as politically charged as what those members are making it in their replies to the Speech from the Throne.

And a few of the words that . . . and I just remember a couple — whether it's a member from Saskatoon Nutana or a member from Prince Albert Northcote — the word that comes to mind so automatically is self-righteous. How self-righteous they were, which I really find is really quite interesting because I remember listening to the Premier after the Weyburn-Big Muddy by-election. And after the Weyburn-Big Muddy by-election, where they finished . . . By the way, did I mention that they finished third in the by-election? After they finished third in the by-election how the Premier stood in front of the cameras and said, well Weyburn-Big Muddy has certainly sent us a signal and yes we are not maybe . . . we've lost touch with the electorate and maybe the people aren't as happy with the job that we have been doing as what we think they should be.

And then, not more than five months later, you hear members from that side of the House come into this Chamber and reply to the Speech from the Throne with this self-righteous, the only people that know how to govern in Canada would be the NDP government, Madam Deputy Speaker. And it's unbelievable. They go on and they preach about how if we don't learn from the past we're doomed to repeat it.

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, first of all you've got to get the past correct. Some of the statements that have been made over the last six or seven days are absolutely misleading and if you're going to learn from the . . . For example I remember the member from Saskatoon Nutana talking about the last, I would say, 25 years in this province. And if she is learning from that history that she recited, we're going to be in big trouble with this government and we are in big trouble. Because her recitation of what the history was in this province is completely different than what I remember and I believe what most people in the province remember, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The member from Saskatoon Nutana talked about the auditor's report. I found it really quite interesting. She did not talk about the auditor's report in 2006. She chose to talk about the auditor's report in 1982 when the Devine government came to power and she supposedly cited from the auditor's report what the debt was from Allan Blakeney moving on to the Devine government. And she said it was something around the three . . . 2 to \$3 billion mark. That may have been true but then when it's recited back that the auditor is saying that seven out of the last 16 years this government has run a deficit budget, she fails to point that out. She fails to acknowledge it. She takes the auditor if it serves her purpose but she ignores the auditor when it goes against what she is trying to espouse.

Madam Deputy Speaker, certainly when the Devine government took over, there was debt from the Blakeney government. We can debate back and forth what that was. But what I do know, that through the 1980s there was a 22 per cent . . . Well the minister from . . . the former Finance minister is saying there's no debate. Well I think there is an awful lot of

debate. There's an awful lot of debate if you want to take into the debt that was hidden into the Crowns and if you want to take into the unfunded pension liability.

But, you know, once again they'll take the number that they think that serves their political interest. And that's all it does is it serves their political interest because it doesn't do anything for re-acting history accurately. It serves their political interest and that's all they're worried about, Madam Deputy Speaker.

You know, it's interesting because through those years it was 22 per cent. You could take \$3 billion and you can go at 22 per cent interest, which is exactly what the Devine government inherited was 22 per cent interest. So what does that 3 billion do? If it's 3 billion what does the 3 billion do in four years? It's going to double. Blakeney's debt will double in four to five years on 22 per cent interest, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I would ask all members to allow the member from Indian Head-Milestone to continue. Order. I ask, I ask the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs to please come to order and allow the member from Indian Head-Milestone on his feet to continue with his debate.

Mr. McMorris: — Absolute incompetence of this government. The absolute corrupt government that this government can be, Madam Deputy Speaker. And you bet it's corrupt. We've got a minister, we've got a minister from Prince Albert Northcote that will stand in this House and talk about a ministerial aide and what he did in 1980 but fail to mention what he did in 1990 and '95, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The minister from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote can stand in here and talk about what happened in the '80s but fail to mention the \$40 million he lost and deceived the public for six years, wouldn't tell the public the truth.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — The minister, the member from Regina Victoria was hollering from his seat about a corrupt government but he can't seem to look in the mirror. If he looked at the member beside and saw what that member did to the public by misleading them for six years, Madam Deputy Speaker, in fact that member had to stand in this House and apologize to the public of Saskatchewan. And I don't remember too many other members from this side of the House having to apologize for a \$40 million loss that was deceived from the public for many, many years, Madam Deputy Speaker.

[14:45]

And that's absolutely appalling because the history that they recite is a history that only simply serves their political purpose. It does nothing for the political debate of this province. It supplies the interests of that party, Madam Deputy Speaker.

And, you know, it's funny because they'll stand in this House and they'll holler about the '80s, but they hate to look in the mirror because what this government is going through right now is some disastrous times, is some disastrous times.

We can look at . . . It doesn't matter which file you want to look

at. Whether you want to look at health care and the baby Paige case or the Crystal Bonderud case or the number and number of cases that we've brought forward and the absolute shambles that this government has made of our health care system.

And it is nothing more than that. They've made an absolute shambles of our health care system when you have people coming to have to plead their case on the steps of the legislature because they can't get service in the emergency room of the Regina General Hospital. That is appalling, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when you look at the . . . I have to get back to my notes here. When you look at some of the things that have been said over the last six or seven days and some of the resuscitation of history that is so politically slanted, you know, whether it's a corrupt and dishonest government . . . which they like to talk about in the '80s; they love to talk about the Devine government in the '80s.

You know what makes these guys, you know what makes the NDP more frustrated than anything else, is that they promised more than the Devine government did in the '80s and still couldn't get elected.

You know, it's really quite interesting. You know, they think that the Devine government was the only government that promised and that went into debt. Well that government over there, that party over there promised more than any Devine government ever did and still couldn't get elected.

And, you know, it's interesting how they'll shy away from their cousins, their cousins from Ontario. They'll talk about the Devine government in the '80s and the fiscal house that they left the NDP government in 1990. But you know it's amazing how they'll ignore what happened under Bob Rae in Ontario. What happened under Bob Rae in Ontario was exactly what happened under Grant Devine here which is exactly what happened under Manitoba which is exactly what happened in every other province in Canada.

But you know they'll fail to acknowledge that. They'll fail to acknowledge the fact that Bob Rae was the premier of Ontario when they went into a huge debt, Madam Deputy Speaker, because all they seem to want to do is relive the '80s, relive the '80s and do a revisionist history of what the '80s were, Madam Deputy Speaker. Because it does nothing for the debate of this province, but it does everything to try and pump up their sagging political polls. And, you know, you can tell that they're sagging, and you can tell that there's dissension on that side of the House.

I find it absolutely amazing that under a government, under this government, you can have a Minister of Community Resources stand in the House every day and deal with what he's dealing under Oyate, but you can have a former minister of Corrections and Public Safety say one bad thing about the Premier and he's out of cabinet. And we know there's a couple others on that side that don't have the confidence in the Premier.

And I can guarantee you that if it wasn't for a leadership convention in November, we wouldn't have seen a 2 per cent drop in the PST last week. The only reason we saw a 2 per cent

drop in the PST last week is because this government and that Premier are having huge difficulties internally, huge difficulties internally. In other words, I really wish, you know, if I was to buy a truck a couple of months ago, that your convention could've been a couple of months ago so that you would've dropped the PST then, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Well unfortunately 20 minutes passes and passes very, very quickly, and I'm glad I was able to stand and comment on some of the debate that has been put forward by this NDP government, Madam Deputy Speaker. And I know that we're getting closer and closer and closer to an election because I can tell the desperation in each one of their voices. They are desperate. They are tired. They are old. And after the next election, they'll be opposition. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance, the member from Regina South.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I'm very pleased to enter into this debate on the Throne Speech and to have an opportunity to put on the record my thoughts about where we're at today in the province and where the direction is that this NDP government will help move our province forward.

This is, I think, my 11th opportunity to address a Throne Speech in the Assembly. And I have to say as I was reading the comments by the new member for Weyburn-Big Muddy, I was reminded again of the first opportunity I had in this House in early 1996, after the 1995 election, to stand and put on the record my comments for the first time. And I was I think, at the time, similar to that member. I was the youngest member of the House. I was no doubt awestruck. I didn't have the same good fortune that he did, not to be heckled in his speech. In fact I think I was heckled in mine at least three or four times, unfortunately all by Premier Romanow at the time. But it was, nevertheless it was a real privilege to be here.

I'm reminded as I was thinking back on that opportunity, and that first opportunity you have to stand and speak on behalf of somebody other than yourself — what a remarkable and awesome responsibility it is. And I think it's something that we should each remind ourselves of as we stand and speak in this Assembly, that in fact we are here to represent our constituents.

The House I think as demonstrated by the comments by the previous member have taken a rather personal, adversarial, I would say in many ways churlish if not an unfortunate turn. There is no doubt that there is no love lost between the two sides of this Assembly. There is a lot of personal animosity. There is a lot of dislike. But at the end of the day, Madam Deputy Speaker, I don't know that that actually really matters. Because we're not here to all be friends. We're here to make sure we're bringing forward a debate to move forward with the issues on behalf of our constituents.

I find it interesting listening to the member opposite refer to me as old. I'm still the fourth youngest member of this Assembly, and one of only four that are under 40. And as I look to this

Assembly and to this debate, I see a wide variety of experience in this House on both sides. And I think that we would probably do better to try to listen more to what each of us is trying to say than necessarily what exactly is said.

I was interested as I was listening to the Speech from the Throne to think about what it is that the Speech from the Throne actually does. And really it allows us as legislators two major opportunities. Number one, it allows us to take stock of where the province is today. It allows us to take stock of where our province is, where our society is, where our communities are, where our economy is. It allows us to lay on the table for the debate of Saskatchewan people and its legislators, a foundation for us to discuss what change it is we seek to move forward.

I have to admit after the spring legislative session I spent a great deal of time really thinking about what it was that we'd accomplished in this province. I thought a lot about what it was we needed yet to do in this province. I spent a lot of time this summer thinking about what it is that we need to do, not only for the province and its economy and its community, but really for the families of this province. What is it Saskatchewan people really want at this juncture in our history?

I made the conscious decision not to look at it as the Minister of Finance, the privileged position that I hold. I decided not to look at it as a cabinet minister. I decided not even to think about it really as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. Rather I wanted to think about what is it that we could do in this Chamber, or what is it we could do as a government to help move this province forward in the way that we connect really as individuals to our community. What is it that we could do to move the province forward?

And I thought about it as a member of a community, as a neighbour, as a son, as a grandson. I thought about it as a social democrat, as someone who really does believe there's more that we can do to increase opportunity for ordinary people here in this province. And I thought about it as a young person who had decided to make his home here and to make his living here. I also thought about it as someone who comes from a family who'd settled here generations ago and who, for generations, whose family has made a living here on these Great Plains of ours.

I thought a lot about how much this province had changed. I thought about how much it had changed since my Grandfather Thomson settled here and in the century that . . . this would have marked 100 years if he was still alive today since he had been born. I thought about how much it had changed since my Grandfather Patterson came back from the war. I thought about how much it had changed in the brief time that I've been alive and indeed in the even briefer time that I've served in this Assembly.

And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's changed a lot. It's something I don't think we focus enough on, is Saskatchewan is not a static place. This is not a pool of stagnation. This is a place of social change. It's a place of growth. It's a place of opportunity. And the simple fact is, is that life is better here than it was a 100 years ago. It is better here than it was when the war was won. It is better here than it was even at the turn of

that 21st century. Life here today in Saskatchewan is better than it has been at any point in this province's history.

And what I think is perhaps even more important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that our best days I do believe are truly yet to come. This is a province with tremendous opportunity.

Now I appreciate that maybe that's not always been so evident. I know that as a member of this caucus . . . I joined this operation in 1995 as a member of the caucus, and I joined a group of men and women who faced some very difficult choices in the early part of the 1990s. I know to them it may not have been so evident that the best days were yet to come as they were grappling with the situation where the previous administration was spending a \$1.25 for every \$1 it took in, at a time when we saw a province that had been ripped apart in terms of its social fabric with community pitted against community, group pitted against group, competing to try and bring this province back to a point where we know that it could grow, where we could have balanced budgets, where we could have financial freedom, where we could have opportunity. This was not an easy task for that caucus.

And I know that as I joined it in 1995, it was a real privilege to join a group of men and women who had fought hard during those early '90s to really help pay for the excess — the gross excess — of the 1980s.

And it's a caucus that I have to say I have a high degree of regard for, not only because of the experience that they have but because of who they represent in reflecting what it is we are as a community. And as you look on this caucus, you'll see a wide variety of people from different backgrounds. You'll see teachers and farmers; we have social workers and bankers, labourers and business people, corrections workers and lawyers, preachers and journalists. We've got civil servants. We've got a wide variety of Saskatchewan people represented in this NDP caucus. And I think that that is in large part our strength as a caucus and as a government, is that we've been able through that debate to be able to reflect the values and the experience that is the Saskatchewan people.

This NDP caucus is the one that came together and found a way to bring Saskatchewan back together. It's the one that found a way to secure our future as a prosperous province by making politically difficult choices. Choices, yes, to raise taxes, to reduce services and rebalance our budget, and the ongoing difficult task to make sure that budget stays in balance.

This is an NDP caucus that was prepared to commit itself to ensuring that we were able to pull the province back together. That we spent the 1990s paying for the 1980s, and that we would never return to that place that that administration brought us to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is because, it is because of the choices of the Romanow government and their determination to clean up the mess made by the Conservatives that we today enjoy an unprecedented level of fiscal freedom. It is unbelievable the opportunity that we have as legislators, as people in government, to be able to make choices that only 10 years ago were impossible to imagine.

That administration, the Romanow administration, laid a foundation for growth and prosperity. But it really is the administration that has been in office now since 2001 under the leadership of the current member for Saskatoon Riversdale, the current Premier, that has really worked to reshape this province in terms of our opportunity for growth.

I was particularly pleased to be invited to join that cabinet, after this Premier was elected, as the minister of Energy. I often joke that I have had the good fortune, I suppose, of having served as the minister of Energy at a time when oil was at \$24 a barrel and potash was at I don't know what. Uranium was at \$7. They weren't great times in the resource sector let me assure you. It is much nicer to be the Minister of Finance when we are looking at substantially higher oil and gas prices, substantially higher production in potash, substantially higher prices in uranium. It is nevertheless an opportunity for us, a great privilege for me to have been able to work in this administration.

[15:00]

What's interesting to note though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and what this Premier does not get enough credit for in this legislature is the work that he did to turn this economy around. This Premier came to office with a very simple idea of what it was we needed to rededicate ourselves to, and that was to ensuring that we had an economic progress that allowed us to afford the social progress we wanted within our communities.

And some five years ago, he established a very clear plan and a vision to make a better future for Saskatchewan families. It's interesting to note that in the time that the MLA for Riversdale has been the Premier, there have been some remarkable changes. I was saying to him the other day just before we came into the House to cut the provincial sales tax, that most people don't realize that since 2000 — since the year 2000 — we have cut almost three-quarters of a billion dollars from the tax rolls of this province. We have made record investments in health care. We have made record investments in education. We have made increases in our social programs that people have not seen for a generation. And we've done that because the decisions of the Romanow administration allowed us to afford it, and the decisions of this administration allow us to make it sustainable. Those are substantial changes.

And if you look at what's happened under this Premier, we've seen that we've already taken significant changes to simplify and reduce personal income taxes. We have reduced oil and gas royalties to stimulate investment. We've restructured the potash and uranium royalties to stimulate production. We've cut corporate income taxes. We've cut corporate capital taxes. We've cut farm property taxes. We've cut small-business taxes and yes, we have cut the sales tax to its lowest level in 20 years.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Since the year 2000, we have cut nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars in taxes while at the same time finding the money to invest in education, finding the money to invest in social services, finding the money to invest in health care.

On any given day if you listen to the members opposite, if you

talk to three of them, you'll get six different opinions on what we should do. It usually involves spending more, taxing less, and doing something around the debt repayment or running a deficit. This is always the approach of that opposition, to not put on the table what their true plan is. And it's interesting to read in the little pamphlets going around Saskatoon right now by the current Leader of the Opposition, his comments about what it is that he wants to do — the founding principles of the Saskatchewan Party.

And he talks about how they will continue to cut the size of government. I find this to be a very interesting comment when each and every member in their Throne Speech response has stood up and talked about how government should be spending more. It's not impossible to spend more as long as you are finding either new revenue to deal with it or finding other cuts. So if they're talking about cutting the overall size of government on top of all of their new spending, one has to ask, who is it that will suffer? What are the priorities of that party as opposed to ours?

We've laid out our agenda on health care, on education and northern affairs and rural development and tax reduction and debt control. Those pieces are clear here. What's not clear is what the secret agenda is of that party opposite. What is it they'll cut? Will it be the literacy programs like their federal cousins cut? Will it be the support to culture and recreation? Will it be a direct attack on our cities? Will it be another attack on the poor? What is it that those members will cut to keep with their founding principles that the Leader of the Opposition hands out in his little pamphlet around Saskatoon? What is it that those members will really do?

And it's interesting that just the other day we were at a debate on property tax with the realty association here. And there was the Finance critic standing up and saying, you know what, we're going to cut the property tax. It's our number one priority. Well two weeks before, when we had cut the sales tax, he said cutting the sales tax is our number one priority, followed by income tax which is our number two priority. Oh yes and then we'll cut the property tax. But when he appears before a different audience, all of a sudden it's the property tax is the number one issue.

Meanwhile just up the street the Health critic is standing and demanding more money, that their number one priority would be health care. When is the Sask Party going to come clean with Saskatchewan people about what their real agenda is?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — When are they going to start being honest with Saskatchewan people?

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the good news about this province and about the Throne Speech today is that our economy is stronger than it has ever been. We have more people working than ever before in this province. There are more opportunities today for young people than we have seen in generations. Our tax levels are at their lowest point since I was a teenager and the Leader of the Opposition was in university. Our tax levels have come down significantly because of the strength of our economy.

And you know what? We have an opportunity by supporting this Throne Speech to make life even better for Saskatchewan young people and Saskatchewan families. This legislature will be called upon during this session and the spring session to do more to help build a better life for Saskatchewan families.

It will be called upon to have the MLAs stand in their places to build a better future for young people right here by investing more in education and training. It will be called upon to strengthen our support for our communities, to improve regional infrastructure programs, to improve highways programming through new measures to improve accountability like the gas tax accountability Act that I'll introduce in the next couple of days in this Assembly.

This legislature will be called upon to support changes to improve access to education and health care. It'll be called upon to support the expansion of our natural gas network to the North so that even more people can enjoy the benefit of the lowest-cost utilities in Canada. And yes, yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will be called upon to support the tax changes that I have introduced to benefit ordinary Saskatchewan people.

This is an economy that is growing, that can afford to make these changes because of the decisions of an NDP government that has worked with Saskatchewan people to make real change. This is an economy that is growing. It's in a province that's prospering, and it's a place that I think all of us should truly agree is the best place in this country to live, to work, and to raise a family.

This legislature will be called upon to make these changes on behalf of the people who elected us and who placed their trust in us to rise above cheap partisanship to do their business. On behalf of those people, on behalf of those people, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to say I will be supporting the changes that have been called upon in the Throne Speech to make life better for Saskatchewan families, and I will be supporting the Throne Speech motion this afternoon. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Prebble): — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to participate in another address-in-reply debate here in the Legislative Assembly.

Before I get into my remarks, I want to make some introductory comments, some acknowledgements, some thank yous. And those relate to the new member for Weyburn-Big Muddy. They also relate to my family back home and the team whose support we enjoy in the Saskatchewan Party and for me and my office in Swift Current.

Just before I do that though, Mr. Speaker, may I say this close to Remembrance Day on behalf of the official opposition, that not only will we — all of us, as will members opposite — be marking Remembrance Day in our respective communities, to honour those who have paid the ultimate price for freedom for our country and those who have served and returned home also willing to pay that price. We will be doing that in a number of

days to celebrate Remembrance Day, Mr. Speaker, and it's especially important that we would do so given the fact that even this day our troops, our men and women are engaged in a battle against terror in a faraway place to make life better in a very faraway country.

And on that point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you'd permit me, I'd like to share just a quick story about an individual that I had the great pleasure of meeting just prior to the Labour Day game, which also turned out to be an enjoyable event in and of itself, and the Riders rolled up a win on the Blue Bombers. But prior to that, the reserves had at the armoury an excellent event where they wanted to, they wanted to honour reserves of our country, those who are prepared, who stand by ready to serve this nation, ready to service freedom, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I remember meeting a young corporal who had just days earlier returned from Afghanistan, and I asked him about that. I actually took him over to our table — I had our . . . our family was with us — because I wanted . . . I introduced him to our kids. And I said, you know there's some people call the players we're going to watch in the game heroes, but I want you kids to meet a real hero, someone who has just returned from Afghanistan to try to make the lives of strangers better, to try to bring freedom to that country.

And in the course of my discussion with him, I asked him first of all how he felt about what he did over there. And he said that he felt intensely proud of what he was doing, of serving his country and making Afghanistan a better place. And I asked him what he was going to do now. And he said he was going to take a bit of time off, and then he was going to sign up to go again, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Those are the kinds of people that we all will honour in just a few days, and not only in this Assembly here but in communities across the province. And if I may just say at the outset of my remarks today, thank you to them on behalf of all of us in the opposition and I'm sure members of this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — I have the great fortune, good fortune, to be blessed by a wonderful family at home. My wife, Tami, and our children, Megan, Colter, and Faith are just so supportive of the work that I'm doing and the fact that I have to be away sometimes more than I would want to be away. And I want to acknowledge them today as well as my mom and dad who have been just supportive in everything I've done, including dumb things that I may have done. They have sought to provide some constructive correction and hopefully, hopefully that's paid off for them.

But I want to thank mom and dad today, and acknowledge in our office in Swift Current, I have a new constituency assistant there. Her name is Crystal Martens. She's just started. She's doing great work in the Swift Current office serving the constituents and helping me serve the constituents of Swift Current. Everett Hindley, the former constituency assistant, is now stuck with me travelling the province when we get a chance to do that and I want to acknowledge him as well as all of our staff here in Regina and in Saskatoon, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without their

excellent work, so let me acknowledge them.

There is a brand new member in the Legislative Assembly that I am very, very happy to be able to, for the first time since this session began, officially welcome. He's no stranger to this caucus certainly, and no stranger to the building. And already I think the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy are benefiting from the experience he has here. They're benefiting from the fact that he was the local candidate in that by-election with strong roots in the Weyburn area. They're benefiting from the same passion we recognized in him long ago to serve, passion for the political process, and passion most importantly for Saskatchewan.

And I would note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he's already thrown himself into the work that he's been assigned as a part of this caucus team to focus and develop a youth retention and recruitment strategy for our province even beyond what the Saskatchewan Party's been offering over these seven years.

And I actually want to begin my remarks and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I can, referencing that by-election. Because I think if we consider the results of the Weyburn-Big Muddy by-election from June of this year in the context of this Throne Speech debate we've been having and specifically in the context admittedly of a vote that occurred yesterday, the confidence vote in the Assembly — but certainly it was an amendment to this motion — I think it's informative and I think it's important that we do it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, interesting to note that in 2003 in this hotly contested constituency . . . And let's not forget that Weyburn-Big Muddy has been for the last two general elections in the province of Saskatchewan, at least '03 and '99, a hotly contested seat. It is the home of Tommy Douglas. And I found out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, first-hand, that when you campaign in Weyburn you know you're not campaigning only against the Leader of the New Democratic Party, you're not only campaigning against their candidate, you're still campaigning against Tommy Douglas.

And there's a number of people there who I think are very disappointed in the NDP, disappointed in the antics of people like the member from Regina South — supporters of the NDP who believe that the member for Regina South has very little in common with Tommy Douglas. And so when they vote for the NDP they're not voting for this version, they are still voting for Tommy Douglas. But it's a tightly contested constituency and it has been for some time.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's interesting to note that in 2003 in that election, the Saskatchewan Party in the city of Weyburn now won only five of 26 urban polls, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That was in the general election of 2003. In this election that . . . In this by-election that we just had with a brand new candidate, with the Liberal leader also in the race, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the NDP touting that they had the only local candidate, what happened? Well the new member for Weyburn-Big Muddy won 23 of 26 city polls, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The poll he lost was by four votes at Souris School in Weyburn. He received a total of 1,747 votes in Weyburn — a massive increase from what happened last time.

[15:15]

Now in the context of the debate that we're having today, I think the question that needs to be asked is, why would that be? Why in that by-election . . . which granted are opportunities for people to send messages and requests for change to the province's legislature. But why would such a massive turnaround occur in that riding with the Liberal leader in the race, with the NDP pouring all of their considerable political machinery in the home of Tommy Douglas, with a brand new candidate nominated for the Saskatchewan Party? Why would that be? Why would the NDP support collapse to third place behind the Liberals, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

And the member for Indian Head-Milestone has done a good job of pointing out that you have to do pretty crappy in Saskatchewan politics to finish behind the Liberal Party, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that is exactly, that is exactly what happened to the NDP in the by-election. Why? Why is that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Why did they lose in Weyburn-Big Muddy? Why is the government lacking support? Because, you know, conventional wisdom would take a look at the political conditions or the economic conditions in the province of Saskatchewan and say, regardless of who's governing, regardless of who the governing party is, there should be an advantage for the governing party because high oil prices are driving revenues for the Government of Saskatchewan. Because the Government of Saskatchewan is stealing the enterprise plan of the opposition, that's driving some job creation in the province of Saskatchewan. All the conditions, all the conditions are there.

So why, when that's the case, why then would we see the result that we saw in Weyburn-Big Muddy, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Well there's a couple of answers. There's some specific issues, some specific answers if we look at that riding, and then some broader ones that relate directly to the Throne Speech.

Let me deal with the specific ones very quickly, and then we'll move on to the broader discussion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Consider that in the dying days of that by-election, with their campaign fully in flames — it was an absolute wreck of a campaign for the NDP; the venerated machine that they have was crashing in Weyburn-Big Muddy — what do they try to do in the dying days of the campaign? They tried to buy off the support of the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy. In the dying days of that campaign, they promised millions of dollars worth of commitments based as a result of the Souris Valley centre. That's what they tried to do. It was amazing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I remember the daily papers of this province not being fooled at all. I remember their headlines in their columns saying, well this is pretty transparent; this is very transparent; it's crass politics. And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it may have . . . At one time in Canadian politics it may have worked. That kind of politics may have worked at one time. The politics of trying to buy people with their own support, the politics of fear, that may have worked, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at one time.

I remember one particular example that we heard about in the Weyburn-Big Muddy campaign. It was a by-election in the '80s and the NDP were campaigning hard. They said, if you don't vote for us the governing party of the day will close all five hospitals in that riding. Do you remember that? That's another

example, that's another example of the kind of politics that they practise. And they tried it in Weyburn-Big Muddy. Now interestingly, that dire prediction was quite prescient. It did come true, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The NDP, led by that member for P.A. Carlton, closed those hospitals, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in that riding.

And you know what? You know what? The people of Weyburn-Big Muddy haven't forgotten that still today. So that was one specific example of why . . . of the result.

Now interestingly, I think that particular happenstance, occurrence in Saskatchewan political history, should inform us about the future of Saskatchewan politics. Because if this NDP government, try as they might, couldn't buy off the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy, they most assuredly will not be able to buy off the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Most assuredly, with their own money. There is going to be a lesson there. I hope the NDP are paying attention for their own sake because we do like to be a helpful opposition and we're worried about their fate if they don't learn any of the lessons from the Weyburn-Big Muddy by-election and from the past.

There are some broader issues at play here, Mr. Speaker, that would speak to the Weyburn-Big Muddy by-election result. And there are some broad notions that we need to consider that would help us make our decision to propose an amendment that moved the non-confidence motion yesterday and for us to vote in favour of that non-confidence motion, and later on this day vote against the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And those relate to some very important measures of government, some very important measures of government — specifically, I think, competence.

I don't think people expect a lot from their governments at any level. I do think they like to see fiscal probity, I think they like to see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some just core competence in delivering the public service that they are hired on to deliver, Mr. Deputy Speaker. On that count this government, by any fair measure, has failed.

And do you know what? If members opposite want to understand why we're going to vote against this Throne Speech, why we voted in favour of a non-confidence motion just yesterday, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all they have to do is review question period from earlier this day. That's all they have to do.

Consider, consider what occurred in question period earlier this day. We raised questions on behalf of Crystal Bonderud and her family. We raised . . . Well the Deputy Premier is very anxious to hear why the people of the province have lost confidence in his government. And again, wanting to be helpful, we're prepared to do that right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Crystal Bonderud came to our legislature today after meeting with the Minister of Health yesterday and not getting the answers that she deserved about the tragic, the tragic death of her husband, Doug, the needless death of her husband, Doug. She came to get answers again today on a couple of key points.

Remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question we asked today? Yes, it was about whether the government would reimburse Crystal and her family for the 80-plus thousand dollars they're out of pocket, having gone to the Mayo Clinic to get help when there was no help available in our system here in the province of Saskatchewan. Yes, there was that question for sure. Because, as the doctors in the Mayo found out, this was an emergency. It needed to be dealt with quickly. And under those terms, that kind of out-of-province funding should . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the Minister of Finance just said spend more, spend more. That's what he said from his seat.

His rules, the rules of his government are this. If there is an out-of-province emergency, yes, the Government of Saskatchewan takes care of its own citizens. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there is some treatment not available in the province of Saskatchewan then there's an out-of-province approval process that people can access to get that care. So in that case, when it's their own rules and when a life hangs in the balance, we do say spend that money, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — That's what we'll say. And if that Minister of Finance doesn't think we ought to do that, then we ought to have a whole separate debate about that issue. I would welcome that opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

She raised the issue of the emergent nature of this case, Mr. Deputy Speaker. She raised that case. She also had some pretty fair questions. She said she had gone through all the political processes. She had talked to her quality care coordinator, Mr. Deputy Speaker. She had talked to doctors and oncologists. She had talked to a medical consultant, another doctor at Sask Health. Did any of them say, did one of them say, oh by the way here's an option for you and Doug. Here's an option that you have to get out-of-province treatment and care for your . . .

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Prebble): — I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition. Members, it's getting difficult to hear the Leader of the Opposition. He has the floor and I would ask for order in the Assembly so that he can be heard. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, all of those people in the health care system, all those people in the health care system for which the minister is responsible, could have said at any time to Crystal and Doug, oh by the way you have an option here. We can get you out of the province. We can provide some care for you and find out what's going on. It might not be Crohn's disease, it might in fact be bowel cancer — as unfortunately it turned out to be.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that didn't happen. Now if this were a unique circumstance, it would be terrible and tragic and still worthy of raising in this Legislative Assembly. But the great tragedy is, it is not a unique circumstance. It is not unlike the baby Paige example, where again the family's not told of options they have until they pack up baby Paige in a car, screaming because of the pain she's in, and drive to the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta.

It's not unlike a call I had last night from a friend of mine who

has told me that he's been loath to call me because, you know, he didn't want to bother me, waiting two years for a diagnosis about chronic pain that he has. He can't have it. And I asked him last night, did anybody ever tell you about options in terms of potential referrals for out of province? You know what his answer was? His answer's no. I've asked caucus colleagues, the critic for Health has asked them, have you had cases come before you where the people will say, no one ever told us about the options we have to go out of province for the care of our loved ones? And every single member has said they have an example of that.

Mr. Speaker, that speaks to the confidence that people don't have . . . And that Deputy Premier right there who heckles from his seat, who is more than prepared to heckle from his seat and engage in that communication, but he's not prepared to turn around and light up the Minister of Health to communicate to people about their options in the health care system.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — And that's why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's why the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy said, man, that is enough. That is enough. And that's why if they're not careful, if they're not careful and we continue to work hard to earn the support of the people of the province, they're going to get a similar lesson province-wide.

What else did we talk about in question period today? What else did we talk about in question period? Well we did talk about Oyate. But first we talked about nurses and the shortage of nurses, and the problem that we're seeing in emergency rooms around the province. Because again this Minister of Health and this government are pretty good at press releases and they're pretty good at Throne Speeches; they're pretty good at talking, Mr. Speaker, but they're not very good at doing anything.

We know it's possible for NDP governments to do something because the NDP in Manitoba — on the issue of recruitment anyway — they've got it right. I think they've got double the training seats in the province of Manitoba. I think they've worked hard. They've worked with the stakeholders, nurses; they've consulted with them. They've developed a plan that addresses things like too much, you know, overtime. They've developed a plan that addresses the fact that nurses want to ease into those high-stress situations so they're not chased out of the workplace in that province. And I'm sure it's imperfect, but you know what? It's a lot better . . . there's a lot more progress being made in the province of Manitoba than there is in the province of Saskatchewan. And why is that? Because we have a minister that won't set targets. We have a minister that's good at issuing press releases, and a minister whose plans fail the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy said, you know we have had enough. We've had enough. That's why members opposite voted against this government in a confidence vote yesterday as well, Mr. Speaker.

What else did we talk about in this question period? We talked about Oyate. We talked about the safe house. The safe house is at least in part a product of the efforts of a joint committee of this Assembly. I think that joint committee of this Assembly

was a highlight for all of us in this House, where we had the member for Greystone, who was recently sitting right there, Mr. Speaker, the member for Greystone. We had the member for the . . . the former member for Humboldt. I believe we had the member for Regina Dewdney on that committee as well. And we had the member for Kelvington who continues to be a voice and a leader on the issue of children involved in the sex trade.

And there was some good work done by that committee. There were recommendations made by that committee that could change the lives of kids that are caught in the sex trade. Now we know that only four of the many recommendations have been implemented by the government. You could argue that the Oyate Safe House or that the notion that we need a safe house is a product of the work of that committee. So something fell apart between the good work of that committee and what this government's doing, and what this government's doing.

We have seen, with respect to the case of the Oyate, we have seen what the Children's Advocate has said about the safe house, and unfortunately it has turned out to be anything but safe for kids — 12- and 13-year-old girls — who need the protection of the minister.

We have heard the Children's Advocate talk, admonish the government. They said the department did not take corrective action to remedy breaches of the service agreement. That had significant impact on the quality of care. The department failed in its responsibilities with regard to children in its care. The children were not provided with the services and protection they were entitled to. Files on children were discontinued even though the department knew sexual exploitation continued, and all the while, all the while, the minister — the worst minister in the history of social service in this province — was briefed. He knew about it. He knew about it.

He knew about the fact that somebody involved in Oyate had been accused of a sexual offence and that managed to cancel a grand opening. Actually it was his predecessor, the member for Moose Jaw North was a minister at the time. So they knew enough to cancel the announcement but did anybody else hear about it, Mr. Speaker? Did they come clean? Did they say, here is a problem at Oyate that is affecting the safety of kids? No, they didn't. When did this information come out?

Well, the Minister of Finance says it's sad. And it is sad. The fact that CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] had to break the story, the fact that the auditor has to get involved, the fact that the Children's Advocate says that this government has failed kids ostensibly, Mr. Speaker, the fact that the member for Northwest has to drag information out of this government, that's what sad, Mr. Speaker. That's what sad.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[15:30]

Mr. Wall: — What did we hear today? What did we hear today from the minister? Well he wouldn't answer at first. He hid behind the Government House Leader when we asked him a pretty important question. Because the all-party committee that's now looking at this, all-party members of the Public Accounts Committee, had decided not too long ago by

unanimous consent — and unanimous I would understand to mean that NDP members supported this — that the former deputy minister, the former deputy minister would come before that committee and would answer the questions from the duly elected members of this Assembly on both sides of the House, on the government side and on the opposition side. All the members agreed to that. I believe that's right. That's right.

But as the heat has been turned up on this government on its failure on Oyate, as the heat has been turned up on its minister, they had a change of heart. And today they used their majority on that committee to do what? To stifle testimony from a witness that had been called. And their answer today? Remember the answer? It was amazing. They said, well the witness that we're referring to that wasn't allowed to testify; the witness was in the room. Well, isn't that special, Mr. Speaker? The witness was in the room, but the government members don't allow that person to testify. So what good is having the witness in the room if government members use their majority to quash a formerly unanimous decision of the committee to have her testify?

And all that sounds like a lot of procedural mumble-jumble. I understand that, Mr. Speaker. But what's at stake? What's at stake? Twelve- and thirteen-year-old girls who are at risk, who may have been betrayed by the very government that had charge over them, who may have been let down, who were let down by the minister responsible for them. That's what's at stake in this. What's at stake in this are answers that the people of the province deserve. Maybe the answers are embarrassing to this government but you know what? The people of this province, they don't care if it embarrasses this government. They want to know what happened. They want people held accountable. They want it fixed. They want a government who has charge over these young kids to do its job and take care of them, Mr. Speaker. That's what it wants. That's what it wants.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — And that's why we voted against this government in the confidence motion. That's why that member is sitting right there on the opposition side of the House. Yes he was an excellent campaigner. He worked very hard. And oh, by the way, also his constituents have had enough of the NDP. And that's the case . . . That's the thing that we see right across this province.

So just in question period today you got a glimpse I think, Mr. Speaker, of why members on this side of the House have lost confidence in the government, why a growing number of Saskatchewan people have lost the confidence of the government. And it must be the only explanation. It must be the only explanation because as I said at the top, as I said at the top of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, conventional wisdom, conventional political wisdom would have any governing party in the current economic circumstances riding high in the polls. But they're not.

Because people are tired of Oyate; people are tired of the waiting lists for health care; they're tired of a callous government's attitude on the Bonderud situation. They're tired, Mr. Speaker, that even in this boom that the Premier refers to, we lose population; 4,500 people left last year while even

Manitoba grew. They're tired of saying goodbye to their kids and having them leave for some other place, Mr. Speaker.

They're tired of a province with all of the potential that we have here . . . And make no mistake — the potential of this province is limitless. They have a problem with the fact that this government is managing to squander that boom, that opportunity. They're overseeing the loss of people which actually is exacerbating the labour shortage situation of the province of Saskatchewan.

I think it's because of this. And here's another explanation. I think it's because of this. I think the people of the province that understand that now while there are some signs of economic performance, some performance in our economy, they can attribute it to a number of things. They can attribute it to high oil prices. And they can attribute it to the fact that this NDP government has finally, finally thrown its hands up and said, you know what, the Sask Party has had it right all along. We're going to adopt much of, not all of, but much of their growth agenda, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — And the Minister of Learning I think, yes, right, she laughs at that. I wonder, does she remember the television ad from the last campaign, the television ad that they ran that referenced taxes on business? You see, the former leader of the opposition had a plan to grow the province — as we have had since — that involved what, Mr. Speaker, that involved what? Reducing the capital tax, reducing business taxes, reducing those taxes that hurt growth and investment.

And what party ran ads in the last campaign? I'm paraphrasing a bit, but they said something like, don't let — I'm paraphrasing — don't let the former leader of the opposition cut those taxes to big evil corporations. There was TV ads about it, Mr. Speaker, but somehow, but somehow they've managed to pile into the Premier's bus. They've managed to pile into the Premier's bus all at once, all the while playing the horsey game we think. That was interesting. More on that, more on that in a moment — playing the horsey game.

And where were they driving, Mr. Speaker? Well they were apparently on the road to Damascus because in the last budget of course they adopted the same plan they derided and criticized in the campaigns. That is the absolutely, undeniable evidence that this government is bankrupt of ideas. And in that case, much like kids who want to help out others who are having trouble in school, we're prepared to let them look over our shoulder and cheat off our homework, Mr. Speaker. We're prepared to do that in this Assembly for the benefit of the province.

So if there is any question at all as to not only why members on this side of the House would want to vote against this government, would want to vote against this Throne Speech, is that they are bankrupt of their own ideas. They continue to preside over the exodus of our people to other places, Mr. Speaker. They continue through Oyate and the Bonderud tragedy and any number of other issues — the nursing shortage — to demonstrate the fact that they lack confidence. The easiest thing for us to do on behalf of a province that we know has

limitless potential, the easiest thing it is for the members on this side of the House to do is stand in our place and vote against this government and be grateful that we are one day closer to its end. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier, the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As always it is a privilege to stand in this legislature and to speak to important issues of the day. I thank the constituents of Saskatoon Riversdale for affording me this privilege, Mr. Speaker. And I am grateful to have the opportunity to participate in this Throne Speech debate — a debate about vision and future, plan and purpose, a debate about focus.

Mr. Speaker, even the most casual, I believe even the most casual observer of this legislature in the course of this Throne Speech debate — and even in the course of this afternoon's debate — would come to some real conclusion very quickly about the contrast, Mr. Speaker, between this government and between that opposition. Now, Mr. Speaker, I've listened to a variety of the speeches in this Throne Speech debate. I've heard members of the government stand in their place and speak about future, speak about vision, speak about hope for the people of Saskatchewan, speak about the challenges that we face. I want to thank the two members who moved and seconded the Throne Speech for their tremendous, tremendous contribution to the debate.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And then, Mr. Speaker, we turn and we hear, we hear members of the Sask Party enter the debate, and it's political rhetoric. It is whining. It is complaining. And the last thing it is, is any plan for the future of our province or the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it was so illustrated this afternoon again when we listened to the member of Milestone-Indian Head stand in his place and spend most of his Throne Speech time defending the Grant Devine government. Never did I expect in this Throne Speech debate the member opposite to stand and spend 20 minutes defending the Grant Devine government.

Now we've just listened to the Leader of the Official Opposition, Mr. Speaker. We've just listened to the Leader of the Official Opposition. He started out talking about the Weyburn by-election — not the Throne Speech, not the future of Saskatchewan. He started talking about the Weyburn by-election straight off the hop, and then he went into a 20-minute question period presentation, a 20-minute tirade — the kind of thing we hear in question period, Mr. Speaker.

Was there a considered vision in the Leader of the Opposition's remarks this afternoon? Was there a word about what he or his party would see for the future of Saskatchewan families and the future of Saskatchewan young people? Not a word, Mr.

Speaker. There, there, Mr. Speaker, there we can see the contrast. There we can see the contrast, Mr. Speaker, and it's about this contrast that I wish to speak this afternoon.

Here, Mr. Speaker, here sits a government, a government with vision — a vision that we outlined in the Throne Speech of a year ago. A vision for the province and the people of Saskatchewan where we said our vision for this province is a province where no one is being left behind on the pathway to opportunity — no one. We vision a province where we have an unbreakable social fabric that is based on the foundation of a green and a prosperous economy in growing and diverse communities, Mr. Speaker. That is government's vision for the future of Saskatchewan.

We take that vision, Mr. Speaker, and in this Throne Speech we give it focus, clear focus, Mr. Speaker. In this Throne Speech the clear focus of the government I lead is to make life better for today's Saskatchewan families and to build a better future here in Saskatchewan for our young people. That is the focus of our government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And we take that focus, Mr. Speaker, and we turn it into specific action, specific action, Mr. Speaker. This Throne Speech, very much like the people of Saskatchewan, very much like the province of Saskatchewan, is a Throne Speech which is very down-to-earth but where the sky is the limit.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask you and I ask the people of Saskatchewan to compare that with the Saskatchewan Party opposition who, Mr. Speaker, have no vision — no vision at least they're prepared to enunciate — no plan, Mr. Speaker, and no focus with one exception. The only focus that we witness in this House day after day of the Saskatchewan Party under their current leader is the focus of winning at the polls, of regaining government. As one member said, of getting their mitts back on the treasury of Saskatchewan. That's their single focus, Mr. Speaker.

Here is the contrast. You have a government that believes and works for the future of Saskatchewan people. You have an opposition that only works for the future of the Saskatchewan Party.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I ask all members, I ask the people of Saskatchewan to note the contrast between this government and the opposition.

Let's talk about record. This is a government, Mr. Speaker, that is proud of its record in government. This is a political party that is proud of its record in government. A record in government that took this province from the very verge of bankruptcy in the 1990s as a result of the work of that party in government. Took this province from the very verge of bankruptcy and restored the fiscal foundations of this province, Mr. Speaker. As a result, 14 straight credit rating upgrades — five of them since I've become Premier, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — That, Mr. Speaker, is a record of which we are immensely proud. Equally we are proud of the work that we've accomplished in the last five years — in the last five years — of rekindling, re-energizing, and reshaping the Saskatchewan economy so that once again this economy can serve as the foundation for the social progress that we desire and the people of Saskatchewan deserve, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — It is a record, Mr. Speaker, in the last five years where we have maintained the balanced budgets, where we've continued the fiscal scrutiny that provides the credit rating upgrades, but at the same time, Mr. Speaker, record investments in social services, record investments in health care, record investments in education, and, Mr. Speaker, record tax relief for families of Saskatchewan and a record of improving the investment climate in our province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And what, Mr. Speaker, what, Mr. Speaker, is the result of that today? Well manufacturing shipments are up. Retail sales are up. Housing starts in our province are up. And, Mr. Speaker, what is most satisfying is that jobs are up.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[15:45]

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the records of the New Democratic Party in government that produces the headline that we saw on the front page of the *Leader-Post*, Regina's *Leader-Post* on Saturday night, a headline which reads, "Jobs, Jobs, Jobs . . ." is a record that we are very, very proud of, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Now contrast that, Mr. Speaker, contrast that with the Saskatchewan Party opposite who will do everything in their power to hide from their record in government. Hide from their record of fiscal destruction of this province. Hide from the shame that accompanied that administration. Hide from the fact that their leader was in this building, a part of that government. Do everything they can to hide from their record, so much they had to go and change their name so that they could hide from that period in their history and in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, when your focus, when your focus, Mr. Speaker, is only the political fortunes of the Saskatchewan Party, you hide from your record. When your focus is serving Saskatchewan people, you're proud of your record.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Now here, Mr. Speaker, again, clearly from the debate that's occurred in this legislature since we returned, let me speak to another contrast. Here, Mr. Speaker,

you have a Premier and a government who are willing to stand up for Saskatchewan families, who are willing to take positions on issues that affect Saskatchewan families in our relationship with the national government of Canada.

We have taken a clear position on child care and the cuts to the child care. We've taken a clear, clear position on literacy and the cuts to literacy. We have taken a clear position on the future of the Canadian Wheat Board and the right of producers to participate in a democratic forum around decisions on the wheat board. We've taken a very clear, clear position on the cuts to the national voluntary sector initiative, Mr. Speaker. And we've taken a very clear position on a fair deal for the natural resources of the people of Saskatchewan under equalization.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And so, Mr. Speaker, I ask you then to contrast that, and the people of Saskatchewan to contrast that with the position of the Saskatchewan Party. What is their position on the federal government's cuts to child care? Do we know it? We do not.

What is their position on the federal government cuts to literacy programming in our province? We don't know it. What is their position, Mr. Speaker, on the future of the Canadian Wheat Board and the right of producers to participate? We don't know it. What, Mr. Speaker, is their position on the cuts to the voluntary sector initiative and the volunteer community of Saskatchewan? They don't know about that.

What is their position to this recent announcement that we've had now of cuts to Aboriginal education, Aboriginal language education in our province? Mr. Speaker, we've made it very clear our position on the Kelowna accord. What is the opposition's position on the Kelowna accord for Aboriginal people?

And, Mr. Speaker, what today is their position on a fair deal for Saskatchewan's natural resources? What is their position in the equalization debate?

Well it is noted, it is noted, Mr. Speaker, it is noted that when we had a Liberal government in Ottawa, this opposition was much more upfront about their position — much more upfront. Now we have their Conservative cousins in Ottawa. What happens? Well we're very, very quiet. We don't want to, we don't want to irritate our cousins and friends in Ottawa. We wouldn't want to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I tell you when your focus, when your focus is only to gain political power, when your focus is to get your hands and the mitts in the treasury again, when your focus is the Saskatchewan Party, you don't want to take any positions that might offend your friends, the Conservatives, in Ottawa.

But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, when your focus, when your focus is Saskatchewan families and building a better future for our young people, you bet we'll take positions. And we'll stand firm on behalf of Saskatchewan people no matter who occupies the Prime Minister's office.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — But here, Mr. Speaker, here, here is where perhaps the contrast grows sharpest. We have listened. We have listened at length to members of the Saskatchewan Party participate in this Throne Speech debate. They have not begun to debate the very speech and the content of this speech.

Mr. Speaker, this speech speaks directly — directly — to the future of Saskatchewan families and young people in our province, Mr. Speaker. We have taken this vision, and we have put focus to the vision. We have a cornerstone. The first cornerstone of this Throne Speech is to make this the best place for young people to live, to work, and to build a strong future, Mr. Speaker. That is the cornerstone of this Throne Speech.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — In this Throne Speech we commit this government, we commit this government to the literacy program of Saskatchewan and its expansion in spite of, in spite of the cuts from Ottawa.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — We commit this government to continuing our work in early childhood learning and education and childhood . . . to provide real options for Saskatchewan families. We commit in this Throne Speech to expanding training opportunities, to unveiling a new partnership between Saskatchewan people who are workers, who are in labour, a partnership with people who are in business and a partnership with our educational institutions to build for labour market development, Mr. Speaker.

We've committed in this Throne Speech to strengthening and expanding our regional training model, bringing education, bringing the student and the student's education closer to the teacher, and the both of them closer to the opportunity and closer to the employer.

We have committed in this Throne Speech to expanding our partnerships and working with First Nations and Métis people, Mr. Speaker. We have committed to deepen those partnerships because we know that much of the future of our province will involve those young Aboriginal people of our province today. We know that, Mr. Speaker, and we are committed to working in partnership with the Aboriginal people of our province and the Aboriginal training institutions.

Mr. Speaker, we remain committed to the bold initiative of immigration that we established a year, a little more ago. Mr. Speaker, we set some bold, bold targets. In our Throne Speech last week we said we would achieve 5,000 new immigrants, offshore, from outside of Canada, coming to Saskatchewan — 5,000 per year by the year 2008. Mr. Speaker, we are on track. We are ahead of schedule. This year alone we will welcome 2,400 new immigrants to the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, they talk about labour market development. Late, late in the day they begin to talk about labour market development. And while they're talking about it, Mr. Speaker, we are doing it. We are building a future

here for our young people that is a cornerstone of this Throne Speech.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the second cornerstone of this Throne Speech is our efforts to improve access to health services in our province and to maintain our leadership in publicly funded and publicly administered medicare, Mr. Speaker.

And I remind you and I remind the people of Saskatchewan again, we are the only have province in Canada that does not charge its families and its citizens a health care premium for their health care, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Under the leadership of the Minister of Health and the ministry of health, in this Throne Speech we commit to expanding training opportunities for the health care providers. We commit to retention strategies, recruitment strategies that are and will work.

Mr. Speaker, we're talking about more opportunities for those internationally educated professionals to work in our province. We are talking very specifically about expanding the Aboriginal health workforce. And, Mr. Speaker, we commit in this Throne Speech to continued progress towards a children's hospital within a hospital in the city of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And, Mr. Speaker, if I may say, if I may say, this Throne Speech commits this government to further, further implementation of the Premier's Project Hope initiative, providing support, providing education, providing rehabilitation to the young people of our province that will be affected by the abuse of drugs or alcohol, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to those young people because they are part of today's Saskatchewan families and they are not to be left behind, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, in this Throne Speech we recognize, we recognize the role that the senior has played in the life of this province. We commit, Mr. Speaker, in this Throne Speech to create a better life for the senior in Saskatchewan . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Because they too, they too, Mr. Speaker, are part of today's Saskatchewan families. The second cornerstone of this Throne Speech, improving access and building on our leadership in public health care, Mr. Speaker.

The third, the third cornerstone so significant, so significant to the future of this province. And not just the province and nation but to the globe, and so important to the young people of today, Mr. Speaker. We will advance Saskatchewan as a leader in environmental protection and the green economy, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will implement, we will implement further strategies, further steps to achieve our long-term goal established last year of — Mr. Speaker, get this — meeting

one-third, one-third of our energy requirements through renewable energy.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue our work, as you've seen in just the last few days, towards building the world's first utility-grade, clean coal production facility — electrical production facility. We're going to pioneer it here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue our leadership, Mr. Speaker, in carbon sequestration. We going to work with large partners in terms of a polygeneration capacity.

Mr. Speaker, you've seen our advancements in biofuels. We're going to be the first province in Canada to mandate the use of biofuels during this session. We are seeing expansion of that industry and we are going to lead the nation in biofuel production.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to lead in green energy but beyond even the production of energy we are going to lead in conservation of energy, in conservation of energy, Mr. Speaker.

We are pursuing our strategies in agroforestry and, Mr. Speaker, we are pursuing strategies for organic food production in this province. And we await the work that's being done, and we will act to see progress in terms of organic food production.

Mr. Speaker, we believe in the future of this province. We believe in the sustainable future for this province. We believe in its environment, the God-given natural environment that we so treasure in this province, and we will show leadership to the nation. We will show leadership to the world, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And the fourth cornerstone, Mr. Speaker, of this Throne Speech is to ensure, absolutely ensure that today's Saskatchewan families are going to benefit, are going to benefit in real and tangible ways from our prosperous economy, the economy that we have laboured to build together. We are going to ensure that Saskatchewan families are going to know those benefits, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to ensure — when we are successful in keeping and having the federal government keep its promise around equalization which means, Mr. Speaker, for the people of Saskatchewan 800 million of our dollars that will be retained here, retained here from the benefits of our natural resources, 800 million to be retained here — we're going to ensure those dollars are going to benefit Saskatchewan families. We've already said that 30 per cent of those revenues, Mr. Speaker, will go to property tax relief in this province. We're going to ensure that that promise is kept because it's a promise to the families of Saskatchewan and a promise to the young people of Saskatchewan as they build their future.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to establish in this session, from some of our one-time revenues as a result of these good economic times and the resource times, we are going to establish a multi-year infrastructure fund which will include a building communities fund that will provide for opportunities in our communities, opportunities for our families, opportunities for our young people.

Mr. Speaker, in this session, as by virtue of commitments in this Throne Speech, we're going to continue to build safer communities because we believe that our families deserve security in their neighbourhoods and our young people deserve the security of growing up in safe neighbourhoods and safe communities. You are going to hear much about that, Mr. Speaker.

We are going to continue to work with the people in the communities of northern Saskatchewan to ensure that life for Saskatchewan families who live in our North will be better, and that the young people of our North have futures in the North, Mr. Speaker. We are going to continue making progress on the northern roads strategy, bringing roads and infrastructure to the people of the North. And you've heard the happy announcements, Mr. Speaker, already made for our northern residents. A new natural gas pipeline to La Ronge and the area of La Ronge, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And, Mr. Speaker, I was proud to be in the community of La Ronge last week and participate with the members of the North in announcing a court house for the people of La Ronge to meet the needs of their community, Mr. Speaker.

We are going, Mr. Speaker, through the dollars available, to provide for the people of Saskatchewan a multi-year, multi-million highways transportation policy of road and rail. We are going to build the infrastructure that meets the economy of today and the economy of the future, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of this Throne Speech and the prosperity of our economy, there will be real benefits for real families. There will be real benefits for farm families in Saskatchewan. In this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, we are committed, committed to the 100 per cent funding of CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization] while the Minister of Agriculture negotiates a better program for Saskatchewan farm families.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, we are going to act in this session around issues facing workers in our province, occupational health and safety issues that face our workers. We're going to act on issues around workers' compensation. And, Mr. Speaker, we are going to act on behalf of vulnerable workers in our province because they are part of today's Saskatchewan family, and they will not be left behind, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[16:00]

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And, Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue the work in spite of the federal government. We are going to continue the work of our volunteer sector initiative because much of the strength of our province is the strength of community and the strength of community is so much the strength of our volunteers. And under the Legislative Secretary

for the volunteer sector initiative, we're going to continue the work, and we're going to develop and build new relationships with the voluntary sector and this government, Mr. Speaker. We're going to do that.

And, Mr. Speaker, as we turn the leaf on this year and move into next year, we are going to make Saskatchewan centre stage, Mr. Speaker, centre stage in the nation. In the year to come, Mr. Speaker, we are going to host, in the province of Saskatchewan, the Western Canadian Music Awards in the city of Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — We are going to host here, in the capital city of Regina, Canada's Country Music Week, Mr. Speaker. We're going to host it here.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — In the community of Prince Albert, we are going to host an Aboriginal showcase, Mr. Speaker, and in my hometown, the city of Saskatoon, we are going to host the Junos.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Now, Mr. Speaker, no other province has ever been able to do this. No other province has been able to pull together to attract these events. This is going to be a year of celebration of the arts, focusing on a celebration of music because, Mr. Speaker, this is the new Saskatchewan. This is the new Saskatchewan, the only jurisdiction on the Rolling Stones' world tour that could support two concerts, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — This is the new Saskatchewan. And this Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is going to be, is today, and will even more in the future be an attractive place for young people to build their futures — attractive in its affordability and attractive in its ability to provide housing at a reasonable cost, where young people have a hope of owning their own homes; an attractive place to be trained and skilled; an attractive place to pursue any career or job opportunity that you want to; and an attractive place for your lifestyle, Mr. Speaker, because we are focused on making life better for Saskatchewan families. We are focused, Mr. Speaker, on making a better future for our young people right here.

And as a result of this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, we said that this prosperity that we've built together as the people of Saskatchewan — not with any assist from the opposition — this prosperity that we've built should be felt by real families in Saskatchewan, and it should be felt in their pocketbooks, Mr. Speaker. As a result of this Throne Speech, the provincial sales tax has been lowered two points, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — And, Mr. Speaker, as I to come to some conclusion, as a result of this Throne Speech, the families of Saskatchewan will enjoy a Family Day holiday in the darkest

days of February, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — So here, Mr. Speaker, here, Mr. Speaker, is the contrast. Here is the contrast. A government that comes with vision. A government that comes with focus. And a government that comes with a specific plan to make life better for today's Saskatchewan families and to build a better future here for our youth.

And what do we have over there? An opposition party that's only interested in the future of its own political party — that, Mr. Speaker. I hear no vision. I've heard no plan in this debate from opposition members. I've heard a great, now a great defence today of their time in government when . . . in the 1980s when Mr. Devine was the premier.

Now, Mr. Speaker, here comes the test, here comes the test because they can hide behind political rhetoric in speeches. They can hide behind political rhetoric when they're in front of the media. But you can't hide from a vote. You cannot hide from a vote in this legislature.

And, Mr. Speaker, here it comes. Here comes the vote. And my question is this. My question is this. Will the Saskatchewan Party stand in their place today and vote for or vote against the full funding of CAIS? Will they stand in their place today and support a program that will expand literacy work in the province of Saskatchewan or will they vote against it? Mr. Speaker, will they stand in their place today and vote for or against a 2 per cent tax cut in the provincial sales tax? Will they vote for it or against it? And, Mr. Speaker, will they stand in their place today and vote for or against a Family Day holiday for the families of Saskatchewan?

The contrast, Mr. Speaker, the contrast is now to be determined. There is no hiding from the vote. If, Mr. Speaker, they believe in the future of Saskatchewan families, in the future of this province, if they believe in making a better life for Saskatchewan people and building a better future here for our young people, if they believe that as we do on the government side, Mr. Speaker, they will vote for this Throne Speech. If their only interest is in the Saskatchewan's Party future, they will vote against it.

Mr. Speaker, we stand for Saskatchewan people. They stand for the Saskatchewan Party. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the difference. And that is why I will be supporting the Throne Speech.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order please. The question before the Assembly is the motion for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, moved by the member for Regina Coronation Park, seconded by the member for Regina Wascana Plains:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

To His Honour the Honourable Gordon L. Barnhart,

Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Those who favour the motion say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those who oppose the motion say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I believe the ayes have it. Call in the members for a standing vote.

[The division bells rang from 16:07 until 16:11.]

The Speaker: — Order. Order.

The question before the Assembly is the motion for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. Moved by the member for Regina Coronation Park, seconded by the member for Regina Wascana Plains:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

To His Honour the Honourable Gordon L. Barnhart, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech in which Your Honour has been pleased to address us at the opening of the present session.

Those in favour of the motion, please rise.

[Yeas — 28]

Calvert	Hamilton	Van Mulligen
Lautermilch	Hagel	Serby
Atkinson	Cline	Sonntag
Wartman	Forbes	Prebble
Crofford	Belanger	Higgins
Thomson	Nilson	Beatty

Taylor
Iwanchuk
Yates
Borgerson

Junor
McCall
Addley

Harper
Trew
Morin

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion, please rise.

[Nays — 26]

Wall
McMorris
Draude
Stewart
Hart
Eagles
Huyghebaert
Brkich
Morgan

Toth
D'Autremont
Hermanson
Wakefield
Harpauer
Weekes
Allchurch
Dearborn
Duncan

Elhard
Krawetz
Bjornerud
Chisholm
Gantefoer
Cheveldayoff
Kirsch
Merriman

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 28; those opposed, 26.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I declare the motion carried. The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

[16:15]

MOTIONS

Address be Engrossed and Presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the government Deputy House Leader, the hon. member for Regina Dewdney:

That the said address be engrossed and presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor by such members of the Assembly as are of the Executive Council.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader, the member for Moose Jaw North, seconded by the government Deputy House Leader, the member for Regina Dewdney:

That the said address be engrossed and presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor by such members of the Assembly as are of the Executive Council.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

Ways and Means

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the

deputy government house leader, the hon. member for Regina Dewdney:

That this Assembly, pursuant to rule 116, hereby appoints the Committee of Finance to consider the supply to be granted to Her Majesty, and to consider the ways and means of raising the supply.

So moved, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Moose Jaw North, seconded by the member for Regina Dewdney:

That this Assembly, pursuant to rule 116, hereby appoints the Committee of Finance to consider the supply to be granted to Her Majesty, and to consider the ways and means of raising the supply.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt that motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:17.]

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CABINET MINISTERS

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Premier

Hon. Graham Addley
Minister of Healthy Living Services
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. Pat Atkinson
Minister of Advanced Education and Employment
Minister Responsible for Immigration
Minister Responsible for the Public
Service Commission

Hon. Joan Beatty
Minister of Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. Buckley Belanger
Minister of Community Resources
Minister Responsible for Disability Issues

Hon. Eric Cline
Minister of Industry and Resources
Minister Responsible for Investment
Saskatchewan Inc.
Minister Responsible for Information Services
Corporation of Saskatchewan

Hon. David Forbes
Minister of Labour
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Glenn Hagel
Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation
Provincial Secretary
Minister Responsible for Gaming
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance

Hon. Deb Higgins
Minister of Learning
Minister Responsible for Literacy
Minister Responsible for Liquor and
Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications

Hon. Eldon Lautermilch
Minister of Highways and Transportation
Minister of Property Management
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company
Minister Responsible for the
Forestry Secretariat

Hon. Warren McCall
Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

Hon. John Nilson
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for the Office of
Energy Conservation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Frank Quennell
Minister of Justice and
Attorney General

Hon. Clay Serby
Deputy Premier
Minister of Regional Economic and
Co-operative Development

Hon. Maynard Sonntag
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations
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Hon. Len Taylor
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Hon. Andrew Thomson
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Minister Responsible for
SaskEnergy Incorporated

Hon. Harry Van Mulligen
Minister of Government Relations

Hon. Mark Wartman
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